

Treatment, Education and Job Related Services for Offenders on Community Supervision

A Guide to Resources Within the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA)

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All of us at CSOSA receive telephone calls and e-mails from friends and relatives of offenders asking for information on programs to assist their loved ones currently under parole or probation supervision. Family involvement, support and encouragement are crucial to the successful reintegration of offenders. In an effort to assist those who are trying to help sons, daughters and friends, we offer the following overview of services available through CSOSA's Community Supervision Officers (CSOs—the professional supervising the offender—known elsewhere as parole and probation officers).

Additional information on services for offenders can be found on CSOSA's web site. Please see www.csosa.gov. The top left hand side of the main page offers an orange button marked "Offender Reentry." The section marked "Reentry Resources" (three-quarters down the page) provides a comprehensive overview of assistance available throughout the city. This article will be posted on CSOSA's main page to allow those with Internet access to easily search noted resources.

Each offender entering supervision receives a comprehensive risk and needs assessment. This assessment identifies the particular areas in which the offender needs assistance. In addition, participation in assistance programs is sometimes a condition of release; that is, the offender is required to participate in order to stay in the community, and failure to do so could result in incarceration. The offender's CSO works with him or her to identify the best mix of programs and services to meet their needs, and to initiate referrals to those service providers.

We encourage you to contact your friend's or relative's Community Supervision Officer, but please note that most information regarding an individual's status on supervision or program participation is protected under the Federal Privacy Act. This information cannot be shared with anyone other than relevant government agencies without the offender's written consent. Within these limitations, however, CSOs can be helpful and encouraging to family members and loved ones trying to assist offenders.

If you are uncertain of the name and telephone number of the Community Supervision Officer, please contact 202-585-7377.

Services Available Through the CSOSA/Faith Community Partnership

CSOSA works with more than 40 faith institutions throughout the city to coordinate a network of support services for offenders returning to the District from prison. Many of

these services are also available to offenders not under CSOSA's supervision and to probationers. CSOSA's faith partners provide an array of services including mentoring, drug counseling, emergency food and clothing, job placement, housing assistance and more. See the CSOSA reentry web site mentioned above.

The CSOSA/Faith Community Partnership is organized into three geographic areas, or "clusters," though offenders may access services outside their cluster. The clusters are as follows:

- **Cluster A: Wards 7 and 8**
Lead Institution: East of the River Clergy/Police/Community Partnership
Cluster Coordinator: Gail Hebron (202-561-1284 or ghebron@ercpcp.org)

- **Cluster B: Wards 5 and 6**
Lead Institution: Pilgrim Baptist Church
Cluster Coordinator: Diane Sims Moore (202-547-1090 or dsimsmoore@aol.com).

- **Cluster C: Wards 1, 2, 3, and 4**
Lead Institution: New Commandment Baptist Church
Cluster Coordinator: Marie Brown (202-291-5711 or mariebrown@att.net)

If you are interested in finding out more about services available through the CSOSA/Faith Community Partnership, please contact the Cluster Coordinator for the area in which the offender resides. If you are interested in mentoring to offenders, you may also contact the Cluster Coordinators to find out about the mentor application and training process.

District Government and Non-Profit Providers

The District of Columbia government provides the majority of services available to ex-offenders. Services range from drug treatment to job placement to health and mental health initiatives and more. The Mayor's "One Stop Reentry Service Center" at 609 H St., NE provides specific services to offenders referred by CSOSA and other agencies. You can contact the staff at the One Stop Reentry Service Center at (202-698-5599). For general information on the District's other one-stop workforce development centers, please contact the DC Department of Employment Services at 202-724-7000, or see (<http://does.dc.gov/does>).

One example of a community-based program providing comprehensive services for women offenders and their families is Our Place DC (www.ourplacedc.org). The phone number is 202-548-2400. Please see the CSOSA Reentry web site for additional examples.

