

Gang Member Reentry Assistance Project

More offenders are being released from prison today than at any time in history, and a number of these offenders have gang affiliations. The reentry of these gang members is burdensome for the community for several reasons. First, persistent gang members may be committed to a criminal lifestyle. Given their relatively high involvement in violent criminal behavior, released gang members represent potential threats to public safety. Strategies to reintegrate them into the community must be balanced with public safety concerns. Second, gang members reentering the community face personal barriers, such as lack of education, stable housing, prosocial support systems, and usable employment/vocational skills. These barriers coupled with the existence of readily available criminal/gang network on which parolees can rely for personal support and potential sources of income, puts gang parolees at high-risk for recidivism. Finally, insomuch as the gang parolee is unprepared to reenter the community, the community, itself, is often unprepared to receive them. There is a clear need for information sharing between prison and probation/parole personnel and agencies to assist not only in the supervision of gang parolees, but also in establishment of open lines of communication for the dissemination of gang intelligence and routine release-notification processes.

Through support from the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), the American Probation and Parole Association (APPA), in partnership with the Institute for Intergovernmental Research (IIR) and the Association of State Correctional Administrators (ASCA), will be developing Gang Member Reentry Informational Guides and PowerPoint Tutorials to assist corrections, law enforcement, parole and probation, social service providers', and others. These aides will provide information on providing prerelease, transition, and post release services to gang members. The products will be focused in two broad areas: (1) prerelease—for personnel dealing with confined populations, and (2) post release—for law enforcement, parole and probation, social service providers, and others providing transition and post release services. The project team will be conducting a thorough review of the literature, one focus group and one working group, and soliciting feedback from practitioners on current programs and strategies directed at gang member reentry.

For more information, please contact:

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