

I. Problems To Be Addressed

The Problem: According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) (Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear 2001), the state of Florida has the fourth highest prison incarceration rate in the United States. Florida is preceded only by (in descending order): Texas, California and the Federal System. For fiscal year 2000-2001, the Florida Department of Corrections (FDC) documented 25,731 prison admissions with violent crime ranked as the primary offense for 8,602 offenders, or 33.4%. Within the state of Florida, Palm Beach County ranks seventh for the number of offenders charged with felony offenses--of the 1,055 offenders released in a one year period in Palm Beach County the dominant criminal charge was violent criminal offense (Part I violent crime: murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault). Of the total number released, 366 or 34.7% had been incarcerated for a violent crime. This is followed by drug-related charges, 262 incarcerations or 24.8%; 349 property incarcerations or 33.1%; and 78 other incarcerations or 7.4%. The most current BJS Recidivism Report reveals that violent criminal offenders have a 36.5% chance of being reincarcerated within three years of their release date. This is corroborated by the FDC Annual Report 2000-2001 which predicts 31% of violent offenders will recidivate and, of the general population, 43.55% of the offenders who were admitted to Florida prisons had been in prisons before.

These statistics strongly indicate that a violent offender returning to Palm Beach County is likely to recidivate and threaten community public safety. Unfortunately, inadequate services while incarcerated lead to the release of an unprepared transitioning offender. An unprepared released offender, predictably, will have difficulty finding employment, adequate housing or family support and view a return to criminal behavior as a viable option. Repeated criminal

offense not only impinges on a community's public safety, but also costs county taxpayers additional funds to reincarcerate and provisionally provide for the returning offender. Due to federal budget cuts and lack of state funding, important transitional services necessary for the returning offender are not being addressed. Prison officials and inmates are faced with a lack of adequate educational services, substance abuse and anger management programs and limited access to vocational programs and transitional assistance prior to release. To improve public safety in the communities of Palm Beach County, returning offenders must receive adequate services prior to release to prepare them educationally, vocationally, emotionally and environmentally for a meaningful return to society and our local communities.

Currently, the Florida prison population is suffering from various program cuts that greatly affect the transitioning offender. The FDC has been forced to eliminate all but 11 substance abuse programs, the FDC education department has lost 85 of their corrections instructors, and vocational and job training programs have been limited. Although the department's risk assessment tool is administered to every inmate at one of the three reception centers, a full comprehensive exit assessment is needed for inmates to identify employability. Substance abuse programs are suffering as well. There are 20,000 inmates diagnosed as in-need and only 1,070 treatment slots. Anger Management was a component of the substance abuse programs, but due to recent legislative budget cuts these classes are only offered on a limited basis. Ex-offenders have a host of needs that cannot be addressed by the prison system. Approximately 70 % of offenders in community supervision are substance abusers. The majority of inmates entering Florida's correctional system lack basic educational and employment skills. Of the 25, 743 inmates admitted to the Florida prison system in fiscal year 1999-2000, approximately 70% were assessed as having less than functional literacy skills (less than 9th

grade level) and 50% were classified as having only basic literacy skills (4th to 8th grade levels). Educational level is one of the strongest indicators for offender recidivism.

Prior to release, the violent offender has a transition plan; however, he leaves with limited skills, typically, into an unsupervised environment. Of the 1,055 offenders released yearly from a correctional facility to Palm Beach County, 62% are released from prison with no supervision and 34% are released with some type of supervision. Supervision indicates that an offender has been given a court-ordered term of community supervision under specified conditions for a specific period of time that cannot exceed the maximum sentence for the offense. Offenders are normally released to their communities with \$100 release gratuity, bus transportation, and limited employment skills. Many offenders are under no supervision upon release and have a significant need for transition assistance that includes employment, housing, transportation, food and counseling. When offenders are released with supervision, it is the local probation officer that is responsible for their case administration. The average caseload for most probation officers is currently 90 clients, according to the Palm Beach County Circuit Fifteen Supervisor's Office. With a caseload this high, it is difficult for the probation officer to provide proper transitional assistance or referral services to the returning offender.

At this point in the reentry process the offender faces substantial barriers when reintegrating into the local community. Upon release, *if* the offender is supervised, the caseload of the parole officer is often burdened to meet the immediate needs of the offender. Family support may be limited and the returning offender may find that familial relationships may also be so severely strained that staying with family or friends is not an option ¹. Additionally, the

¹ Jeremy Travis, Amy Solomon and Michelle Ward, "*From Prison to Home, The Dimensions and Consequences of Prison Reentry*," June 2001, Washington D.C., The Urban Institute, p. 35.

returning offenders are now faced with monetary concerns coupled with the immediate need of employment and housing. They may also owe supervision fees if under supervision and in some cases, owe victim restitution fees. Employment opportunities are scarce. The largest percentage of the violent offender population targeted in this project is 24 years old and younger; many of whom have no previous employment record. Even if an inmate *had* an established vocation or work history, they now have a felony conviction and face the barrier of employer attitudes toward hiring felony offenders. Facing unemployment due to prejudicial hiring practices forces an impossible situation in meeting financial obligations and finding affordable and adequate housing. The returning offender's only remaining option is to contact a family member or friend.

Predictably, prison life disrupts family life on many levels. An inmate must deal with the forced distance between parents, spouses, children and extended family and also with the anger and shame felt by these family members. Upon returning to family and community, the released offender most likely will face rejection from the support system he needs the most. The Vera Institute of Justice documents that "supportive families were an indicator of success across the board, correlating with lower drug use, greater likelihood of finding jobs, and reduced criminal activity."² Unfortunately, documentation is weak linking the personal aspects of family unification, but it is understood that family support for most returning offenders is limited or nonexistent. These complex relationships, combined with the great distance between many prisons and their home communities, require creative management on the part of the families, government agencies, and community support systems to minimize the harm to children and

² Jeremy Travis, Amy Solomon and Michelle Ward, "*From Prison to Home, The Dimensions and Consequences of Prison Reentry*," June 2001, Washington D.C., The Urban Institute, p. 39.

families³. Most often, the returning offender experiences little or no support from friends and family.

