

The Alaska Department of Corrections **Recidivism Reduction Plan**

Safer Neighborhoods, Better Citizens

**Providing Tools and Resources to
Alaska's Returning Citizens -
Reducing Crime and Averting the Need
for Additional Prison Construction**

**A Report to Governor William M. Walker
The Alaska Department of Corrections**

March 2015

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Content</u>	<u>Page Number</u>
INTRODUCTION	2
THE ALASKA PRISONER REENTRY INITIATIVE	3
Purpose, Goals and the Alaska Prisoner Reentry Framework	3
Priorities for Prisoner Reentry Reform	4
Offender Management and Planning	4
Sustainable, Affordable and Safe Housing	5
Job Development and Supportive Employment	6
Graduated Sanctions and Incentives for Offender Behavior	8
State Organizational Structures to Support Reentry Reform Efforts	9
The Alaska Prisoner Reentry Statewide Council	9
<i>The Alaska Native Focus Group</i>	10
The Alaska Prisoner Reentry Implementation Steering Team	10
<i>Departmental Implementation Resource Teams</i>	11
<i>The Transition Accountability Planning Committee</i>	11
<i>Housing and Employment Committees</i>	11
<i>The Grants Development and Management Committee</i>	11
<i>The Data, Evaluation and Performance Committee</i>	11
Organizational Chart for the State Structure	12
Local Organizational Structures to Support Reentry Reform Efforts	13
The Local Implementation Steering Team	13
The Returning Citizens Transition Team	13
The Local Reentry Advisory Council	13
Organizational Chart for the Local Structure	14
Coordinating Community Development	15
Skills for Community Coordinators	15
The Responsibilities of Community Coordinators	16
Offender Management Plans and the Importance of Prison In-Reach	17
Principles that Guide the Offender Management Planning Process	18
The Offender Management Planning Process Flowchart	20

ADDENDA

TAB	
1	AK-PRI Framework, Summary
2	AK-PRI Framework, Targets for Change
3	AK-PRI Collaborative Case Supervision and Management Model
4	Coordinating Community Development- the Heart of the AK-PRI
5	AK-PRI Community Assessment Instrument
6	Offender Management Plans and Prison In-Reach
7	AK-PRI Case Logic Model

The Alaska Department of Corrections Recidivism Reduction Plan

March 2015

INTRODUCTION

The Alaska Department of Corrections (DOC) has supported for many years adult criminal justice reform. In 2014, building on the work conducted for the past several years in the DOC, the department entered into a contract with the Michigan-based Center for Justice Innovation (the Center) to conduct an internal review of Alaska's reentry services. This review concluded that, while a good deal of laudable work was underway, increased coordination among the various efforts was needed to overcome the barriers to reducing recidivism. Given that finding, the DOC utilized its contract with the Center to help facilitate development and implementation of a comprehensive reentry improvement. After preliminary data analysis and facilitated meetings with state and local stakeholders, the Alaska Prisoner Reentry Initiative (AK-PRI) has been launched. The AK-PRI represents the foundation for a five-year effort expected to make Alaska a national leader in recidivism reduction of its citizens who are returning to their communities following a prison term.

In the meantime, following the 2014 legislative session, Senate Bill 64 was signed into law by Governor Sean Parnell in July 2014, creating the 13-member Alaska Criminal Justice Commission (ACJC) with a three-year mandate to promote public safety through better oversight and management of the adult correctional systems. Concurrently, the Legislature provided additional guidance to the executive branch through HB 266 that required the Department of Corrections, the Department of Health & Social Services, the Department of Labor & Workforce Development, the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, the Alaska Court System, and the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority to:

"...Develop and implement a comprehensive, complementary, non-duplicative institutional community-based plan for providing substance abuse, mental health, housing and employment services to those who are released from correctional institutions... (that will improve) treatment and other outcomes for recently released inmates with the goal of reducing correctional system recidivism rates".

The Alaska Prisoner Reentry Initiative (AK-PRI) is the executive branch's Recidivism Reduction Plan and is intended to reduce the recidivism rate of returning citizens so that system and individual offender performance is improved and the state can avoid the need for additional prison construction.

Subsequently, in March of 2015, under the leadership of Corrections Commissioner Ronald Taylor, the DOC created an Office of Prisoner Reentry (OPR) using existing resources within the agency to implement prisoner reentry reforms as the primary focus of recidivism reduction in the agency. The primary responsibilities of OPR are to ensure successful offender reentry to the State of Alaska, to reduce recidivism, to enhance public safety through collaboration among stakeholders and to assist in ensuring the appropriate and responsible use of cost savings realized by justice reforms through reinvestment in evidence-based, community-centered services.

THE ALASKA PRISONER REENTRY INITIATIVE

The Alaska Department of Corrections launched the Alaska Prisoner Reentry Initiative in November 2014 with the vision that every returning citizen released from prison will have the tools and support needed to succeed in the community. In order to make this vision a reality, the mission of the Alaska Prisoner Reentry Initiative (AK-PRI) is to improve public safety by reducing crime through implementation of a seamless plan of services and supervision developed with each returning citizen—delivered through state and local collaboration—from the time they enter prison through their successful transition, reintegration, and aftercare in the community. The initiative gives Alaska the tools to become a national leader among states in recidivism reduction.

The fundamental goals of the AK-PRI are to:

1. Promote public safety by reducing the threat of harm to persons, families and their property by citizens returning to their communities from prison; and
2. Increase success rates of returning citizens who transition from prison by fostering effective, evidence-based risk and need management and treatment, returning citizen accountability, and safe family, community and victim participation.

Performance measures to determine the degree that these goals are met include measurements of increased public safety through the reduction of recidivism (as measured by re-conviction or conditional release violation and return to prison) and successful completion of community supervision.

At the heart of the initiative is the Alaska Prisoner Reentry Initiative Framework (See Tabs 1 & 2). The AK-PRI Framework (the Framework) was designed for Alaska but builds on approaches for reentry improvement developed by the National Prisoner Reentry Council, as outlined in its Reentry Policy Council Report,¹ and the National Institute of Corrections through its Transition from Prison to Community (TPC) Framework.² These approaches provide guidance for specific justice policies that will be considered in Alaska as the “Targets for Change” to improve prisoner reentry.

These Targets for Change are categorized within the three TPC Framework phases (Getting Ready, the Institutional Phase; Going Home, the Pre-Release Phase; and Staying Home, the Community Supervision and Discharge Phase) and seven primary decision points that comprise the reentry process. For each Target for Change, goals and operational expectations are included, as well as references for further reading to specific pages within the voluminous Reentry Policy Council Report and other publications that pertain specifically to the Target for Change that is being addressed. Thus, the Framework provides a practical guide to help direct Alaska’s plan to meet the policy goals and operational expectations of this Council. The Framework also frees state agencies to begin to focus immediately on implementation.

¹ Reentry Policy Council. *Report of the Re-Entry Policy Council: Charting the Safe and Successful Return of Prisoners to the Community*. New York: Council of State Governments, January 2005.

² Peggy Burke, *TPC Reentry Handbook: Implementing the NIC Transition from Prison to the Community Framework*. Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice. National Institute of Corrections, August 2008.

Importantly, the Framework underscores the three overarching policy and practice considerations that must be in place to truly reform a returning citizen's behavior: Offender Management Planning, Case Management and Evidence-Based Practices.

Alaska benefits from a wealth of technical assistance that was provided for the development and implementation of the AK-PRI Framework. These technical partners include the Council of State Governments-National Reentry Resource Center and the Michigan Council on Crime and Delinquency - Center for Justice Innovation.

