



## SECOND CHANCES

FOR FORMER OFFENDERS AND THEIR LOVED ONES

### Prisoner Reentry Checklist

The following checklist assumes that you have already been released from prison and that you have immediate access to food and shelter. If you do not, find a phone and call 211 immediately to locate emergency services in the area.

#### FIRST CONTACTS

Be careful about your first contacts in the free world. Reaching out to even one wrong person could complicate things beyond your control. Ask yourself: Do they need to know I'm home? Will they have my best interest at heart? Will they help me get to where I want to go? On your ride home, make a list of your first contacts and make sure to include:

- ☐ Anyone you are required to report to
- ☐ Your immediate family members
- ☐ The few people who are on your side
- ☐ One role model to hold you accountable
- ☐ Your faith community — to get involved, not to ask for help!
- ☐ First Call For Help (see below)

It's worthwhile making a second list of people who you may like hanging out with but who have a bad influence on you — and make a point of staying away from them.

#### FIRST CALL FOR HELP

Just because you're a former offender doesn't mean that you qualify only for services intended for former offenders. You're also part of the general public — and if you dial 211, you'll be able to talk with someone who knows what services exist in the area and how to get in touch with them. A few common reentry needs are listed below with space for you to add your own. List the services you need then call 211 from a local number.

SERVICE	PHONE NUMBER
<input type="checkbox"/> Child support assistance	
<input type="checkbox"/> Clothing	
<input type="checkbox"/> Computer giveaway	
<input type="checkbox"/> Employment	
<input type="checkbox"/> Food	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fitness	
<input type="checkbox"/> Identification	
<input type="checkbox"/> Medical care	
<input type="checkbox"/> Mental health care	
<input type="checkbox"/> Prescription assistance	
<input type="checkbox"/> Public internet	
<input type="checkbox"/> Shelter	
<input type="checkbox"/> Support group (be specific)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	
<input type="checkbox"/> Veteran assistance	
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	

#### STAYING CONNECTED

Connective technology is important in just about every area of our lives now — including getting help, finding employment, and accessing information. Fortunately, it's not hard or expensive to get connected in Chattanooga.

- ☐ Get a library card and find out about its public computers
- ☐ Register with American Job Center to learn about its resource center with self-service computers
- ☐ Order a free Lifeline phone at [www.lifelinesupport.org](http://www.lifelinesupport.org)
- ☐ If you are not eligible for a Lifeline phone, consider a pre-paid phone from Walmart (Straight Talk)
- ☐ Set up a free Google account
- ☐ Set up a free Google Voice account
- ☐ Find free internet at [www.chattanooga.gov/it/nooganet](http://www.chattanooga.gov/it/nooganet)
- ☐ Find a computer giveaway program (see First Call For Help)

We recommend Google because of its free applications. You can create and save documents, manage your appointments, and keep track of your contacts. Plus, Google Apps includes Google Voice, which gives you a free local phone number with voicemail and texting capabilities. You need a mobile phone to set it up. But a Lifeline phone will do. And, once it's set up, you don't need to worry about running out of minutes. As long as you're connected to the internet, you can use Google Voice to make and receive calls, send and receive texts, and retrieve voicemail. You can also keep your Google Voice number indefinitely and connect other phone numbers to it as needed.

#### IDENTIFICATION

Gather all your identification and apply for replacements as needed. For employment purposes, in most cases, you will need a Social Security Card and a state-issued picture ID that has not expired. To learn what other identification can be used for employment, get in touch with the American Job Center. You should have the original or a legal replacement of all of the following identifications which you are eligible for:

- ☐ Birth Certificate
- ☐ Social Security Card (not laminated)
- ☐ Driver License (reinstatement information [dl.safety.tn.gov](http://dl.safety.tn.gov))
- ☐ If you can't get a Driver License, get a State issued picture ID
- ☐ If discharged from the military, DD 214 & veteran ID Card
- ☐ If foreign born, proof of citizenship
- ☐ If Native American, certificate of degree of Indian Blood

Getting replacement identification can be tricky, especially if you were born in another state. If you don't know where to start, call 211 and ask for information about agencies that can assist you obtain your identification and that may have resources for application fees and transportation.