Based on this information, limited programming in the correctional facility, limited supervision upon release, extremely low literacy levels, limited or no work experience, prejudicial hiring practices, little or no family or community support, unavailable housing and a lack of substance abuse and/or mental health counseling--violent offender recidivism is predictable. According to the FDC report on recidivism, the younger the inmate the higher the recidivism factor, the lower the literacy level the higher the recidivism factor. For the age group 25-34, reoffense occurs at a 46.8% rate within 48 months. When recidivating, ex-offenders commit crimes in the following order according to the BJS Special Report: violent offense, property offense and drug offense; prisoners were often rearrested for the same type of crime for which they had served time in prison. Offender recidivism is not only a threat to the community's public safety, it is costly. The costs of incarcerating a repeat offender are incurred by the general public's tax dollars and in the state of Florida cost an average of \$18,159 annually; a male youthful offender costs \$55.65 per day, an adult male offender costs \$41.22 per day.

The challenge a community, such as Palm Beach County, ultimately faces, is to understand how to effectively manage the inevitable returns from prison so that communities will be safer⁴. It is evident that pre and post-release transitional services must be reinforced to provide the ex-offender the required vocational, educational and emotional tools

³ Jeremy Travis, Amy Solomon and Michelle Ward, *"From Prison to Home, The Dimensions and Consequences of Prison Reentry,"* June 2001, Washington D.C., The Urban Institute, p. 40.

⁴ Jeremy Travis, Amy Solomon and Michelle Ward, *"From Prison to Home, The Dimensions and Consequences of Prison Reentry,"* June 2001, Washington D.C., The Urban Institute, p. 6.

needed to reintegrate into their community. Through early pre-release services, post-release intensive case management and after-care, this project will address the multiple needs and required services of the returning offenders in Palm Beach County in an effort to reduce recidivism, improve public safety and strengthen offender family unity and community involvement.

Analysis of the Population: Prominent risk factors for recidivism are age, educational level, gender, race and type of offense. The FDC recidivism report reflects that younger offenders reoffend at a much higher rate than older offenders; it takes only 18 months for 47.0% of the under 18 offender to reoffend. Younger offenders also reoffend at much higher rates than older offenders (e.g., 2-year rate-under 18: 51.3% vs. age 35-49: 30.0%), thirty-six month after release 45.7% of the age group 18-24 reoffend and 42.6% of the age group 25-34 reoffend. The FDC report also reflects that the tested educational level at release also relates to reoffense rates (e.g., 2-year rate – under grade level 4: 39.1% vs. grade 12: 25.8%). Finally, black males appear to reoffend at higher rates than white males (e.g., 2-year rate- black males: 39.9% vs. white males: 26.8%) and the type of original conviction offense is one of three: property, drug or violent.

This project will focus on the young adult (18-24) and adult populations (25-35) of serious and violent offenders released in Palm Beach County. We are requesting \$1,000,000 to assist this specific population. The Florida Department of Juvenile Justice supervises all juveniles under the age of 18 with the exception of those charged as adults. They will apply for the additional \$1,000,000 to service this population.

On average, per year, 1,055 offenders are released to Palm Beach County. In Palm Beach County the number of young adult or adult returning offenders who have committed a serious and violent crime and have a Forecasted Release Date (FRD) between 9-1-2002 and 8-

31-2005 number 727. Of that population, 304 are classified as violent offenders, 60 will be released under community supervision. Zip codes information regarding specific areas of offender return is not available until the release plan is engaged, three to six months prior to release.

Serving a community of 60 returning violent offenders will provide a critical opportunity to engage, document and evaluate intensive case management from pre to post-release. Due to funding cuts, offender opportunities for intensive rehabilitation services have been limited. These services that are most often required to modify and correct years of nonproductive and inappropriate behavior have been limited. This program seeks to offer comprehensive and full assessments before release allowing case managers to diagnose appropriate services for the returning offender. These services will include substance abuse prevention for all inmate participants; anger management and mental health counseling for required inmates; adult literacy and GED, vocational training and job development, family unity, environmental needs and housing issues.

Through early pre-release services, post-release intensive case management and after-care this project will address the multiple needs and required services of the returning offenders in Palm Beach County in an effort to fuse the offender in a timely and productive manner with his chosen community.

II. Project's Goals and Objectives

The FDC's project goals and objectives clearly mirror those of the Serious and Violent Reentry Initiative, but also indicate what is considered practical and obtainable for the communities of Palm Beach County. These goals and objectives relate to the problems, needs

resources, and capabilities of the community and are obtainable within the timeframe of the Initiative.

Goal 1: Prevent re-offending

- Objective 1: **Identify key elements** of the reentry planning process within the correctional setting for 60 offenders and initiate contacts with key service providers, law enforcement, and community corrections agencies six months (1 year, if possible) prior to release from prison (100%).
- Objective 2: **Case managers will describe expectations and consequences to the 60 offenders so that they are** fully engaged in the planning process and clearly understand the expectations and consequences of the program six months prior to discharge (100%).
- Objective 3: **6 months prior to release from prison the 60 offenders will be able to list and describe the** support and services **that are available to them**, designed to promote successful re-entry (100%).
- Objective 4: **Case Managers will be able to describe the graduated sanctions for non-compliance or criminal behavior to the 60 participating offenders** (100%).