The Framework provides state agencies and local partners with the tools to move from planning to implementation and to accurately measure changes in recidivism. By moving reentry planning beyond high-level strategy to a focus on carefully scripted actions, the AK-PRI can quickly make Alaska a leader in recidivism reduction.

PRIORITIES FOR REENTRY REFORM

The priorities for implementation of the AK-PRI Framework include an improved offender management and accountability planning process (OMP) with each returning citizen, from the point of imprisonment through successful discharge from post-release community supervision,³ with an emphasis on safe, affordable housing and employment.

This careful case planning will be driven by a validated, objective assessment of each returning prisoner's risks, needs and strengths.

Offender Management and Planning

Offender Management Plans (OMP) are concise guides, driven by a validated assessment of risks, needs and strengths, that describe goals for each returning citizen's successful transition along

Alaska Prisoner Reentry Initiative Framework

PHASE 1: GETTING READY

1. **Assessment And Classification**
 - 1.1. Development of Intake Procedures
2. **Returning Citizen Behavior And Programming**
 - 2.1. Development of Programming Plan (OMP1)
 - 2.2. Physical Health Care
 - 2.3. Mental Health Care
 - 2.4. Substance Abuse Treatment
 - 2.5. Children & Family Support
 - 2.6. Behaviors & Attitudes
 - 2.7. Education
 - 2.8. Technical Training
 - 2.9. Work Experience

PHASE 2: GOING HOME

3. **Returning Citizen Release Preparation**
 - 3.1. Development of Parole & Reentry Plan (OMP2)
 - 3.2. Housing
 - 3.3. Continuity of Care Planning
 - 3.4. Working with Potential Employers
 - 3.5. Employment Upon Release
 - 3.6. Identification and Benefits
 - 3.7. Release Preparation for Families
 - 3.8. Release Preparation for Victims
4. **Release Decision Making**
 - 4.1. Advising the Releasing Authority
 - 4.2. Release Decision

PHASE 3: STAYING HOME

5. **Supervision And Services**
 - 5.1. Design of Supervision & Treatment Strategy (OMP3)
 - 5.2. Implementation of Supervision & Treatment Strategy
 - 5.3. Maintaining Continuity of Care and Housing
 - 5.4. Job Development and Supportive Employment
6. **Revocation Decision Making**
 - 6.1. Graduated Responses
7. **Discharge And Aftercare**
 - 7.1. Development of Discharge/Aftercare Plan (OMP4)

2015 PRIORITIES HIGHLIGHTED IN RED

³ In Alaska, post-release community supervision includes probation supervision, parole supervision as well as for some cases, who have concurrent active cases, concurrent probation *and* parole supervision, and for cases who max-out from prison, no supervision.

with a corresponding schedule of actions for the returning citizen, institutional staff, the parole board, probation/parole staff, and partnering agencies. The OMP spans the phases of the transition process and agency boundaries to ensure continuity of services and supervision between institutions and community. Increased certainty will motivate returning citizens to participate in the OMP process and to become engaged in fulfilling their responsibilities and will ensure that all parties are held accountable for timely performance of their respective responsibilities.

Goal: To establish the comprehensive and standardized use of assessment-driven OMP at four critical points in the returning citizen transition process that succinctly describe for the returning citizen, the staff, and the community exactly what is expected for returning citizen success: (1) At reception as part of the prison intake process, (2) As part of the release decision process when the returning citizen is approaching the end of their confinement, (3) When the returning citizen re-enters the community, and (4) When the returning citizen is to be discharged from probation/parole supervision.

Policy Expectations: Prisoner reentry policies are defined as formal, written rules and agreements that define standard practices for agencies engaged in the transition process. Alaska's policies regarding the OMP process currently include or are expected to include, the following provisions:

- OMPs are driven by a validated risk, needs and strengths assessment instrument that is used at prison intake and at subsequent major decision points in the corrections/parole/post-release supervision process.
- As a result of these assessments, the OMPs consist of the returning citizen's Treatment Plan updated at critical junctures in the transition process and are prepared at prison intake, at the point of the release decision, at the point of return to the community, and at the point of discharge from probation/parole supervision.
- OMPs are a collaborative product involving institutional staff, the returning citizen, the parole board, community supervision officers, human services providers (public and/or private), victims, and neighborhood and other community organizations.
- The OMP policy clearly states that the objective of the OMP is to increase both overall community protection by lowering risk to persons and property and by increasing each returning citizen's prospects for successful return to and self-sufficiency in the community.

Safe, Affordable, and Supportive Housing

Following incarceration, many returning citizens join the growing number of individuals in the general population struggling to obtain safe, affordable, and supportive housing. But former offenders face additional barriers in seeking access to the scarce housing options available.

Court orders, state laws, local ordinances, and conditions of release often restrict the locations in which a returning citizen can seek housing. In the private rental market, many landlords are unwilling to rent to individuals with a criminal record. Due to exclusions in federal housing assistance policy and the broad discretion of local public housing authorities to add exclusions, individuals with a criminal history are not eligible for many forms of public housing assistance.

Finally, although family is a key resource for many returning citizens, staying with relatives is not always an option. Some families are unwilling, perhaps as a result of prior criminal behavior, to welcome an individual back into the home. In other cases, families may not have the resources to support another

unemployed family member or may be putting their own public housing assistance in jeopardy by opening their home to a relative with a criminal record.

Given such barriers, it is not surprising that incarceration puts returning prisoners at greater risk of homelessness. A certain proportion of incoming prisoners were homeless before their incarceration, and at least as many end up homeless for some period of time after leaving prison. For those with histories of mental illness, the likelihood is still greater. Nationally, surveys of homeless assistance providers and individuals who use their services have found that about 54 percent of currently homeless clients had been in jail or prison at some point in their lives.⁴ The consequences of insufficient housing extend beyond the prisoner. Research indicates that parolees without stable housing may face a higher risk of parole failure, whether through re-arrest for a new crime or failure to meet basic parole requirements. Studies indicate that the likelihood of arrest increases 25 percent each time a parolee changes address.⁵

Goal: To facilitate access to safe, affordable and supportive housing upon reentry into the community.⁶

Policy Expectations: Formal written rules and agreements defining the standard practice for agencies engaged in improving access to stable housing should include the following provisions:

- Facility staff, probation/parole staff and community-based transition planners work with returning citizens to assess individual housing needs and identify the appropriate housing option for each incarcerated individual well before release. The housing planning process includes an assessment of the feasibility, safety and appropriateness of an individual living with family members after his or her release from prison.
- A full range of housing options (i.e. supportive housing, transitional housing, affordable private rental housing) will be accessed to accommodate individuals returning to the community.
- In order to make certain that returning citizens are not discharged from prison into homelessness, individuals leaving prison without a documented housing plan and those with histories of homelessness are included among the homeless priority population in order to facilitate their access to supportive housing and other housing services.
- Returning citizens receive information and training on strategies for finding/maintaining housing and their legal rights as tenants.

Job Development and Supportive Employment

Research has consistently shown that offenders who find stable employment soon after release from incarceration are less likely to recidivate.⁷ Employment not only provides the income needed to meet basic needs but also provides the means to become a productive member of the community.

⁴ M.R. Burt, Y.A. Laudan, T. Douglas, J. Valente, E. Lee, and B. Iwen, *Homelessness: Programs and the People They Serve: Findings From the National Survey of Homeless Assistance Providers and Clients* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1999).

