

GOING HOME TO STAY

A Guide for Successful Reentry for Men and Women



United Way of
Greater Cleveland



TO THOSE CURRENTLY OR FORMERLY INCARCERATED

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

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

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

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PREPARING FOR YOUR RELEASE

While you are in prison...

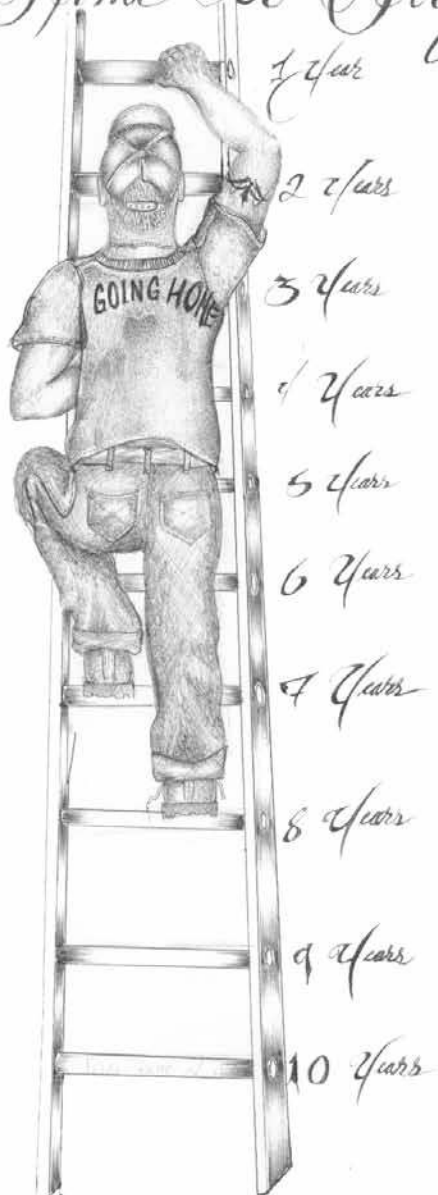
- Learn a trade or get a marketable skill.
- Participate in education programs. Get your GED.
- Address personal issues through treatment for addictions and mental health counseling.
- Modify (change) your child support order if needed.
- Work toward finding a positive place to live when released.
-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

FIRST STEPS AFTER RELEASE

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

- Contact a reentry program (page 3) and/or an employment program (page 19).
- Stay in a positive living situation (page 33).
- Get proper clothing (page 11), food (page 24).
- Find your way around — know the bus system (page 79).
- Get a birth certificate if you don't have one (page 50).
- Get a photo ID/driver's license (page 54).
- Get your Social Security card if you don't have it (page 60).
- Sign up for government benefits (page 82).
- Keep in touch with your parole officer (page 78).
- Take care of health and dental needs (page 27).
- Take care of mental health needs (page 70).
- Get help for alcohol or other drug abuse (page 1).
- Make arrangements for child support (page 7).
- Take care of childcare or parenting needs (page 6).
- Get more training or education (page 14).
- Clean up your record and get legal help if needed (page 61).
- Clean up your credit and spend money wisely (page 72).
- Register with selective service (page 59). Register to vote (page 81).

Going Home to Stay



ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG ABUSE TREATMENT

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

Dial 211 or 216-436-2000 24 hrs. a day if you need to find a place that can help.

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

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

Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Treatment

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

Alcoholics Anonymous 216-241-7387
aacleveland.org

Al-Anon (for families, friends) 216-621-1381
afgcleveland.org

Cocaine Anonymous 216-523-8701
caohio.org

Families Anonymous 440-779-4357
familiesanonymous.org

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

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

Narcotics Anonymous 888-438-4673
nabuckeye.org

Nicotine Anonymous 440-843-8197 or 877-879-6422
ohio-nica.org

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

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

CARING FOR OLDER ADULTS

If you are caring for an elderly parent or other relative, there are services available to help you. Call 211 or 216-436-2000 for referrals to services for older adults and their caregivers.

CASE MANAGEMENT / SUPPORT / INFORMATION

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

Comprehensive Reentry Programs

Community Re-Entry 216-696-2717

1468 W 25th St., Cleveland, OH 44113

Provides a comprehensive reentry program for men.