Goal 2: Enhance public safety

- Objective 1: **Identify participating offenders to local law enforcement and probation and parole staff** (100%).
- Objective 2: **Document use of** GPS electronic monitoring technology upon release for offenders so ordered to provide increased accountability, ensure their location is appropriate and does not pose an undue threat to the community or the victim (100%).
- Objective 3: **Document any** new criminal activity for 60 offenders on continuous basis (100%).

- Objective 4: Develop and implement individual reintegration plans for 60 offenders with appropriate levels of supervision on a continual basis (100%).

Goal 3: Re-deploy and leverage existing community resources by fostering linkages and accessing currently provided services (e.g., community-based corrections agencies, social services providers, local police departments, faith-based organizations, educational services providers, businesses, civic organizations, family/parent organizations; domestic violence, sexual assault, and other victim advocates).

- Objective 1: Document vital relationships that are built between providers and various agencies.
- Objective 2: Identify existing state or local resources that would allow for a continuation of project activities.
- Objective 3: Identify partnerships among government agencies and community organizations.
- Objective 4: Identify and list available quality reentry services.

Goal 4: Assist the offender to avoid crime, engage in pro-social community activities and meet family responsibilities.

- Objective 1: Document productive engagement between 60 offenders and community organizations on a continual basis (e.g., law enforcement, community groups, schools, substance abuse and mental health treatment providers, training centers, employers, victim advocates, civic and faith-based organizations) (100%).
- Objective 2: Document the progress of offenders participating in this program. (100%).
- Objective 3: Document the involvement between members of offenders support networks and 60 returning offenders on a continual basis (100%).

Goal 5: Ensure program sustainability.

- Objective 1: **Identify** current community and government resources **that can be** utilized and will remain accessible once federal funds are unavailable.
- Objective 2: **Expand** broad government and community support.
- Objective 3: Ensure that this initiative is viewed as integral to community and public safety.

III. Identifying the Target Population

Target Population: The target population consist of violent offenders: 41 young adults (18-24) and 19 adults (25-35) leaving correctional facilities in the state of Florida and returning to Palm Beach County under some form of criminal justice supervision. Primary offenses committed were murder/manslaughter 6; sexual/lewd behavior 10; robbery 24; violent, other 20. There are 35 males and 6 females in the 18-24 group and 18 males and 1 female in the 25-35. Of the total population 33 are black, 27 are white and two are other. Noting the high-risk factors for recidivism, age and educational level, this population model's age group is at-risk for recidivism. Released offender educational level is also a factor; 44 of the 60 inmates have no GED or High School Diploma, 39 offenders test at a basic or functional literacy level.

This target population poses a risk to Palm Beach County's community safety based on the crimes that they committed (classified as violent), their age and their educational level. There is also an average 48% chance that these offenders will commit new offenses within the first three years of release. These offenses include violent offense, property offense and drug offense. The returning offender faces many barriers upon release, including substance abuse and mental health issues, employment barriers, financial requirements, family issues, education obstacles and housing issues.

Participants will be made aware of the consequences of non-participation in any of the requirements of the reentry program. If a participant in this reentry program fails to comply with all requirements of the program, sanctions may be enacted. These sanctions could include violation of probation, termination from the program or a requirement for closer supervision.

Plan To Select Offenders To Participate:

Of the 304 offenders classified as violent and returning to Palm Beach County, 60 are under some form of criminal supervision. The remaining 240 offenders that are returning to Palm Beach County will be served through the Palm Beach County Workforce Development Board's (PBCWDB) One-Stop centers coordinated by the Probationer's Educational Growth Program (PEG). In addition to the targeted population, all inmates (1,055) expected to return to Palm Beach County will receive a letter from Workforce Development/PEG indicating direct and referral services that address the holistic needs of the offender population.

The 60 offenders for this initiative will be selected from the state inmate population by using the Offender Based Information System (OBIS) to isolate those offenders who meet the requirements set forth in the grant narrative pages 10-12. The Project Director, working in cooperation with the Department of Correction's Bureau of Data and Research will be responsible for the selection and proper placement of the population that will be served by this initiative. The Project Director will work closely with Department of Correction's Central Office to ensure appropriate selection and placement of offenders.

Research literature had identified a number of interventions, such as drug treatment, job training and educational programs, that have been shown to reduce reoffending rates ⁵. Evaluation results from the Key-Crest Program in Delaware indicate that residential treatment, coupled with community aftercare, can be very effective in reducing drug relapse and criminal recidivism ⁶.

Table 1. Results from Key-Crest Program

Treatment group	No arrest at 18 months	Drug free at 18 months
In-prison TC treatment	43%	22%
Work-release TC treatment	57%	31%
Both	77%	47%
Control group	46%	16%

Palm Beach County has been selected as the target area for this reentry program. Palm Beach County ranks seventh in the state of Florida for the number of offenders charged with felony offenses, and is ranked within the 50 largest local jail jurisdictions in the nation according to the BJS (Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear 2001). Palm Beach County is also home to an established Reentry Initiative. The Palm Beach County Criminal Justice Commission Ex-Offender Reentry Workgroup (CJC) is dedicated to the reintegration of offenders back into the community after release. Their goals are to reduce recidivism by providing literacy, job training and placement, temporary food and housing, life skill assistance and other social service needs.

⁵ Jeremy Travis, Amy Solomon and Michelle Ward, “*From Prison to Home, The Dimensions and Consequences of Prison Reentry*,” June 2001, Washington D.C., The Urban Institute, p. 8.

⁶ Jeremy Travis, Amy Solomon and Michelle Ward, “*From Prison to Home, The Dimensions and Consequences of Prison Reentry*,” June 2001, Washington D.C., The Urban Institute, p. 26.