⁵ Tammy Meredith, John Speir, Sharon Johnson, and Heather Hull, *Enhancing Parole Decision-Making Through the Automation of Risk Assessment*, (Atlanta, GA: Applied Research Services, Inc., 2003).

⁶ Report of the ReEntry Policy Council, pgs. 256-281

⁷ For example, see: Miles D. Harer, *Recidivism of Federal Prisoners Released in 1987*, (Federal Bureau of Prisons, Office of Research and Evaluation: Washington, D.C., 1994); Mark W. Lipsey, *What Works: Reducing Reoffending*, (West Sussex, U.K.: Wiley, 1995); Robert J. Sampson and John H. Laub, "A Life Course Theory of Cumulative Disadvantage and the Stability of Delinquency," Terence P. Thornberry (ed.) *Developmental Theories of Crime and Delinquency, Advances in Criminological Theory, Volume 7*, (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1997, p 133 – 161); and Christopher Uggen, "Work as a Turning Point in the Life Course of Criminals: A Duration Framework of Age, Employment and Recidivism." *American Sociological Review* 67 (2000) 529-546.

However, among job seekers, individuals with criminal records, particularly those recently released from incarceration, face unique hurdles. Compared to the general population, returning offenders tend to have less work experience, less education, and fewer marketable skills.⁸ They frequently return to communities already hit hard by unemployment, where job prospects and access to employment services are limited and contact with a social network that can provide job leads is rare.⁹ Furthermore, the stigma of a criminal record, spotty work histories, low education and skill levels, and physical and mental health problems take many jobs out of reach for returning offenders.¹⁰

Many returning citizens also lack necessary identification documents, access to transportation, and childcare for dependent children. To a lesser extent, many recently released prisoners have unstable housing situations that may prevent access to employment. Restrictions on the type of employment a former prisoner may obtain, and practices of probation/parole agencies may pose additional obstacles to obtaining and holding a job for those under supervision.

Predetermined reporting requirements and supervision fees may be particularly burdensome. Estimates show that the proportion of prisoners who have a job secured before release ranges from 14 percent to just under 50 percent.¹¹ For those lacking employment upon release, job placement organizations can play a key role. Transitional employment can provide released prisoners with access to income, structure, and additional supervision to assist in the transition from custody to freedom.

Goals: To recognize and address the obstacles that make it difficult for a returning citizen to obtain and retain viable employment while under community supervision; and to connect returning citizens to employment, including supportive employment and employment services, before their release to the community.

Policy Expectations: Formal written rules and agreements that define the standard practice for agencies engaged in improving employment outcomes among returning citizens are expected to include the following provisions:

- Supportive transitional employment programs are supported and promoted across agencies.
- Staff charged with community supervision work towards sustainable employment for returning citizens.
- Work-release programs are available as a transition between work inside a correctional facility and work after release into the community.
- Community members and community-based services act as intermediaries between employers and job-seeking individuals who are incarcerated.

"We are embarking on a new and exciting path to reform the ways we manage and support Alaska's returning citizens. Supporting the transition and re-entry for those who have been in prison is an undertaking that government alone can't do and we need the support of every community in the state"

DOC Commissioner Ronald Taylor

⁸ Abigail Coppock, "Transitional jobs: Overcoming barriers to employment" *Advocates Forum* (2007) 34-48.

⁹ *Report of the ReEntry Policy Council*, pgs. 306-316; 383-389.

¹⁰ Harry J. Holzer, Steven Raphael, and Michael A. Stoll, "Employment Barriers Facing Ex-Offenders" (paper presented at The Urban Institute's Reentry Roundtable, Washington, DC, May 19-20, 2003).

¹¹ Christy Visser, Nancy G. La Vigne, and Jill Farrell, *Illinois Prisoners' Reflections on Returning Home* (Washington DC: The Urban Institute, 2003) and Steven Steurer, Linda Smith, and Alice Tracy, *Three-State Recidivism Study* (Lanham, MD: Correctional Educational Association, 2001).

- Returning citizens receive written information about prospective employers in their community and/or community employment service providers well in advance of the anticipated release date.
- Prior to discharge, returning citizens receive official documentation of their skills and experience, including widely accepted credentials.

Graduated Sanctions and Incentives for Offender Behavior

It is essential in the application of supervision and responses to violations that corrections and community supervision agencies have a well-developed and documented policy that directs staff to include incentives and sanctions in their arsenal of responses. These “graduated sanctions and incentives” must also be understood and supported by the full range of stakeholders in the justice system (judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and parole board members) and with the larger community.

In a risk reduction driven system such as Alaska is pursuing, community supervision staff will obviously take offenders’ risk level into account when determining responses to behavior that may be positive (using incentives) or negative (using sanctions). Research shows that it is important to match responses as not doing so can have negative results and *increase* aberrant behavior.¹²

Corrections and supervision agencies should thoughtfully document into policy and procedures expectations to use sanctions and incentives to improve offenders’ behavior when possible. Research shows that the use of incentives and encouragements, in addition to sanctions, reduces criminal activity when used as part of a transformation from a “tail ‘em, nail ‘em, jail ‘em” philosophy to one that is driven by offender success and assumes more a coaching role for supervising officers.¹³

According to one of the most useful manuscripts on the subject, the Ten Step Guide for Transforming Probation Departments:¹⁴

Incentives and graduated sanctions give probation officers a range of responses to probationers’ behavior that helps build accountability and discourage recidivism. They also help ensure that each officer responds to violations with a level of swiftness and severity that is directly related to the probationer’s risk level and the condition of supervision that has been violated...Standardizing responses provides a measure of fairness while giving officers necessary flexibility.

This Guide includes Travis County’s “Violation Response Table,” which identifies the different levels of graduated sanctions depending on the type of infraction. The Guide recommends a four point process that Alaska should consider as another step in the process of redesigning their system based on the ADOC’s case logic.

¹² Edward Latessa, Lori Brusman Lovins, and Paula Smith, *Follow-up Evaluation of Ohio’s Community Based Correctional Facility and Halfway House Programs—Outcome Study* (Cincinnati: University of Cincinnati Center for Criminal Justice Research, February 2010); Christopher Lowenkamp and Ed Latessa, “Increasing the Effectiveness of Correctional Programming Through the Risk Principle: Identifying Offenders for Residential Placement,” *Criminology and Public Policy* 4(2) (2005): 263–90.

¹³ See for, example, Crime and Justice Institute, *Implementing Evidence-Based Policy and Practice in Community Corrections*, second edition (Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, 2009), http://www.cjinsitute.org/files/Community_Corrections_BoxSet_Oct09.pdf.

¹⁴ Ten Step Guide for Transforming Probation Departments to Reduce Recidivism; Fabelo, Nagy, Prins; Council of State Governments Justice Center, New York (2011).

Redesigning Incentive and Sanctioning Strategies Checklist¹⁵

- ✓ Work with judges, prosecutors, parole board members and other stakeholders to develop a range of supported options and new procedures for employing incentives and graduated sanctions that are tailored to probationers'/parolees' level of criminogenic risk and identified need.
- ✓ Issue a comprehensive report that details the transparent procedures to be followed.
- ✓ Train officers to ensure the procedures are carried out fairly and in swift response to a violation. Emphasize the use of incentives rather than relying exclusively on punitive sanctions.

Goal: To ensure that probation officers have a range of options available to them to reinforce positive behavior and to address, swiftly and certainly, failures to comply with release conditions.