Women's Re-Entry Network 216-696-7535

1468 W 25th St., Cleveland, OH 44113

Provides a comprehensive reentry program for women.

North Star Neighborhood Reentry Resource Center 216-881-5440

1834 E 55th St., Cleveland, OH 44103

northstarreentry.org

Helps those involved in the criminal justice system or who were formerly incarcerated. Provides job search and ID help, linkage to services, and other classes and programs.

Other Reentry Support / Information

Access to Recovery

HUMADAOP 216-459-1222

Oriana House, Inc. 216-881-7882

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

Case Management / Support / Information

Antioch Baptist Church

216-421-1516 Ext. 151

8869 Cedar Ave., Cleveland, OH 44106

Offers support groups for ex-offenders and their families.

Citizen Circles

216-698-2501

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

The following locations offer Citizen Circles:

Downtown Citizen Circle

216-751-1382

North Star Resource Center

1834 E 55th St., Cleveland, OH 44103

Mt. Pleasant Citizen Circle

216-752-1464

Mt. Pleasant Weed and Seed

12802 Kinsman Ave., Cleveland, OH 44120

Euclid Ave. Citizen Circle

216-421-0482 Ext. 282

Church of the Covenant

11205 Euclid Ave., Cleveland, OH 44106

Cleveland Eastside Ex-offender Coalition

216-426-9012

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

Provides counseling services, case management, mentoring, and benefits screening to ex-offenders and their families.

Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities

216-736-2673

1275 Lakeside Ave. E, Cleveland, OH 44114

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

Gospel House Prison Ministry

440-439-6555

14707 Alexander Rd., Walton Hills, OH 44146

Offers reentry support and information.

Just Like Us Enrichment Center

216-581-1400

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

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

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT)

216-651-5428

Community Center of Greater Cleveland

6600 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44102

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

Mental Health Services

216-623-6888

1744 Payne Ave., Cleveland, OH 44114

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

Passages

216-881-6776

P.O. Box 91831, Cleveland, OH 44101

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

The Salvation Army

216-861-8185

2507 E 22nd St., Cleveland, OH 44115

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

Sure House Baptist Church Ministries

216-441-4211

11318 Miles Ave., Cleveland, OH 44105

Mentoring, employment help, and linkage to services for ex-offenders.

For social service information and referrals, you can call 211 or 216-436-2000

24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Not exclusively a service for ex-offenders.

Support Before Release

Center for Families and Children

216-325-9400

c4fc.org

Greater Cleveland Integrated Re-Entry Project (GCIRP)

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

CHILD DAY CARE AND PARENTING

Child Day Care

Starting Point for Child Care and Early Education

800-880-0971

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

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

Cuyahoga County Employment and Family Services

216-987-7346

1641 Payne Ave., Cleveland, OH 44114

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

Parenting Helplines

Bellflower Center for Prevention of Child Abuse

216-431-8200 Tot Line

216-229-8800 Family Helpline

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

Cuyahoga County Fatherhood Initiative

211 or 216-436-2000

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

Help Me Grow

216-698-7500

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

City of Cleveland - Dept. of Public Health

216-664-4194

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

For referrals to parenting classes (there are many programs in Cuyahoga County), parent support groups and other parenting resources call **211** or **216-436-2000**. Available 24 hours.

CHILD SUPPORT AND CHILD CUSTODY

Child Support Tips:

- The parent paying child support is called the NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT or OBLIGOR.
- The parent receiving child support is called the CUSTODIAL PARENT or OBLIGEE.
- A Support Order tells you how much child support must be paid each month. If you have to pay child support, you are still responsible for that amount the whole time you are in prison. In fact, the total amount you owe keeps increasing unless payments are being made on your case.
- If you are incarcerated, check with your worker. You may be eligible for a modification of your order.
- Notify the Support Enforcement Agency anytime your address, phone number or employment changes.
- If you are the one that is owed child support, contact the Support Enforcement Agency to see what you can do to start collecting again once you are released.
- Do not make payments directly to the custodial parent. That will not count. You will still owe that money.
- Pay the amount you owe each month. If you are having trouble paying this amount, contact the Support Enforcement Agency right away. You might be able to get your payment changed through a Support Order Modification if you qualify.