Based on a GIS map of supervised offenders in Palm Beach County and other data at the CJC website, it is apparent that a large number of inmates are released to concentrated areas in Palm Beach County. The Workgroup's presence in this project will provide welcome direction and assistance.

Risk Assessment: *The* Florida Department of Corrections Risk and Needs System for inmates utilizes objective assessments (academic and vocational education, substance abuse, and the classification risk and needs instrument) of the inmate's program needs that, when compared to the inmate's risk factors and other classification criteria, results in a prioritized list of recommended internal placement decisions (program and/or work, housing, etc.). The Correctional Probation Officer (CPO or CPSO) utilizes the prioritized recommendations as the primary guideline in making work and program placement decisions. Security staff uses the "Housing" factor as a guide in making housing assignments. The Risk and Needs System is comprised of the Risk and Needs Instrument and the Inmate Management Plan.

The Risk and Needs Instrument is a document which is completed by conducting a personal interview with the inmate. The CPO during the reception process conducts the initial interview with subsequent interviews mandated whenever the inmate is transferred to a new permanent facility, and at regularly scheduled progress reports. CPO's may conduct unscheduled interviews at their discretion. The Risk and Needs Instrument is an assessment tool for classification designed to collect information through a face-to-face interview with the inmate, integrate with the Offender Based Information System, and serve as the foundation to develop the Inmate Management Plan.

- Section I Internal Management (groups or gangs membership)

- Section II Outside Influences (family, inmates, friends, enemies, attorney representation, religion)
- Section III Attitudes and Motivations (recommended programs)
- Section IV Internal Management-Arrest History and Assessment

The FDC Risks and Needs tool is a national model and was validated by the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) in 2000. The goals and objectives are measures related specifically to the 1998 NIC/NCCD Internal Classification project and to the initial pilot test site, Columbia Correctional Institution, which is also Florida's pilot test site for the NIC/NCCD Internal Classification System project.

The Inmate Management Plan is the foundation for the FDC in making both internal and external classification decisions. The Inmate Management Plan is the central component of the inmate orientation and progress report. Decisions of work, programs, housing, and transfers all involve utilizing the Inmate Management Plan. Inmate expectations are developed and their performance is tracked using the goals and objectives developed for an inmate. The Inmate Management Plan utilizes information collected from the various assessments and makes up to three priority program or work placement recommendations for the CPO to consider. The CPO also develops the inmate plan by determining those things the inmate is expected to do (objectives) within the reporting period (6, 12, or 24 months) based on the goals for the inmate to accomplish during incarceration.

IV. Organizational Capacity

Lead Agency The Florida Department of Corrections incarcerated the first inmate in 1868 at Chattahoochee near Tallahassee, Florida. Many changes and developments have occurred since

the early years. Today the Department functions much like a state-of-the-art business. Although the number of inmates now tops 72,000 and the number of supervised offenders exceeds 152,000; the Department reduced administrative cost by 30% since 1999. The Department in keeping with its mission statement, puts the majority of its resources into the areas that will best "Protect the Public, staff and inmates, develop staff committed to professionalism and fiscal responsibility, ensure victims and stakeholders are treated with dignity, sensitivity and respect in making and executing administrative and operational decisions, prepare offenders for re-entry and release into society."

The Department has a long history of leading and participating in various partnerships within communities in the accomplishment of its mission. FDC has established a strong working relationship with Workforce Florida through a memorandum of agreement that sets forth cooperation and assistance between the agencies. This cooperation enhances the services that released offenders receive as they are re-establishing themselves in the community. The Department also oversees the grant-funded Project Re-connect. This program assists released offenders in securing gainful employment through the work of Employment Specialists and Community Network Consultants working with local communities to identify available employment opportunities, and place ex-offenders in those jobs. FDC also contracts with Northeast Florida Builders to train young inmates in the area of marketable construction job skills. Both of these programs are funded through the Grants to States for Workforce and Community Transitional Training for Incarcerated Youth. As an example of leveraging state resources, FDC provided 25 youthful offender dollars amounting to \$37,500 and PBCWDB allocated \$87,500 from WIA to fund a cable-lineman training program in a correctional facility.

The programs require constant networking and cooperation with community organizations, businesses and other state agencies.

The Department has recently contracted with approximately 50 faith-based organizations to provide transitional housing to released offenders who need housing and other services. This effort also requires the constant cooperation between agencies and organizations for effectiveness. These contracted providers provide or refer ex-offenders to medical, mental health, substance abuse and many other services, while providing other programs and services. The goal of these efforts is to establish the person as a functioning member of society. Before recent Legislative budget reductions, the Department had approximately 65 in-prison treatment programs under contract with various treatment providers. After budget reductions, the Department currently has 11 in-prison treatment programs. These programs, while delivering quality treatment to inmates who have been identified as needing treatment, also strive to link inmates to community resources that will help them continue sobriety and accomplish successful re-entry into society.

Department employees working in prison and in community corrections spend countless hours interfacing with community agencies, criminal justice agencies on both the state and federal levels as they perform their job duties. The Department is proud of the bonds that have been formed through years of such cooperation with other organizations. Through these relationships the Department is able to procure and utilize funds more effectively. The Florida Department of Corrections, acting as the lead agency for this project, brings years of experience, a plethora of partnerships and a willingness and desire to utilize resources to ensure that the target population is served effectively, yet efficiently. The Department has the experience and

the ability to be a part of cooperative and comprehensive evaluation as it has the willingness and desire to gain as much knowledge through this Initiative as possible.

Decisionmakers: The Serious and Violent Reentry Initiative is a collaborative effort between FDC, PBCWDB, The Palm Beach County Criminal Justice Commission (CJC), Circuit Fifteen Probation and Parole Office, county social and human service agencies, victims of crime, offenders' families, community-based organizations, faith-based groups and other public and private service agencies as deemed appropriate to the program goals. All Decisionmakers will be involved on a continuous basis throughout the grant process.