Policy Expectations

- An organized structure guides the imposition of sanctions.
- Revocation and re-incarceration are the most serious of many different options available for addressing violations.
- Individuals who violate conditions of release are assessed to gauge the level of response needed.
- Policies governing the sharing of information consider privacy and confidentiality issues.
- Meaningful positive reinforcements exist to encourage compliance with the terms of release.
- Victims are given an opportunity to inform the imposition of graduated responses.

STATE LEVEL ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES TO SUPPORT REFORM EFFORTS

States which have been more successful at implementation of prisoner reentry improvements that result in long term, sustainable reductions in recidivism of former prisoners create organizational structures at the state and local level that are strong enough to support the weight of the reforms. In order to address the legislative directive for statewide collaboration, the OPR is developing a state level organizational structure that will fully engage reentry stakeholders across the state to participate in the on-going development and implementation of the AK-PRI. This state level structure – which will be built gradually over the course of 2015, begins with the statewide *Alaska Prisoner Reentry Council* and the *AK-PRI Implementation Steering Team (IST)* which will guide prisoner reentry reforms at the strategic and tactical (operational) levels through community –based work groups and department-based operational teams. (See page 11 for an illustration of the State Structure).

The Alaska Prisoner Reentry Statewide Council (the Reentry Council)

The Reentry Council is comprised of individuals and organizations from whom the Council has sought – and will continue to seek - advice and counsel on how to improve the success of Alaska's returning citizens. These supporters and stakeholders will assist the reentry reforms by acting as conduits for communication and a mechanism for building community awareness, support, and participation. The Reentry Council will develop work groups and sub-committees, as needed, to address pertinent issues from the varied perspectives of community leaders – many of whom have been engaged in improving prisoner reentry for many years. Committees of the Statewide Council will focus on specific issues around implementation. It is recommended that the first committee focus on Alaska Natives.

¹⁵ Ibid

- *The Alaskan Native Focus Group:* The Alaskan Native Advisory Committee will be comprised of representatives from groups and organizations which are dedicated to addressing the over-representation of Alaskan Natives in the adult prison system to help determine the most effective ways to address this enormous concern.

The AK-PRI Implementation Steering Team

In November of 2014, the initial phase of work on the AK-PRI involved a core team of state agency representatives from the Department of Corrections, the Parole Board, the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and community reentry stakeholders. This core team, the *AK-PRI Implementation Steering Team* (IST), is chaired by Ronald Taylor, the Acting Commissioner of the DOC, whose office provides staff support. Once the Statewide Reentry Council convenes in 2015, it will be recommended that the IST become formalized and report to the *Statewide Reentry Council*.

When the Council adopts the Framework as the roadmap for the AK-PRI, the IST will expand to include human services organizations, non-profit institutions and faith-based partners. These additions will enhance the team's perspective and help it expand and become firmly established statewide. Thus, for practical purposes, the Framework should be viewed as a *preliminary* plan that will be strengthened dramatically through full community engagement. The IST will function through three Workgroups, one representing each of the three Phases in the AK-PRI. Each of the workgroups has co-chairs appointed by Acting Commissioner Taylor and will be facilitated and staffed by the OPR. The IST will:

- Identify barriers in each department or agency that may hinder the successful transition of returning citizens and develop policies, procedures, and programs to overcome such barriers.
- Identify methods to improve collaboration and coordination of offender transition services, including cross-training, information-sharing systems, and policies, procedures, and programs that measure offender reentry management with well-defined, performance-based outcomes.
- Consult with state and local agencies, organizations, and community leaders with expertise in the areas of prison facilities, parole decision-making, reentry, and community supervision to collaborate on offender transition issues and ways of improving operations.
- Consult with representatives from professional associations, volunteer and faith-based organizations, and local treatment and rehabilitation agencies to collaborate on offender transition issues and ways of improving operations.
- Provide recommendations as to how the Governor and other state departments and agencies may assist the Council in overcoming the barriers it has identified to the successful transition and reintegration of offenders returning to communities.
- Provide recommendations on how state laws and may be improved in order to contribute to the successful transition and reintegration of offenders into society and reduce recidivism.

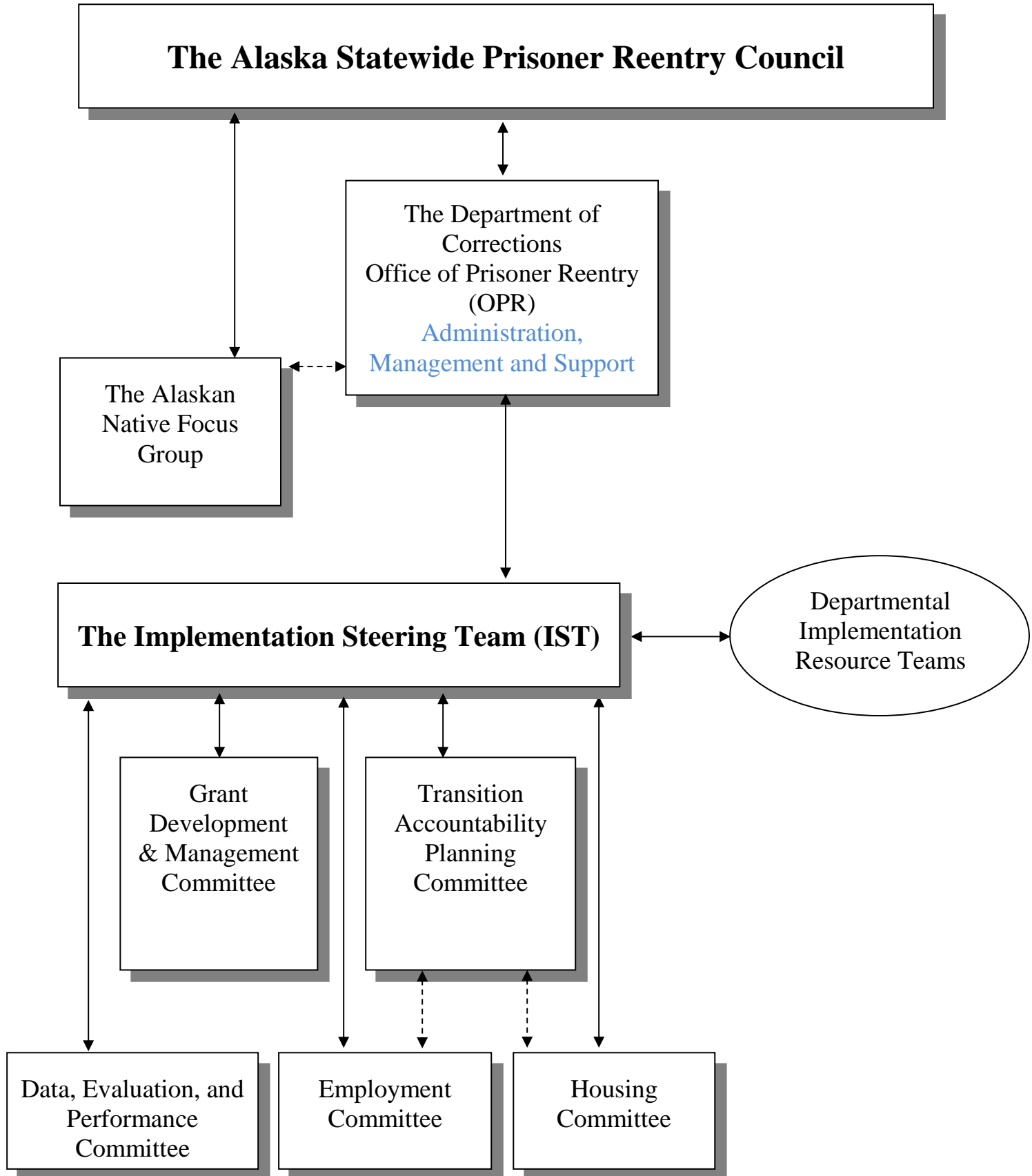
In order to meet these responsibilities, the IST will over time implement a committee structure that focuses on policy and practice barriers to the full and robust implementation of the AK-PRI, and specific activities to overcome those barriers. The committee structure will be built as needed throughout 2015.