Services Available from the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency

CSOSA supervises 15,500 offenders on parole, supervised release or probation every day. About half of these individuals are on “general” supervision, which means approximately 50 offenders work with one Community Supervision Officer. The other half are assigned to “special” supervision officers with lower caseload of 25 to 30 offenders.

CSOSA’s approach to community supervision combines accountability with opportunity. CSOSA enforces the conditions and requirements imposed by the court or Parole Commission (such as drug testing and supervision contacts) but also provides each individual with access to supportive programs and services that will help to foster personal change. An individual supervision and treatment plan is developed for each offender.

The following programs are provided either by CSOSA staff or by providers under contract to CSOSA:

Substance Abuse Treatment

It is estimated that nearly 75 percent of the District of Columbia’s offender population has a history of substance abuse. The connection between drug abuse and crime has been well established. Long-term success in reducing recidivism among drug-abusing offenders depends upon two key factors:

1. Identifying and treating drug use and other social problems among the defendant and offender population; and
2. Establishing swift and certain consequences for violations of release conditions.

National and CSOSA research supports the conclusion that treatment significantly reduces drug use. Not only can treatment reduce drug use and criminal behavior, it can also improve the prospects for employment.

CSOSA’s treatment resources are focused on the highest-risk, highest-need individuals. We also work with District government to place other individuals, as appropriate, in city-funded treatment as slots are available.

Offenders access treatment in several different ways:

- By testing positive for drug use, which usually results in referral for assessment and possible treatment placement;
- By talking with the Community Supervision Officer and requesting referral for treatment;

- By having a condition for substance abuse treatment imposed by the U.S. Parole Commission or D.C. Superior Court;
- By completing the pre-treatment program in CSOSA's Assessment and Orientation Center and being discharged to continue treatment.

The treatment process begins with assessment by CSOSA's Treatment Management Team (TMT). The 17 TMT Treatment Specialists manage the treatment process by:

- Conducting assessments and formulating treatment recommendations;
- Facilitating pre-treatment, substance abuse education, anger management and sanctions group programs; and
- Monitoring individual progress once the offender begins treatment with a CSOSA-funded provider.

The CSOSA substance abuse treatment continuum includes the following programs:

- 7-Day Medically Monitored Detoxification
- 28-Day Intensive Residential Treatment
- 90- to 120-Day Residential Treatment
- 120-Day Residential Treatment and Transitional Housing for Women with Children
- 120 to 180-Day Residential Treatment for Dually Diagnosed Offenders (mental health and substance abuse)
- 90-Day Supervised Transitional Housing
- Intensive Outpatient and Outpatient Treatment

After the individual completes treatment, he or she is generally assigned to an aftercare support group. CSOSA's Treatment Specialists facilitate these groups to ensure that the offender continues to establish a healthy, drug-free life.

Assessment and Orientation Center (AOC) Program

The Assessment and Orientation Center provides 30 days of intensive assessment and pre-treatment programming for individuals with long-term histories of substance abuse and criminal involvement. These individuals are the highest-risk, highest-need offenders under CSOSA supervision.

Offenders are generally referred to the AOC directly upon release from prison or early in their supervision. Participation for offenders is voluntary, though some defendants are court-ordered to participate. The 30-day AOC program provides offenders and defendants with tools to prevent relapse, improve family relationships, and modify deviant behaviors.

85 percent of offenders assigned to the program have successfully completed it. Studies by the University of Maryland found that offenders who participated in the program were less likely to commit new crimes.

The AOC will return to Karrick Hall on the grounds of D.C. General Hospital late this fall. The program was temporarily moved in 2004 to allow the building to be renovated and expanded. CSOSA will reopen the renovated building as a 100-bed Reentry and Sanctions Center.

Mental Health Services

CSOSA contracts with mental health service providers for psychiatric screening and evaluation; psychological case reviews; pretreatment counseling; aftercare counseling; medication compliance/education groups; and full battery assessments on an as-needed basis. CSOSA does not provide mental health therapy or medication management. Based on the assessment results, CSOSA will refer the individual to the District of Columbia Department of Mental Health for appropriate services. However, CSOSA does maintain a special supervision team that specializes in mental health cases, and our substance abuse treatment services are available to offenders with a dual mental health and substance abuse diagnosis.