The program mission is to reduce offender recidivism by providing a program of pre-returning, returning and post-return services to offenders who lack the necessary family or social system support, educational or vocational training and other basic resources necessary to sustain themselves. Recidivism studies indicate that in the absence of job skill training, job assistance and placement, housing, counseling and other holistic services, offenders often return to criminal activity to exist.

Approximately 1,055 ex-offenders return to Palm Beach County annually from the Florida Department of Corrections. National statistics indicate approximately 50% of all offenders will return to jail or prison within two years. Another compounding fact is that a term of incarceration contributes to disintegration of family structures that once may have existed and now leaves the offender totally without a support system to rely on. In many instances, these offenders have adolescent children who then become dependent on a single-parent household. Under these circumstances, to support themselves, assistance is often depended on from county social service agencies.

The primary goals of The Serious and Violent Reentry Initiative are as follows:

- Prevent offending
- Enhance public safety
- Redeploy and leverage existing community resources by fostering linkages and accessing currently provided services
- Assist the offender to avoid crime, engage in pro-social community activities and meet family responsibilities
- Ensure program sustainability

The agencies listed below are committed in spirit, principle and resources to provide a seamless integration of services necessary to interagency collaboration in the research, development, implementation and maintenance of a comprehensive strategy to accomplish the stated goals. To fulfill their roles as participating in The Serious and Violent Reentry Initiative, these agencies have entered into a Memorandum of Agreement. Palm Beach County will not be liable for the activities/services provided by the agency providers reflected herein. The Memorandum of Agreement does not bind the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners in any way other than specifically stated in those Memoranda provided by County Agencies.

State Decisionmakers:

Mr. William Bankhead, Secretary, Florida Department of Juvenile Justice

- To provide inter-agency coordination and sharing

Mr. Jimmie L. Henry, Chairman, Florida Parole Commission

- To provide inter-agency information and cooperation

Ms. Kathleen A. Kearney, Secretary, Florida Department of Children and Families (**Substance Abuse and Mental Health**)

- To provide support and inter-agency information sharing

Ms. Kathleen A. Kearney, Secretary, Florida Department of Children and Families (Substance Abuse and **Mental Health**)

- To provide support and inter-agency information sharing

Mr. Charlie Crist, Commissioner, Florida Department of Education

- To provide inter-agency information and cooperation

Mr. William D. Bales, Bureau Chief, Florida Department of Corrections, Bureau of Research and Data Analysis (evaluator)

- To provide needed data and other pertinent project information

Ms. Toni Jennings, President, Workforce Florida, Inc.

- To provide inter-agency information sharing and cooperation

Mr. James T. Moore, Commissioner, Florida Department of Law Enforcement

- To provide data and inter-agency cooperation

Mr. Norm Dubreuil, Executive Director, KAIROS, Inc.

- To provide information and inter-agency cooperation

Local Decisionmakers:

Mr. Warren Newell, Chairman, Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioner

- As Local Elected Officials (LEO)--leverage, redeploy and access existing resources contracted to PBCWDB to fund WIA, Wagner-Peyser and Welfare-to-Work programs

Ms. Valerie Rolle, Senior Circuit 15 Administrator, Florida Department of Corrections Probation/Parole

- To provide community supervision for the targeted population, i.e., GPS and other sources

Sheriff Ed Bieluch, Sheriff, Palm Beach County Sheriffs Office

- Work in connection with Florida Department of Corrections, Probation/Parole

Mr. Max Davis, Chairman, Palm Beach County Workforce Development Board, Inc.

- Leverage, redeploy and access existing resources; create community support & sustainability
- Assist in coordinating management information systems; make policy & procedural changes

Mr. David May, District Administrator, Department of Children and Families

- Assist in integrated case management systems and joint intake and assessment procedures

Mr. David May, District Administrator, Department of Children and Families

- Assist in integrated case management systems and joint intake and assessment procedures

Arthur C. Johnson, Ph.D., Superintendent, The School District of Palm Beach County

- Create new sources of support, leverage, redeploy and access existing resources
- Participate in inter-agency staffing groups; provide adult educational services

Dr. Dennis Gallon, President, Palm Beach Community College

- Leverage, redeploy and access existing resources for vocational, apprenticeship, secondary & technical training.

Ms. Shirley Garrison, Florida Department of Corrections, Transition Services Program Manager-Region IV (evaluator)

- To provide data information and evaluation and coordinate inter-agency staffing (TAS)

Mr. Doug Saenz, Executive Director, Palm Beach County Jobs Partnership

- To provide mentoring, tutoring, job readiness and faith-based community support
- To provide support for participating offender's families

Ms. Nancy Dixon, Director, Victim's Services

- To provide rights, notification, privacy and respect for victims rights

V. Project Design and Management

Phase I: Protect and Prepare: Institutionally-Based Programs

“Idle prisoners are more likely to cause trouble than other prisoners. According to research on the topic, some level of structure activity (education, job training, prison industry, or similar activities) is vital to running a safe and humane prison”⁷. **This initiative fits into the Department of Correction's current delivery system by enhancing and supplementing current transition services that are being provided to inmates nearing release. Currently there are 52 Placement and Transition Specialist, one at each major institution. The Transition Assistance Specialist's primary responsibility is to prepare an effective transition/release plan for each inmate that is nearing release.**

⁷ C. Riveland, “Prison Management Trends, 1975-2025,” In M. Toney and J. Petersilia (Eds.), *Prisons*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999.