- *Departmental AK-PRI Implementation Resource Teams:* In order to effectively implement the AK-PRI Framework, each department that is responsible for any type of service that affects returning citizens will be represented on the IST and be asked to form in their state agency an

Implementation Resource Team (IRT). This team would be comprised of top level managers who are responsible for moving the AK-PRI Framework into the policies and procedures of their department and assuring that the Framework is fully implemented at both the state and local level. The Implementation Resource Teams will be responsible for interpreting how their departments' functions will need to be adapted to correspond with every aspect of the AK-PRI Framework and assuring efficient implementation. Active participation of the IRT Team Leader on the IST will be critical for their clear understanding of the forces driving the development and implementation of the Framework. AK-PRI Implementation Resource Teams will propose solutions to their department directors on how to respond to the challenges that inevitably will arise as their departments' reform their approaches to addressing the needs of citizens returning to Alaska's communities so that crime in Alaska is reduced. **This process represents the way that the AK-PRI Recidivism Reduction Plan will become, as House Bill 266 requires, "...comprehensive, complementary, and non-duplicative..."**

- *The Transition Accountability Planning Committee:* Given the critical important of transition planning across the spectrum of the reentry process from intake to prison through discharge from correctional authority, the Offender Management Planning (OMP) process requires, a work group that is comprised of prison, community supervision and community justice leaders and service providers is needed to implement the process with fidelity. This committee will work to ensure that all stakeholders' perspectives and inputs are taken into account when developing the new processes and policies around transition planning.
- *The Housing and Employment Committees:* Housing and employment for returning citizens are paramount for improved offender and system outcomes. These two service areas are the top priority of the Reentry Council and as such will benefit from specific forums for agency and community stakeholders to meet and determine the state's and each community's assets, barriers and gaps around housing and employment and work to maximize the assets, overcome the barriers, and eventually reduce the gaps in the service milieus of these two service areas.
- *The Grants Development and Management Committee:* One of the benefits of having explicit expectations for improving prisoner reentry through the AK-PRI and its state and local structures and guidelines is an enhanced ability to be very competitive for local, state, federal and foundation grant dollars. This committee will serve the purpose of determining the availability of funding from all sources, determine those that are important to pursue and provide the structure, discipline and capacity to pursue and achieve enhanced funding. Federal grant making for prisoner reentry under the Second Chance Act, for example, has grown dramatically over the past decade and states with clear designs, strategies and tactics to reduce recidivism have an excellent track record for grant awards.
- *The Data, Evaluation, and Performance Committee:* The ability to track, record, monitor, report and share data between stakeholders that provides needed accountability for improved reentry services is paramount to success. This committee will serve as the forum for policies, processes and protocols for data system development and implementation.

The State Organizational Structure of the AK-PRI



LOCAL LEVEL ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES TO SUPPORT REFORM EFFORTS

The state will implement the Alaska Prisoner Reentry Initiative (AK-PRI) Framework locally beginning with a number of Community Pilot Sites in 2015, and then adding additional sites until the entire state is engaged. Community Pilot Sites will be organized under a structure that parallels the state-level organizational structure. Each Community Pilot Site has three key groups of stakeholders who will be instrumental to the wide range of activities needed for full implementation of the AK-PRI Initiative. The local organizational structure requires clear definition of roles and responsibilities with guidance for development by the Alaska Department of Corrections Office of Prisoner Reentry (OPR).

The Local AK-PRI Implementation Steering Team

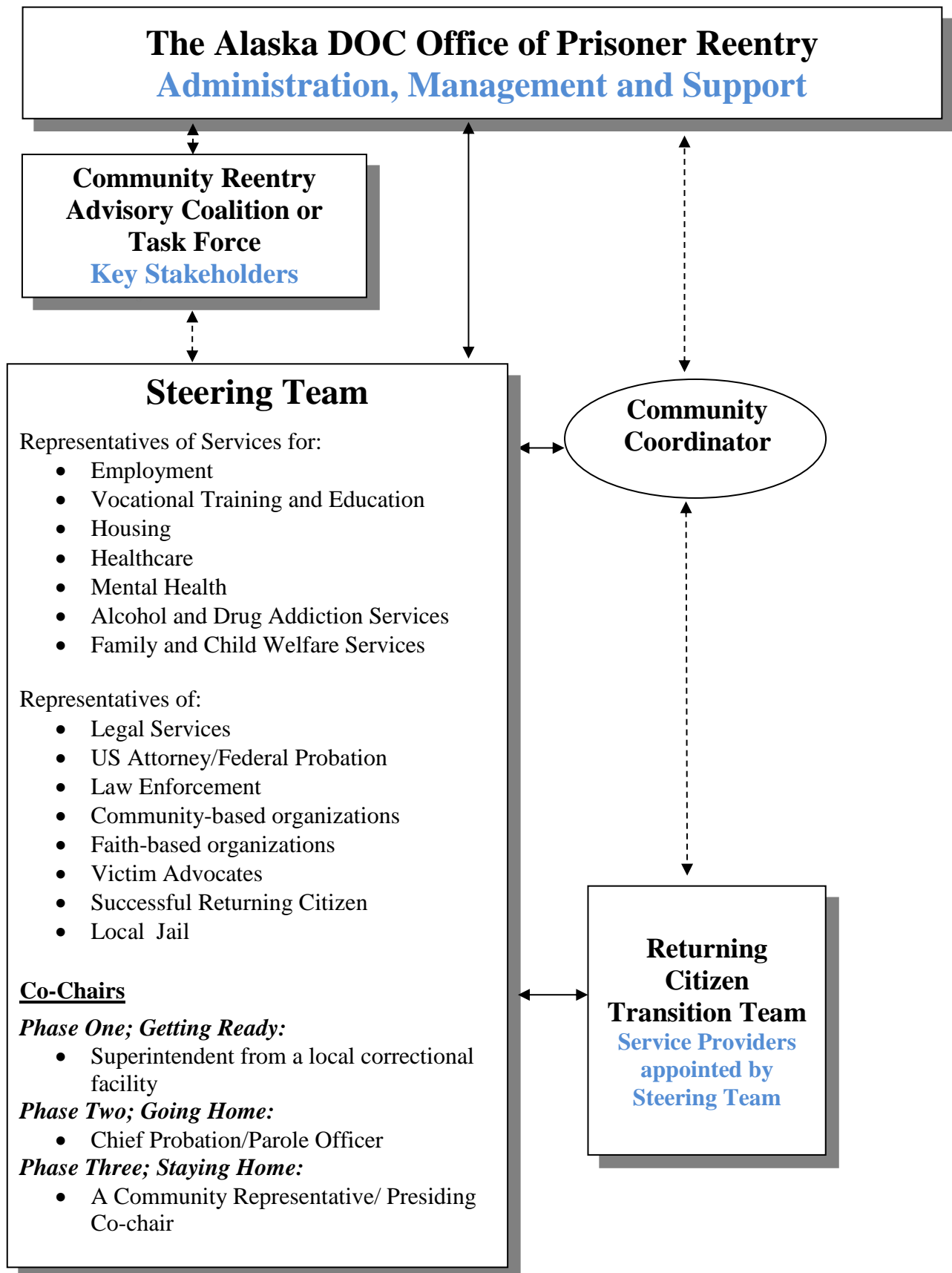
Develops, oversees, and monitors the local implementation process and coordinates local community involvement in the overall statewide AK-PRI development process. The Steering Team is organized under three co-chairs and will be staffed by a Community Coordinator:

1. The *Superintendent* of a local Correctional Facility or designee;
2. The *Chief Probation/Parole Officer* or designee;
3. A *Community Representative* drawn from the large number of local faith, human service, and planning organizations who are critical to the local effort who will act as the “presiding co-chair to lead the meetings and to represent the local face of prisoner reentry.