FATHERS MATTER

Social Services Designed for the Unique Needs of Fathers

What kind of help do you need?

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



www.fatherhoodinitiative.cuyahogacounty.us

We have options for you.

The Cuyahoga County Fatherhood Initiative: 211 or 216.436.2000

Child Support and Child Custody

- If you are more than one month behind in child support, your driver's license can be suspended before your incarceration or after your release. Your driver's license will not be suspended while you are incarcerated. If, upon release, you find that it was, contact your worker right away.
- The agencies listed on page 10 may help with issues regarding child support.
- You could go back to prison for not paying child support.

Support Order Modification

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

Modification does not help with what you already owe. Your new payment amount would not start until the month after the entire modification review process is completed. Even with a new Support Order payment, you will still have to pay off the past due child support that you owe.

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

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

Don't worry too much about whether you qualify under these guidelines. Just contact the Support Enforcement Agency and explain your situation, such as a lack of a job, and they will let you know if you qualify. If you request a modification while you are still incarcerated, the new support payment will be based on the amount of your prison wages.

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

Child Support and Child Custody

Upon your release, contact the following agency by phone:

**Cuyahoga Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA)
Re-entry/Incarceration Team**

**See description
for phone #**

PO Box 93318, Cleveland, OH 44101

Call the phone number listed below according to the first letter of your last name:

A - K: (216) 443-5166 and L -Z: (216) 443-5317

For ex-offenders 6 months or more since release, contact:

Cuyahoga Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA)

216-443-5100

PO Box 93318, Cleveland, OH 44101

Contact can also be made in person at all Neighborhood Family Service Centers (welfare offices) throughout Cuyahoga County.

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

If you owe one month or more of your child support obligation (default), your driver's license can be suspended.

If your driver's license has been suspended, you must either pay the full amount that is owed or have payments deducted from your paycheck or bank account. If your driver's license was suspended while you were incarcerated, contact your Support Officer worker right away for resolution. You must contact your Support Officer to discuss the details specific to your case.

Full payment of arrears (the amount that you owe) can be made as follows:

If you need to make a cash payment, then you must make the payment in person at the Cashier's Office of the Cuyahoga County Treasurer. Make sure you get a receipt. You can take your receipt to CSEA to get a Reinstatement Form the same day.

Cuyahoga County Treasurer - Cashier's Office

216-443-7412

1219 Ontario St. Rm. 121, Cleveland, OH 44113

You can go to CSEA and pay with a money order or cashier's check to get your Reinstatement Form on the same day. If you pay with a personal check, you will have to wait up to 10 days before you get the Reinstatement Form.

Payments by mail must be sent to Ohio Child Support Payment Central (OCSPC). They accept money orders, cashier's checks, and personal checks. Be sure to include your case number or Social Security number with the payment. You will have to wait up to 10 days for the payment to clear before you can get the Reinstatement Form.

Ohio Child Support Payment Central (OCSPC)

888-965-2676

PO Box 182372, Columbus, OH 43218-2372

- Once you get your Reinstatement Form, take it to the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles Reinstatement Center. You will need to pay another fee there.
- If at any time you have questions or just want to check to see if your payment cleared, contact your Support Officer for assistance.

Child Support and Child Custody

Child Support / Child Custody Resources

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

Center for Fatherhood and Family Dynamics **216-769-9754**

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

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

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

www.crckids.org

1387 Marlowe Ave. Ste. 8, Lakewood, OH 44107

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

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

1640 Superior Ave., Cleveland, OH 44114

PO Box 93318, Cleveland, OH 44101

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

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

3955 Euclid Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115

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

Cuyahoga County Justice Services **216-443-3149**
Custody Intake and Mediation Services

1910 Carnegie Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115

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

**Cuyahoga County Fatherhood Initiative -
Parenting in Separate Households****216-261-2300***310 W. Lakeside Ave., Rm. 500, Cleveland, OH 44113*

Provides information and classes for unmarried parents seeking custody or visitation with their children.

Domestic Violence Center**216-651-8484 Ext. 355***3146 Scranton Rd., Cleveland, OH 44109*

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

Ohio Dept. of Job and Family Services**800-686-1556****Child Support Consumer Hotline**

For child support information and general questions.