Services: Where: Phase I will initiate the program after the grant has been awarded. At present, limited services are offered in the facilities that FDC has targeted for the “Coming Home” Initiative. **Services to be provided in Phase I of this project will include GED/Education, Family Tele-Video Conferencing, Mental Health, Substance Abuse Treatment, Medical/Dental services. Faith-based providers will provide housing as well as the majority of services listed on pages 20-26 of this narrative. The services that Faith-based providers are not equipped to provide, they will act as referral agents to those needed services.** The program participants identified, as our target population will be released from one of the 56 State of Florida correctional facilities. The Department will attempt to reassign inmates to one of four institutions according to the assessment identified custody classification. The four institutions that the participants will be relocated to are: Glades Correctional Institute (male), Belle Glade, close-custody facility; West Palm Beach Work Release Center (male), West Palm Beach, minimum security; Atlantic Work Release Center (female), West Palm Beach, minimum security; Broward Correctional Institution (female), Pembroke Pines, maximum security.

Best Practices: The design of this program is based on the best practices of three profiles of correctional education programs identified in the State Policy Update issued by the National Institute for Literacy, March 2002. These programs were executed in Maryland, Texas and Ohio and each plan exhibits unique approaches to the educational, physical and emotional needs of the offender. These models have proven successful; in Texas alone, during the 2000-2001 school year, 83,500 inmates were served and nearly 21% earned a GED, secondary degree or a Technical Certificate. Examples of program ideas are: Maryland’s peer tutoring program and

Ohio's cognitive skills initiative. The focus of the cognitive skills initiative is to improve inmates' thinking and social skills, while providing them with literacy and vocational skills.

Additional Funding Sources: Many local, state and federal agencies will contribute to funding this holistic reintegration model. These agencies include: the Department of Labor-Employment and Training Administration funding distributed through PBCWDB WIA funding; the Department of Labor-Employment and Training Administration funding distributed through PBCWDB TANF non-custodial parent funding; U.S. Department of Education, Grants to States for Workforce and Community Transitional Training for Incarcerated Youth funding distributed through the FDC; Florida Department of Education, Adult and Family Education Corrections Grant; Palm Beach County Health Care District providing medical and dental assistance; Palm Beach County Public Transportation (Palm Tran) providing transportation passes; Department of Labor and Employment Security, Vocational Rehabilitation; The School District of Palm Beach County, GED,ESOL,ABE; Palm Beach Community College, Pell grants.

GED/Education: The Comprehensive Vocational Assessment will determine the educational level of the offender. Based on the scores, the offender will be placed in a classroom and given individual computer-based instruction in ABE and/or GED development. Based on best practice studies, Peer Tutor and Cognitive Skills programs will be utilized. The Peer Tutor Program allows institutional inmates to assist fellow inmates under appropriate supervision. The Peer Tutor is required to have a minimum of a high school diploma or GED and a TABE score of 11.0 in the area of tutoring instruction. The FDC and PBCWDB will set aside federal funds for education and job training and placement services. A grant awarded through the FDOE, the Corrections Education Grant, will set up the ABE/GED classroom at Glades Correctional Institute and the Atlantic Work Release Center. Broward Correctional Institute has an existing

classroom.

Job Training & Placement Services: The PBCWDB will serve as the administrative entity for a wide variety of workforce services including the Probationers Education Growth Program (PEG), Workforce Investment Act Services, Welfare Transition Program, Welfare-to-Work, School Readiness, and TANF eligibility. The PBCWDB has extensive experience coordinating, directing, and managing funds and programs involving multiple agencies. PBCWDB has served as the coordinating body for all workforce-related issues and, as such, has lead and participated in a wide variety of planning, policy and operations teams related to offenders and a multitude of other populations. Previous sections of this proposal highlight the partnerships already established for offender programs in Palm Beach County.

The five established Workforce Development One-Stop Centers will be utilized by the case managers to implement job training and employment services in conjunction with placement specialists currently employed at the centers. The job training will be offered according to the high skill/high wage demand occupations found on the WFI targeted list.

Transition Team: *The transition team will consist of the appropriate treatment providers including mental health counselors, substance abuse counselors, victim's advocacy, mentors, probation officer,* Transitional Assistance Specialist (TAS), case managers, classification officer. The FDC TAS is an important component of the Transition Team. The TAS prepares a needs assessment on each inmate prior to release, selects appropriate community based support services and develops a post-release plan. A separate level of case management service will be developed with a lead case manager who will report directly to the Program Manager.

This transition team along with the offender will develop a reentry plan in the institution and it will continue until the offender leaves the program. Cross-agency training will take place

during transition team meetings.

Delivery system: The system support that is required to assist inmates in the institutional setting for this program will be continued outside the institution, and upon their return to their community by either the same agency or by an agency of transfer. The members of the Transition Team: the case manager, the TAS, the probation officer, and classification officer will be responsible for a smooth transition of services from the institution to the community environment. Continuation of community linkages will be accessed as needs are indicated. PEG will also participate in assisting the transition team with any special needs associated with delivery of services.

Assessment: Two types of assessments will be used to evaluate offenders. The first assessment that is administered upon entry to the FDC is the Risk and Needs Assessment. The FDC has taken a broad and careful approach to building a comprehensive, objective classification system. This internal system sorts inmates within a system. It enables the institution to gauge the proper custody level of an inmate, to identify the inmate's educational, vocational and psychological needs. Risk and Needs are coordinated through the Office of Inmate Classification. This process begins at the reception process for all inmates. Inmates served by this grant will be classified under the Florida Department of Corrections Risk and Needs Assessment. This enables the Department to determine the proper custody level, identify educational/vocational, medical, psychological and substance abuse treatment needs.

The second evaluation is performed when the inmate is identified as a participant in the program. It is a Comprehensive Vocational Evaluation optimally administered one year prior to release. The comprehensive vocational evaluation process involves detailed interviewing, assessment of academics, vocational interests, aptitudes, physical functioning, problem solving

and direction taking. The evaluation systematically utilizes work, real or simulated, as the focal point for the purpose of assisting individuals. The anticipated outcome of the evaluation is to provide individuals with options for training and job development.