Each Steering Team includes representatives or service providers associated with the AK-PRI partner government agencies representing the service modalities that must be included in successful reentry planning. These representatives are active on the Steering Team because of the critical need for multi-agency collaboration and the encouragement and support of agency leaders who empower their active participation. The three co-chairs of the Steering Team will work with the local Community Coordinator who will be resourced for each site as the AK-PRI is implemented using a combination of local, state, federal and/or foundation funds. The Community Coordinator will staff the Steering Team under the guidance of the co-chairs. (See next section)

- *The Returning Citizen Transition Team:* Supports returning citizens in the transition planning process and guides the individual from the institution back into the community through a case-management approach. The Transition Teams are comprised of key local service providers, drawn from the membership of the Steering Teams, whose major responsibilities include the local and essential input needed to develop and implement the Offender Management Plan (OMP) for three phases of the AK-PRI, Reentry (OMP2), Community Supervision (OMP3) and Discharge (OMP4) as part of collaborative case management (See Tab 3, *The AK-PRI Collaborative Case Supervision and Management Model* for more detail)
- *Local Reentry Advisory Council:* Advises, informs, and supports the implementation process. The purpose of the councils are help build support for the local implementation of the AK-PRI Model and will work to educate the community on how the initiative will create safer neighborhoods and better citizens. Many jurisdictions already have councils and they will be invited to participate; in other jurisdictions they will be developed by the community with support from the OPR.

Local Organizational Structure of the AK-PRI



COORDINATING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: THE HEART OF THE AK-PRI

Strong and sustained local capacity is the single most critical aspect of the implementation of the Alaska Prisoner Reentry Initiative (AK-PRI). Pilot Site communities will become dedicated champions of improved reentry that will result in less crime through determined and specific preparation for inmates who will transition back to their communities. Local efforts at education, training, planning, and implementation need significant guidance and support in order to build the capacity for system reform. Each Pilot Site will have the benefit of a local Community Coordinator to help the community effectively prepare for reentry while the Alaska Department of Corrections (DOC) is better preparing returning citizens for release. The Community Coordinator will be assisted by local post-release supervision agencies.

Community convening and organizing will serve to elicit community buy-in and investment, plan for sustainability, and ensure quality results throughout the transition process. The Community Coordinators will receive training and technical support from the Alaska DOC Office of Prisoner Reentry (ORP) so that they are clear on how to manage the process based on the AK-PRI Framework. The four key ingredients for successful community organizing that the Community Coordinator will assist with are:

- *Capacity.* Each Community Coordinator must have the capacity to work on reentry. Indicators of adequate capacity include experience, staff capacity, resources to apply to the work, and relationships with key stakeholders.
- *Commitment.* Each Community Coordinator must demonstrate a dedicated commitment to reentry. Additionally, the community must develop a commitment to reentry. The development of community commitment may be fostered by the Community Coordinator. How is this level of interest perceived by other key community stakeholders?
- *Credibility.* The Community Coordinator must demonstrate credibility within the community. What is the demonstrated historic experience and credibility of the Community Coordinator in playing a catalytic role?
- *Knowledge.* What is the Community Coordinator's understanding of reentry and its implications?

The Skills of Community Coordinators: Local community-development efforts to implement the AK-PRI Framework will require a precise and extensive set of skills that will be the hallmarks of the Community Coordinators, who will staff the local development process. (See Tab 4, *Coordinating Community Development- the Heart of the AK-PRI* for more detail).

- *Communication.* The Community Coordinators must have excellent communications (both written and verbal) skills to facilitate connectedness among all implementation stakeholders. Communications must be facilitated both from the local communities to the statewide AK-PRI managers and from AK-PRI to the local communities.
- *Community convening.* The Community Coordinators must possess the skills to bring diverse stakeholders together, build consensus around reentry issues, and catalyze action and leadership within communities toward transition planning.
- *Community organizing.* Organizing within pilot communities involves training Steering Team members and Transition Team members, facilitating Reentry Advisory Council meetings, and building partnerships among key stakeholder groups.
- *Brokering.* When acting as a broker within communities, the Community Coordinator can benefit from maintaining a degree of neutrality to negotiate effectively through community conflict.

Extensive skills in brokering and fostering neutrality will be a central requirement of a Community Coordinator.

- *Coordinating.* The implementation planning associated with AK-PRI is challenging to coordinate. Maintaining connectedness to community activities will require extensive coordinating by the Community Coordinator.
- *Systems building.* Building systems and shepherding cross-systems change requires a complex set of skills. The Community Coordinator must have experience in building and managing system-wide change.

The Responsibilities of Community Coordinators: The involvement of communities in the AK-PRI includes three “focus areas” for Community Coordinators.

Focus Area One: Coordination and communication regarding the evolving design of the AK-PRI Framework so that each of the seven primary decision points is deeply influenced by the community perspective. The iterative process of refining the Framework will require open communication and effective coordination to ensure that community input is captured, the community has an accurate understanding of the Framework, and expectations for implementation are clearly defined. The affected policies and practices provide a rich context for an examination of the community’s role in the AK-PRI and thus a guide to the work.

- **Task 1.** The Community Coordinator will be responsible for facilitating communication with local stakeholders and with ORP to ensure that the evolving design of AK-PRI Framework is informed by the community perspective.

Focus Area Two: Facilitation and coordination regarding the identification of: (1) community assets that can be applied to improve returning citizen success, (2) policy and operational barriers among state and local agencies, and (3) service gaps that must be filled.

- **Task 2.** The community-assessment task of evaluating the assets, barriers, and gaps will be organized by the Community Coordinator. (See Tab 5 for the *AK-PRI Community Assessment Instrument*).
- **Task 3.** Committees will be formed to address these issues. Community representation on the AK-PRI committees will be coordinated by the Community Coordinator.

Focus Area Three: The design and implementation by local Pilot Sites of Comprehensive Reentry Plans that will provide the framework, rationale, and funding – when it is available from local, state, federal and private sources - for improved policies, practices, and programs whose success will be measured by reduced crime and fewer returns to prison. The Community Coordinator will facilitate the local process and provide the staff support needed to write the Comprehensive Plan.

The local Comprehensive Plan is developed from two primary sources of information. First, state DOC “pipeline data” that provides the community with the number and characteristics of citizens expected to return in the planning year. Second, the results of the community assessment process described above.

- **Task 4.** Coordinating the completion of the Comprehensive Community Reentry Plans utilizing DOC “pipeline data” and the result of the local community assessment process. .

Focus Area Four: The Offender Management Plan (OMP) process must be coordinated with prison officials, release authorities, supervising agencies and the local steering team.