Violence Reduction Treatment Intervention

The Violence Reduction Treatment Intervention (VRTI) is one of several different treatment options offered by CSOSA that provide services for formerly incarcerated individuals. The program runs approximately 12 months and was first piloted in the Marshall Heights area in May 2005.

The VRTI targets young men with histories of violent criminal charges and encourages behavioral change through the acquisition of non-violent alternative problem-solving skills. The program design incorporates a mentorship component in combination with a behavioral restructuring curriculum. The mentor's continued involvement is especially important in the Aftercare component of the program.

The VRTI is actively seeking volunteers and mentors to work with the program. Please contact CSOSA's Office of Community Justice Programs at (202) 220-5320 to learn more.

Specialized Treatment

Several specialized treatment interventions are provided to offenders who have committed certain types of crimes or are assigned to special supervision caseloads. These interventions include:

Traffic Alcohol Program (TAP)

Offenders are court-ordered to complete the Traffic Alcohol Program (TAP) following

conviction for traffic and/or alcohol related offenses. The program is part of assignment to a specialized supervision team. Community Supervision Officers in this team ensure that the offender complies with surveillance drug testing and court-ordered treatment.

Sex Offender Assessment and Treatment

CSOSA contracts with treatment providers to assess and treat individuals convicted of sex offenses, as ordered by the Superior Court or U.S. Parole Commission.

Domestic Violence Treatment

As part of CSOSA's special supervision of domestic violence cases, offenders convicted of domestic violence may be court-ordered to participate in an 18-week Family Violence Intervention Program or a 22-week Domestic Violence Intervention Program. Both programs are focused on persuading the offender to see the futility of violence in relationships, to accept responsibility for his/her role in the incident and to explore alternative ways to avoid violence using a safety plan.

Anger Management

CSOSA Treatment Specialists facilitate a 12-session Anger Management group program. Participants attend one 90-minute session each week. The sessions cover such topics as stress reduction, denial, limiting beliefs, and alternative coping strategies.

Beyond Treatment—Educational Assistance and Job Placement

Vocational Opportunities, Training, Education, and Employment Unit (V.O.T.E.E.)

The V.O.T.E.E. unit was established to assess and respond to the unique educational and vocational needs of offenders. The unit's objective is to support successful re-entry by providing educational, vocational, training and referral services to offenders. V.O.T.E.E. Employment Specialists place offenders in jobs. They are also aware of employment opportunities through the faith community and District government. V.O.T.E.E. Educational Specialists assist offenders raise their literacy levels, or obtain their GEDs.

General Operations

V.O.T.E.E Centers:

- 4923 East Capital Street, - S.E. (St. Luke's Center)
- 1230 Taylor Street, - N.W.
- 25 K Street, - N.E.
- 4415 South Capitol Street, - S.E.

- 300 Indiana Avenue, - N.W.

V.O.T.E.E Unit Staff:

- Vocational Development Specialists
- Learning Lab Specialists

General Services Provided: Educational Services

- ABE (Adult Basic Education)
- GED (General Education Development)
- ESL (English as a Second Language)
- Life Skills Program
- Educational Referral Services

Employability Services

- Job Readiness Assistance (i.e. resume writing, interviewing)
- Training Services/Referrals (Occupational)
- Placement and Referral Services
- Follow-Up & Tracking Services (Job Coaching)
- Technology Training
- Computer Aide Instructions Course Capability

Hours of Operation:

- Monday-Friday 8:00 AM - 6:00 PM
- Evening Technology Training (hours and locations vary)

Conclusion

CSOSA's Community Supervision Officers (CSOs) are responsible for creating a supervision and treatment plan for each offender under CSOSA's supervision. Please contact the CSO supervising your friend or family member if you would like to discuss your loved one's needs. Your support, encouragement and guidance are often critical elements that keep many offenders from returning to crime or drugs.