Family Counseling: Anyone eligible for WIA or Welfare Transition can access family counseling services through support service dollars that are set aside to be accessed by and for each individual client. ACS, our direct service provider contracts with Crisis-Line, a 24-hour help line, for a special service only available for PBCWDB One-Stop customers.

Mentoring: Provided by faith-based organizations that work collaboratively under the umbrella of Jobs Partnership of Palm Beach County. Jobs Partnership of Palm Beach County is a faith-based organization that bands together with community leadership, church leaders and local business to mentor, train and employ their own community members in meaningful labor, with benefits to last a lifetime.

Pastors from partner churches promote this workforce development initiative in their congregations and the community they serve, helping to identify potential candidates. Church Pastors look for people who are currently unemployed or underemployed and then meet with each individual candidate to discuss their commitment to a 12-week training course. The Palm Beach County Jobs Partnership recognizes returning offenders as potential candidates and has offered their support to these individuals.

Family Tele-Video Conferencing: This establishes video links in designated facilities for offenders and caretakers. After a case manager reviews the offender family needs, pre-counseling for both parties is executed and an appointment is made for video contact between the offender and family members. The Case Manager and other Transition Team members will also have the ability to access the system to contact program participants.

Housing: Housing is in short supply for the returning offender who has no permanent resident to return to in Palm Beach County. This initiative has earmarked \$121,500 to assist offenders in obtaining temporary housing for 90 days. The Housing Partnership and the Housing Coalition Authority have also been contacted and are aware of the extreme need for housing for this population.

In addition, The Homeless Outreach Team performs an eligibility assessment for homeless individuals. Three team members (45th Street Mental Health, CARP, Human Service Outreach social worker) review the outcomes and develop an individual service plan for transitional housing.

Mental Health: Mental health services will be subcontracted to provide pre-release mental health counseling and support group services. The provider will serve as a key player on the transition team. Offenders will be referred to the appropriate agency; such as, 45th Street Mental Health Center. 45th Street Mental Health Center in conjunction with the Homeless Hot Team sponsors a Mobile Crisis Team that performs on-site mental health assessments to determine participants' needs for mental health services.

Substance Abuse: Based on assessments, substance abuse treatment will begin prior to release and will continue thereafter, recognizing substance dependence is a relapsing disease. Offenders will be referred to the appropriate agency; such as, Comprehensive Alcohol Rehabilitation Program (CARP) and/or other similar agencies.

Anger Management: One of the skills that is critical in terms of helping offenders to develop the attitudes, behaviors and skills that will enable them to succeed as parents, workers and citizens is anger management and conflict negotiating skills. A proven anger management curriculum will be provided prior to release for all participants by a local service provider.

Life Skills: Employers throughout Palm Beach County have for many years cited applicants' lack of "soft skills" as a top workforce concern. Although a number of excellent employability skills training programs exist, they have not been used in a consistent manner nor has the training been required of all workers in order to impact local employers' concerns.

In response to this problem, PBCWDB and local workforce development partners spent the past year working with local business partners and others to identify the skills and competencies required of entry level workers. The result was an employer-driven training and certification program for use in workforce programs across the state. This new program, the Work Readiness Training and Certification Program, is a comprehensive, competency-based employability skills training program designed by employers for the purpose of producing high quality, work ready entry-level employees. All offenders will participate in the Work Readiness Training and Certification Program.

Medical & Dental: The Palm Beach County Health Care District provides health care and dental coverage for Palm Beach County residents that qualify under economic eligibility criteria. For the inmate population to access this program appropriate documentation must be provided. The coverage is for a one-year period.

Special Services: WIA or Welfare-to-Work transition eligible clients are able to access support services deemed necessary through their case manager. This grant is also setting aside monies for emergency use and special services. These special services may include: legal support, food, vehicle repairs, work tools, shoes and uniforms, driver's license re-issuance fee, etc.

Phase II: Control and Restore: Community –Based Transition Programs

Upon returning to the community, the offender will report to the local reentry authority, Florida Department of Corrections/Probation and Parole Department, Circuit 15. At this point a

probation officer will be assigned to their case and the offender will be informed of the program's guidelines, incentives and sanctions. Those offenders needing GPS supervision will begin program requirements at this time. **The Program Manager will maintain open communication with the Circuit Administrator and the probation officers that will be supervising the offenders participating in this project.**

The offenders will continue to receive the appropriate services outlined in Phase I; if other service needs are identified in Phase II, appropriate referrals will be made. As outlined in Phase I, the delivery system will be as seamless as possible by the Transition Team from Phase I to Phase II. In addition, the following service component will be added during Phase II.

Community Service and Restitution: Any offenders who have been designated to pay victim restitution will be supervised by the probation officer and transition team. The Victim's Rights Organization will be involved and make recommendations of appropriate community service.

This involvement will take place during all phases of this project.

Community Service will be organized through the Palm Beach County Jobs Partnership, a faith-based organization charged with bringing together local churches and other religious organizations with businesses to empower, equip and employ the citizens of the local community. The Palm Beach County Jobs Partnership works to establish mentoring programs that complement the services many individuals are receiving through the One-Stop system. Mentors have been instrumental in serving as positive role models and support systems for the offender population providing counseling and enhancing work and life skills.

GPS Supervision: GPS refers to a form of electronic monitoring through satellite tracking, offering increased surveillance and a higher level of protection to victims. GPS provides inclusionary and exclusionary boundaries, two-way communication with the victim or the offender, location mapping

for archive retrieval, immediate tamper notification, remote laptop tracking with a wireless modem for constant communication with the Surveillance Data Center, and other innovative features. With the use of Global Positioning System (GPS) and the wireless communications network, the GPS tracking system allows the Department of Corrections to monitor an offender's movements.