- **Task 5.** The Community Coordinator will be responsible for making certain the information from the first Offender Management Plan (OMP1) is in the hands of the local AK-PRI Steering Team.
- **Task 6.** The Community Coordinator will be responsible for making certain that the expected release date and location of the offender is communicated to the local Steering Team.
- **Task 7.** The Community Coordinator will be responsible for ensuring that the local reentry Chief Parole and the Chief Probation Officer coordinates the logistics for the interaction of the Transition Team and the local prison and for the convening and facilitation of local Team meetings to develop the OMPs.
- **Task 8.** Since the Community Coordinators will be acting as staff for the local Steering Teams and their Reentry Councils, one of their many responsibilities will be to coordinate the planning and implementation of the fourth and final OMP (OMP4: The Discharge OMP) that will be the explicit “hand off” of the parolee’s case to responsible parties in the community who will continue providing services and guidance to the returning citizen.

OFFENDER MANAGEMENT PLANS AND THE IMPORTANCE OF PRISON IN-REACH

The lynchpin of the AK-PRI Model is the development and use of Offender Management Plans (OMPs) at four critical points in the transition process. Each of the OMPs succinctly describe for the returning citizen, the corrections and/or field staff and the community exactly what is expected for a successful re-entry process. Under the Alaska Prisoner ReEntry Initiative (AK-PRI) Model, the OMPs, which consist of summaries of the returning citizen’s case management plan at critical junctures in the transition process, are prepared with each returning citizen at reception as part of the prison intake process (Phase I), as part of the release decision process when the returning citizen is approaching the end of their confinement (Phase II), when the returning citizen re-enters the community (Phase III), and when the returning citizen is to be discharged from probation/parole supervision (Phase IV). So, OMPs serve as concise guides for returning citizens, corrections and field staff and community service providers:

- **OMP1:** The expectations while imprisoned that will help returning citizens prepare for release.
- **OMP2:** The terms and conditions of the returning citizen’s release to communities.
- **OMP3:** The supervision and services returning citizens will experience in the community.
- **OMP4:** The Case Management Plan for eventual discharge from parole and/or probation.

The OMP integrates transition from prisons to communities by spanning phases in the transition process and agency boundaries. The OMP is a collaborative product that at any given time may involve institutional staff, the returning citizen, the parole board, parole/probation officers, human services providers (public and/or private), victims, and neighborhood and community organizations. The OMP describes actions that must occur to prepare individual returning citizens for release to the community, defines terms and conditions of their probation/parole supervision, specifies both the type and degree of supervision and the array of services they will experience in the community, and describes their eventual discharge to aftercare upon successful completion of supervision from probation and/or parole.

The objective of the OMP process is to increase both overall community protection by lowering risk to persons and property and by increasing individual returning citizen’s prospects for successful return to

and self-sufficiency in the community. The OMP process begins soon after returning citizens enter prison and continues during their terms of confinement, through their release from prison, and continues after their discharge from supervision as an evolving framework for aftercare provided by human service agencies or other means of self-help and support. The OMP1 is developed by institutional probation officers and education staff in the prisons that form the OMP1 Transition Team. Beginning with the OMP2, the OMPs are developed by a Transition Team that includes institutional staff, probation/parole supervision staff, and community agencies and service providers.

Thus, the membership of the Transition Team and their respective roles and responsibilities change over time as the returning citizen moves through the reentry process. During the institutional phase (OMP1) institutional probation officers leads the team. During the reentry and community supervision phases (OMP2 and OMP3) Prison In-Reach specialists – if they are available – or probation/parole offices lead the team with both institutional staff and community services providers as partners in the collaborative process. After returning citizens have successfully completed community supervision, their OMP will continue as needed and be managed by staff of human services agencies as the returning citizen continues to receive services and support (OMP4). At each stage in the process Transition Team members will use a collaborative case management model to monitor progress in implementing the OMP.

The OMP reduces uncertainty in terms of release dates and actions (and timing of actions) that need to be taken by returning citizens, prison staff, the parole board, parole and probation agents, and partnering community agencies. Increased certainty will motivate returning citizens to fully participate in the OMP process and to become engaged in fulfilling their responsibilities and will ensure that all parties are held accountable for timely performance of their respective responsibilities. *(See the illustration on page 19)*

The most pivotal activity that distinguishes the old way of doing business from the new way is the Prison In-Reach process that is the centerpiece of AK-PRI Phase II, the Reentry Phase. Prison In-Reach is the process by which community-based human service organizations work with the department on the development of the OMPs. When reviewing the Policy Statements and Recommendations that comprise the AK-PRI Model, the importance of the Prison In-Reach process becomes more focused. There are a series of Policy Statements in the AK-PRI Model that require an aggressive and productive Prison In-Reach process followed by an equally aggressive supervision strategy – especially during the pivotal first month of release.

PRINCIPLES THAT GUIDE THE OMP DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

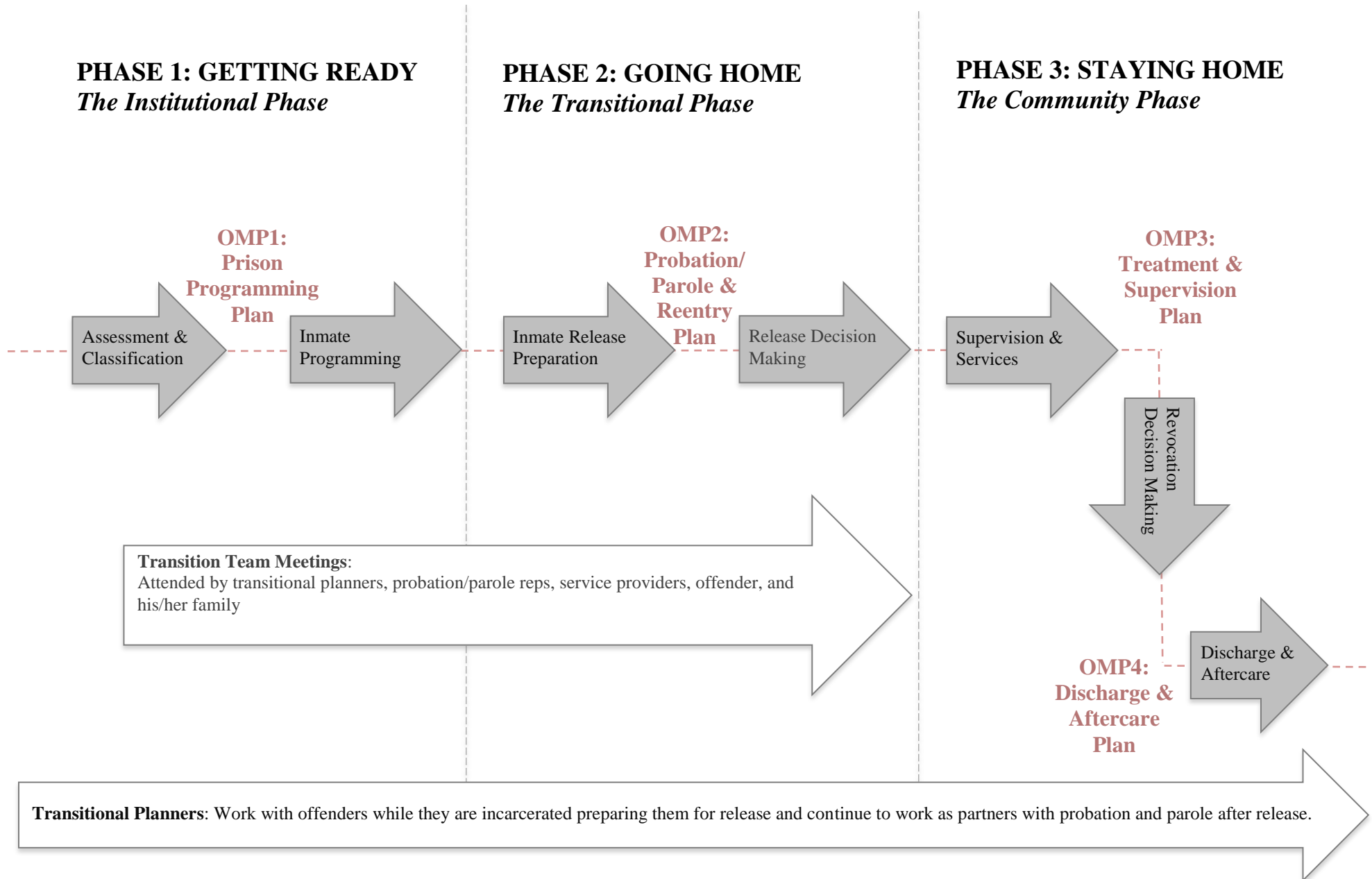
1. The OMP process starts during returning citizen's classification soon after their admission to prison and continues through their ultimate discharge from community supervision.
2. OMPs define programs or interventions to modify returning citizen's dynamic risk factors that were identified in a systematic assessment process; address the returning citizen's needs and build on the identified strength of each individual. The returning citizen is at the center of the process.
3. OMPs are sensitive to the requirements of public safety, and to the rational timing and availability of services. In an ideal system, every returning citizen would have access to programs and services to modify dynamic risk factors. In a system constrained by finite resources, the rational access to services and resources requires using risk management strategies as the basis for that allocation.