CLOTHING

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

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

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

Cleveland UMADAOP**216-361-2040 Ext: 25****Mate Masie Re-Entry Store**

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

Clothing

Salvation Army

216-861-8185

Phone or go to the office closest to you. They may provide vouchers for you to get clothing from a Salvation Army Thrift Store. Bring your Release Papers or Prison ID if you have these.

Salvation Army - Hough

216-432-0500

6000 Hough Ave., Cleveland, OH 44103

Salvation Army - Miles Park

216-341-1640

4139 E 93rd St., Cleveland, OH 44105

Salvation Army - Ohio City

216-631-1515

4402 Clark Ave., Cleveland, OH 44109

Salvation Army - Superior

216-229-6065

9000 Superior Ave., Cleveland, OH 44106

Salvation Army - Temple

216-692-1388

17625 Grovewood Ave., Cleveland, OH 44119

Salvation Army - West Park

216-252-3593

12645 Lorain Ave., Cleveland, OH 44111

St. Herman's Monastery/House of Hospitality

216-961-3806

4410 Franklin Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44113

Men Only - must call first

West Side Catholic Center

216-631-4741

3135 Lorain Ave., Cleveland, OH 44113



DROP-IN CENTERS

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

DROP-IN CENTERS (Homeless)					
	Showers	Meals	Phone	Men	Women
Bishop Cosgrove Center 1736 Superior Ave., Cleveland OH 44114 M-F: 8am-3pm. Closed 2nd Monday of the month. Showers: M-F: 10am - noon only.	✓	✓*	Pay	✓	✓
Catholic Worker Community Storefront 4241 Lorain Ave., Cleveland OH 44113 M-W,F: 7pm-9pm; Sat & Sun: 9:30am-11:30am	✓	Snack		✓	✓
Norma Herr Women's Shelter 2227 Payne Ave., Cleveland OH 44114 7 days: 9am-6:30pm	✓	✓	✓		✓
St. Herman's House of Hospitality 4410 Franklin Blvd., Cleveland OH 44113 Showers: M-F: 2pm-3pm. Arrive by 2:15pm	✓	✓*		✓	
St. Malachi Center 2416 Superior Viaduct, Cleveland OH 44113 Showers: M-Th: 7:30am-10am, F: 7:30am-11:00am; Drop-in: F-Su: 7:00pm-7:00am	✓	✓*		✓	✓
St. Paul's Community Church 4427 Franklin Blvd., Cleveland OH 44113 T-F: 9am-12:30pm		Coffee	✓	✓	✓
West Side Catholic Center 3135 Lorain Ave., Cleveland OH 44113 M-F: 9am-3pm; Sat: 9am-noon Showers: M & F: 1pm-3pm. Sign up before 1pm	✓	✓*	✓	✓	✓
St. Philip Neri 799 E 82nd St., Cleveland, OH 44103 M-Th: 9:00am-1:00pm		Coffee		✓	✓

*See the food section on page 26 for details.

EDUCATION

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

GED

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

The Adult Basic Literacy Education (ABLE) Program offers help for adults who want to improve their basic reading and math skills or prepare for the GED test. Some places offer English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), social studies, science, employment skills, and citizenship preparation. These classes are free of charge but there will be a fee for the GED test. The cost for the initial test is \$40 which includes five sections. The cost to re-take any section of the test is \$10 for each section, with the maximum fee for retaking the test being \$40.

To find places offering GED classes and other literacy programs, call 211 or 216-436-2000.

Ohio Literacy Network

800-228-7323

ohioliteracynetwork.org

Provides the opportunity to study for the GED through either a computer-based program or television-broadcast. Practice tests for the GED are also offered.

Project: LEARN

216-621-9483

2728 Euclid Ave., Ste. 400, Cleveland, OH 44115

projectlearn.org

Provides classes and tutoring as well as other skills instruction.

Ohio Dept. of Education

877-644-6338

State GED Office

ode.state.oh.us (click on GED)

Offers information on where to go for GED testing and copies of GED test scores.