Phase III: Responsibility and Productivity: Community –Based Long-Term Support

This critical phase of the offender's reentry will again duplicated those needed services provide in Phases I and II. The integrity of the delivery service system will remain intact and provide a seamless transition as demonstrated in Phase I and II. Palm Beach County Jobs Partnership, PEG, AA and NA support programs and the PBCWD One-Stop Centers will provide the continuum of services required in Phase III.

The Department of Corrections is currently working on two (2) separate proposals that would ensure the sustainability of this project.

(1). One proposal has been submitted to the Lt. Governor requesting support for providing services for all inmates nearing release. This will be accomplished through partnership with the state one-stop centers. Inmates will be Pre-qualified for goods and services prior to release. This will enable them to more readily access available services upon release.

(2). The department also plans to submit a Legislative Budget Request to acquire the needed funds to continue the type of services and case management set forth in this proposal. These potential-funding sources would allow the Department to enter into long-term agreements with the service providers and to continue with similar case management described in this narrative.

Organize Project Management:

Determine Staff Resources: The FDC currently has a management staff in place to provide for the medical, educational and physical needs of 72,000 inmates statewide. Several of

the inter-agency programs that the Department is currently coordinating require constant networking and cooperation with community organizations, businesses and other state agencies. FDC has the required experience to manage the Reentry Initiative and will oversee all fiduciary aspects of the program and ensure that communication between all members of the Transition Team is cogent and productive. Project oversight will be coordinated by the CJC/PBCWDB Reentry Subcommittee, and the Project Manager.

The PBCWDB is the administrative entity, fiscal agent and policy Board for a wide variety of workforce services including the Probationers Education Growth Program (PEG), Workforce Investment Act Services, Welfare Transition Program, Welfare-to-Work, School Readiness, and TANF eligibility. The PBCWDB has extensive experience coordinating, directing, and managing funds and programs involving multiple agencies. As the operator of the PEG program since 1997, the PBCWDB has successfully served over 3,000 offenders through specialized services as well as existing One-Stop services.

ACS State and Local Solutions (ACS) has been the prime contractor for the PBCWDB since 1997 providing a full range of eligibility, case management, employment and retention services to all job seekers throughout Palm Beach County ACS' staff in the 5 One-Stop centers will provide a full range of placement and retention services as an in-kind contribution to offenders as part of their existing contract with the PBCWDB.

The Program Manager, an employee of FDC, will be responsible for the initial program development and implementation and for reporting all evaluative information to the lead agency, the FDC. The Program Manager will also hire and be the direct supervisor of the two case managers and an accounting person, oversee the MIS development and be responsible for coordinating various services provided by the different funding streams. It will be the Program

Manager's responsibility to ensure effective communication between all members of the Transition Team. The FDC and the PBCWDB both have experience administering multi-system initiatives and will suggest mandatory measures to the Program Manager to ensure a smooth communication process between all members of the Transition Team. The Program Manager will be headquartered in the PBCWDB central office and will participate in Board meetings where many of the local service providers are represented. The Program Manager will also have access to any PBCWDB information and/or One-Stop service information that is deemed appropriate for the returning offenders. Grant activities will be a collaborative effort between those partners mentioned in the narrative. However, The Department of Corrections, Palm Beach County Criminal Justice Commission and Palm Beach county Work Force Development Board will play the key roles in grant development and management. The Department of Corrections will be the Fiduciary and lead agency for all grant activities. The Project Director will work for the Department of Corrections as will the contracted Case Managers. The Department of Corrections will also identify all inmates to be served by this grant through the FDC research department. Palm Beach county Workforce Development will be the base of operations for grant staff. Palm Beach Workforce will also provide valuable partnerships with area service providers, along with important technical assistance. The Palm Beach County Criminal Justice Commission will provide support and technical assistance during the life of this grant. The Commission will also work in conjunction with FDC to provide conflict resolutions for any inter-agency difficulties that may arise. The Project Director will meet often with the partnering agencies, transition team and Case Managers so that communication will ensure project effectiveness.

The Palm Beach County CJC will work in conjunction with FDC to provide a format of conflict resolutions for any inter-agency difficulties that may arise. The Reentry Subcommittee under the CJC will act as the intermediary in the event that any mediation need becomes apparent. Demonstrating a proactive management style, the Program Manager will schedule meeting times in advance to meet with partnering agencies, the Transition Team and the Case Managers on a regular basis to circumvent any disputes that may arise. The Program Manager will be responsible for generating all required reports and will work with the local, state or federal program evaluators.

Design an Integrated Transition Management Information System

The FDC currently has an Offender Based Information System (OBIS) that provides information on inmate histories, demographics, institutional program participation, educational and vocational skill levels and the department's determination of needs for inmates scheduled for release. PBCWDB currently uses the state's MIS system for entering case management information and is anticipating the introduction of a new web-based system (OSMIS) in October of 2002. OSMIS will be web-based, include many different systems (OSST, ODDS, and WIA) and have a financial tracking system.

Integrated information system and information retrieval will be an integral part of the intensive case management system for the program. A database accessible to all of the service providers will allow for detailed and timely information sharing and tracking of clients. It will contain all of the fields for information entry of all of the service providers, a case note section, and a scheduling and tracking section. The database will be a Web based program and established in a Virtual Private Network (VPN) to insure security for the information and appropriate privacy for clients. All service providers will be able to access the system through

individual passwords. Each entry will be logged and held in the administrator's hidden files as a double layer of security. Efforts will be made to ensure connectivity to OBIS and/or OSMIS.