4. Appropriate partners should participate in the planning and implementation of individual returning citizen's OMPs. These include the returning citizen, institutional staff, parole board authorities, supervision authorities, victims, returning citizen's families and significant others, community-based treatment agencies, housing organizations and other human service agencies, and volunteer and faith-based organizations. While corrections staff lead the Transition Team, community representatives are vital partners in the process. The design of the OMP is a collaborative process.
5. Individual OMPs delineate the specific responsibilities of returning citizens, correctional agencies and system partners in the creation, modification, and effective application of the plans. The OMPs hold them accountable for performance of those responsibilities. While all four OMPs should include the types of services that are needed to address identified needs, reduce identified risks and build on identified strengths, beginning with the OMP2, they should encompass the enrollment of the returning citizen in the agencies responsible for the services. The OMP2 is the first OMP that is developed as a "prison in-reach" process that brings community representatives into the prisons to interact with the returning citizens. **Prison In-Reach – the process through which community-based human service agencies work with the DOC to develop the OMP - is a major distinction between the way business has been done in the past and the way it is improved and the single most important innovation of the AK-PRI Initiative.**
6. OMPs provide a long-term road map to achieve continuity in the delivery of treatments and services, and in the sharing of requisite information, both over time and across and between agencies. This is particularly essential during the re-entry phase (Phase II) when the boundaries between agencies are literally fences and brick walls. The OMP2 must serve as more than a plan – it must serve as a highly specific schedule of events beginning with the first hour that a returning citizen is released and has his or her Orientation Session with the probation/parole officer, and must include the expectations of how the returning citizen will spend his or her time during at least the first month of release. Perhaps the most vulnerable time for returning citizens is their first month in the community.
7. The Collaborative Case Management and Supervision (CCMS) process is used to arrange, advocate, coordinate, and monitor the delivery of a package of services needed to meet the specific returning citizen's needs. During the prison portion of the OMP process, institutional probation officers function as case managers. As returning citizens prepare for release and adjust to community supervision, their field probation/parole officer serves as the central and primary case manager. When they are successfully discharged from supervision, a staff member from a human service agency may assume case management responsibilities for returning citizens who continue to need services and support.

(See Tab 6, *Offender Management Plans and the Critical Importance of Prison In-Reach*; and Tab 3, *Collaborative Case Management and Supervision*).

Offender Management Planning (OMP) Flowchart

For more detail, see Tab 7, AK-PRI Case Logic Model



The Alaska DOC Recidivism Reduction Plan

ADDENDA (available upon request)

Tab 1: *AK-PRI Framework, Summary*

Tab 2: *AK-PRI Framework, Targets for Change*

Tab 3: *AK-PRI Collaborative Case Supervision and Management Model*

Tab 4: *Coordinating Community Development- the Heart of the AK-PRI*

Tab 5: *AK-PRI Community Assessment Instrument*

Tab 6: *Offender Management Plans and the Critical Importance of Prison In-Reach*

Tab 7: *AK-PRI Case Logic Model*

About The Center for Justice Innovation

The Michigan Crime and Delinquency's Center for Justice Innovation specializes in adult corrections and justice policy issues and seeks to build capacity within state and local jurisdictions to improve both system and individual offender outcomes through the use of evidence-based practices. These improved outcomes include:

- (1) Fewer crimes committed by formerly incarcerated individuals and individuals who have been or are currently under correctional supervision in the community;
- (2) Community and institution-based programs that demonstrate increased fidelity to the standards of evidence-based practices;
- (3) Prevention of unnecessary confinement of offenders in jail and prisons; and,
- (4) Reduced costs and improved efficiencies.

The Center is led by Dennis Schrantz, who has worked in ten states over the past 10 years to assist state and local jurisdictions in improving their policies and practices for prisoner reentry. One of Mr. Schrantz's major accomplishments in prisoner reentry was his work over seven years in the Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) where, as chief deputy director and an appointee of Governor Jennifer M. Granholm, he led efforts to design, implement, monitor, and evaluate the Michigan Prisoner ReEntry Initiative (MPRI).

MPRI contributed to a decline in the prison population of nearly 17% in six years, allowing the closure of 21 prisons and a projected cost savings to the state of \$339 million annually in averted prison costs;¹⁶ all while the reinvesting over \$50 million annually in supervision and reentry services. Based on data from nearly 33,000 former prisoners who participated in MPRI from 2005 through 2011, Michigan has witnessed unparalleled successes: a 38% reduction in parolee revocations to prison; an increase in the parole approval rate from an average of 48% to nearly 75% because of the Parole Board's increase confidence in Michigan's reentry strategy; and, a 42% decrease in technical violations despite a 40% increase in the parolee population.¹⁷

Michigan's ability to integrate research into the policies and practices that reduce recidivism has been highlighted in numerous publications¹⁸ and has established MCCD as a leading national expert on how to reduce the return-to-prison recidivism rate of former prisoners, reduce prison populations, and reinvest prison dollars into communities.

¹⁶ The Sentencing Project, *On the Chopping Block: State Prison Closings*, 2012.

¹⁷ Michigan Department of Corrections, *Trends in Key Indicators*, 2013.

¹⁸ See, for example: *Downscaling Prisons; Lessons from Four States* (The Sentencing Project, 2010), *On the Chopping Block: State Prison Closings* (The Sentencing Project, 2012); *Michigan Breaks the Political Logjam: A New Model for Reducing Prison Populations* (The ACLU, 2009) and, from the *Washington Monthly*, "Prison Break: How Michigan Managed to Empty its Penitentiaries while Lowering its Crime Rate."; The Council of State Governments, *States Report Reductions in Recidivism*.