**CLOTHING**

You can get most of the clothing you need by calling thrifts stores in the area and letting them know that you've just gotten out of prison. Add to the list below as needed. Then call 211 for a list of thrift stores in the area. Call around until you've found everything you need. Then find a ride, set aside a day, and visit the places that said they would help.

ITEMS	THRIFT STORE
<input type="checkbox"/> Casual shoes	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Work shoes	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> First change of clothes (casual)	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Second change of clothes (work)	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Third change of clothes (interview)	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Fourth change of clothes (religious)	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Jacket appropriate for the season	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____

**SHORT MATERIAL LIST**

To get the most out of the limited money you have to begin with, you'll want to be very clear about the things you need to purchase first. Start with the list below and add to it according to your circumstances. This will help you to prioritize how to spend your money. And, if there are people who want to give you a hand, you'll know just what to ask them for.

ITEMS	ESTIMATED COST
<input type="checkbox"/> Bus pass (2-3 months)	\$50 a month
<input type="checkbox"/> Money for identifications	\$25-50
<input type="checkbox"/> Pocket cash job search (8 weeks)	\$50 a week
<input type="checkbox"/> Watch	\$15
<input type="checkbox"/> Wallet	\$15
<input type="checkbox"/> Purse	\$15
<input type="checkbox"/> Alarm clock	\$15
<input type="checkbox"/> Pens	\$5
<input type="checkbox"/> Pads of paper	\$5
<input type="checkbox"/> Pocket calendar	\$10
<input type="checkbox"/> Pocket notebook	\$5
<input type="checkbox"/> Gym bag	\$20
<input type="checkbox"/> Umbrella	\$15
<input type="checkbox"/> Haircut	\$15
<input type="checkbox"/> Toiletries	\$25
<input type="checkbox"/> Underwear	\$15
<input type="checkbox"/> Socks	\$15
<input type="checkbox"/> Wal-Mart gift card (for misc. items)	\$40
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____

**GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE**

Make an appointment with the State Department of Human Services if you think you are eligible for programs such as:

- ☐ Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - SNAP A
- ☐ Families First
- ☐ Vocational Rehabilitation

If you have received disability benefits through SSI or SSDI in the past, or you believe that you are eligible for one of these programs, contact a SOAR specialist in your area who will help you with the application. You can locate a specialist at [soarworks.prainc.com](http://soarworks.prainc.com) or by calling (518) 439-7415.

**CHILD SUPPORT**

If you owe Child Support, don't wait to get in touch with the court. The obligation will not go away. Therefore, the sooner you address it the better. When you call, explain that you have just gotten out of prison and ask if there is a program to help non-custodial parents with employment or to review and adjust orders to match actual earnings. In several Tennessee cities, for example, CSPED (Child Support for Noncustodial Parents Employment Demonstration) can help with a variety of services aimed at employment and establishing minimum orders.

**EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION**

If you would like to get a college degree, now is the time to do it. You will be eligible for more financial aid immediately after you're released from prison than you will during the years after you start earning money. Plus nothing convinces an employer that you can be trusted more than earning a degree after release. And you'll be eligible for higher paying jobs.

- ☐ Request a Job Seeker's Primer from Chattanooga Endeavors
- ☐ Call Educational Opportunities about student financial aid
- ☐ Call Community College about a GED or technical degree
- ☐ Schedule a meeting at the American Job Center
- ☐ Set up an account on Indeed.com
- ☐ Open a bank account or set up a Walmart MoneyCard

Chattanooga Endeavors addresses many issues that are unique to former offenders as they look for employment. Through classes that are taught by a team of former offenders and helping professionals, students learn a variety of job search strategies such as how to turn prison time into an asset during a job interview, how to locate the hidden job market for former offenders, why it's counterproductive to count on lists of felony friendly employers during the job search, and the down side of popular programs like "Ban The Box." Chattanooga Endeavors is a daily demonstration of the fact that prison can be put in the rearview mirror and that a better tomorrow is within reach of anyone who is ready for a change.

More information about Chattanooga Endeavors is available at

PO Box 3351  
Chattanooga, TN 37404-0351  
(423) 266-1888  
[info@chattanoogaendeavors.org](mailto:info@chattanoogaendeavors.org)  
[www.chattanoogaendeavors.org](http://www.chattanoogaendeavors.org)