School and Career Counseling

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

Cleveland Scholarship Programs

216-241-5587

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

cspohio.org

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

Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C)

216-987-6305

Educational Opportunity Center

50 Public Sq., Ste. 200., Terminal Tower Bldg., Cleveland, OH 44113

tri-c.edu

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

Trade and Technical Schools

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

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

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

Colleges / Universities

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

Cleveland State University (CSU)

216-687-2000

2121 Euclid Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115

csuohio.edu

Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C)

216-987-4000

700 Carnegie Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115

tri-c.edu

Paying for School / Financial Aid

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

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

For more information about student financial aid:

Cleveland Scholarship Programs

216-241-5587

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

cspohio.org

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

Federal Student Aid Information Center

800-433-3243

federalstudentaid.ed.gov

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

fafsa.ed.gov



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

Towards Employment

Call **216.696.5750**

to learn more.

towardsemployment.org

Our 4-week training program

is the first step along your pathway to success. We will help you to prepare for the job, get the job, keep the job and move into a career. New workshops start each month.

EMPLOYMENT

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

Here are items you may need:

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

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

3. Understand your rights.

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

Employment

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

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
1240 E. 9th St., Ste. 3001, Cleveland, OH 44199
eeoc.gov

800-669-4000

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

U.S. Department of Labor
Wage and Hour Division - Cleveland District
1240 E 9th St., Rm. 817, Cleveland, OH 44199-2054
dol.gov/esa

866-487-9243
or 216-357-5400

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

4. Learn about Fidelity Bonding.

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

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

Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction
770 W. Broad St., Columbus, OH 43222
www.drc.ohio.gov

614-728-1534

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

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

The employer just needs to complete two forms within a certain time period after the start-to-work date. Forms and directions are available from the agency listed below. This program may end August 31, 2011.

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

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

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

Women's Re-Entry Network **216-696-7535**
1468 W 25th St., Cleveland, OH 44113
 Résumé help and job search assistance for women. No job placement.

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

Northeast Ohio Reentry Coalition **216-421-1142**
3555 Hough Ave. Ste. 219, Cleveland, OH 44106
 Offers resume help and job search guidance, but not job placement.

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

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

7. For those age 55 or older, there is a program called the **Senior Community Service Employment Program** that helps low-income persons get part-time, on the job training. This does not focus on helping ex-offenders, but they may serve them. Contact the following agencies for more information (see next page).

Employment

AARP 216-881-1155

National Caucus on Black Aged 216-721-9197
12200 Fairhill Rd., Cleveland, OH 44120

Mature Services Senior Employment Center 216-731-4664

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

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

Catholic Charities Employment and Training 216-426-9870

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

Employment Connection
Brookpark 216-898-1366
Downtown 216-664-4673

Several other locations throughout Cuyahoga County.
employmentconnection.us

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

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

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

Spanish American Committee 216-961-2100

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

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

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

9. Consider temporary employment agencies.

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

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

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

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

Cleveland Better Business Bureau**216-241-7678***cleveland.bbb.org***10. Consider day labor temporary agencies.**

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

AmeriTemps**216-621-4477***2332 Prospect Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115***Lake Land Employment Group****216-875-0000***1285 W 9th St., Cleveland, OH 44113***Minute Men Staffing****216-426-9675***3740 Carnegie Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115*

Employment

11. Start your own business/entrepreneurial resources.

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

Business Advisers of Cleveland **216-426-2053**
4614 Prospect Ave. Ste. 401, Cleveland, OH 44103
busadvcl.org

Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) **216-522-4194**
1350 Euclid Ave. Ste. 216, Cleveland, OH 44115
scorecleveland.org

U.S. Small Business Development Center **216-622-0999 Ext. 215**
at Urban League of Cleveland
2930 Prospect Ave.,
entrepreneurohio.org

Classes and one-on-one counseling on starting a business or improving an existing one.

Women's Business Center **216-707-0777**
at Alex Community Development
12200 Fairhill Rd., 4th Flr., Cleveland, OH 44120
alexcdc.com

WECO Fund **216-458-0250**
3209 Chester Ave., Cleveland, OH 44114
wecofund.com

12. Use libraries as resources.

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

Cleveland Public Library - Main Branch **216-623-2800**
325 Superior Ave., Cleveland, OH 44114
cpl.org

There are 28 additional branch libraries throughout Cleveland.