

**Reentry Housing Work Group
Recommendations to Criminal Justice Reform Council
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Reentry Housing Work Group proposes to address the critical need for housing to support successful reentry for returning citizens that will enable them to be successfully restored to their communities, reduce recidivism, promote public safety, and conserve limited public resources.

1. Ask private landlords to adopt rules that comply with Housing And Urban Development (HUD) Guidance regarding the use of a person's criminal record when making leasing decisions. Publicize that broad bans on leasing housing to persons based on arrest or prior conviction violates the Fair Housing Act.
2. Expand to DCS authority to issue Completion Certificates (now issued by DOC) that confer a rebuttable presumption that landlord acted with due care in leasing to a person with a certificate.
3. Provide an income tax credit for landlords who lease housing to returning citizens akin to the tax credit granted employers who employ parolees within one year of release per HB 828 that became law in 2016.
4. Use the Georgia Housing Voucher Program as a model to create a pilot program for 200 persons with developmental or intellectual disabilities, brain injury or other disability who would be paroled but for the ability to identify appropriate long term housing.
5. Expand DBHDD's Forensic Supervised Housing program beyond the current 40 units. The program provides structured residential community housing for persons unable to stand trial or found guilty but not sentenced to prison because of mental illness who are currently in institutional settings.
6. Expand the DCS in-reach program to all state prisons.
7. Expand the DBHDD Forensic Peer Mentor Program to include all eight prisons with the highest Level 3 and 4 Mental Illness populations and all 15 Day Reporting Centers.
8. Fund a grant program to support providers of housing assisting persons who otherwise would be able to participate in Accountability Courts.
9. Expand the Reentry Partnership Housing Program by recruiting providers in areas of the state where demand exceeds available resources. Increase provider support payments per participant (unchanged over ten years), and allowing for extensions of the length of stay where appropriate.
10. Suspend rather than terminate Medicaid eligibility upon incarceration.
11. Insure that all persons leaving prison or jail have state issued identification card upon release.
12. Begin process for restoration or application for SSI/SSDI prior to release for eligible persons.
13. Develop a model for local reentry coalitions based on the experience of the Georgia Prison Reentry Initiative and existing local community based collaboratives like the Dekalb Nick program, the Gwinnett GRIP program and the Macon Reentry program.