

Contra Costa County Evaluation of AB 109 Programs



Prepared by:

Resource Development Associates

May 2015





Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	2
I. Introduction	29
II. Key Findings	32
III. Program Strengths and Facilitators of Client Success	37
IV. Program Challenges and Barriers to Client Success	44
V. Recommendations	54
VI. Appendices	A-1
Appendix A: Methods	A-2
Appendix B: Program-Level Reports	A-4
Bay Area Legal Aid	A-5
Brighter Beginnings.....	A-11
Center for Human Development	A-16
Goodwill.....	A-23
Men and Women of Purpose.....	A-30
Reach	A-34
Rubicon	A-39
Shelter, Inc.	A-46
Appendix C: Logic Model	A-Error! Bookmark not defined.
Appendix D: GAINS Reentry Checklist.....	A-52



Executive Summary

Introduction

In implementing Assembly Bill (AB) 109, or Public Safety Realignment, Contra Costa County, along with all California counties, ultimately hopes to see long-term impacts including improvements in recidivism rates, quality of life, and fiscal efficiency. In November 2013, Contra Costa County contracted with Resource Development Associates (RDA) to support the implementation and evaluation of the County's AB 109 efforts. This report builds on the first year's efforts by evaluating the implementation and preliminary outcomes of the County's contracted AB 109 service providers.¹

The current evaluation covered the period of time from July 1, 2013, when the AB 109 service contracts began, through September 30, 2014, prior to the implementation of the Reentry Network for Returning Citizens in East and Central County. In addition, Contra Costa County's AB 109 reentry programs and networks are still in the process of being developed and implemented. These findings are thus preliminary and are intended to help the County make data-driven decisions moving forward.

It is important to note that while some AB 109 services, such as housing assistance and employment, have very clear and measureable outcomes, services such as mentorship and family reunification often have intangible outcomes that are harder to document and measure. Further, while the focus of this report is primarily on the contracted community-based organizations (CBOs) themselves, because the CBOs operate as part of a larger County AB 109 reentry infrastructure, evaluating the CBOs necessarily involves an assessment of that infrastructure as well. Although we did not focus on collecting data from County departments for this report, we draw on the findings from the previous evaluation to support our understanding and evaluation of the County's AB 109 reentry infrastructure.

This report presents findings on strengths and challenges that were similar across programs, as well as strengths and challenges for each individual CBO. Findings highlight factors related to both the programs themselves, as well as to the

Evaluation Methods

The evaluation team collected a range of qualitative and quantitative data.

- Interviews and meetings with service providers;
- Focus groups with program participants, including current participants and individuals who enrolled in programs and subsequently discontinued participation;
- Quantitative data on client enrollment and service provision from service providers;
- AB 109 clients' risks and needs as assessed by the Probation Department using the CAIS (Correctional Assessment and Intervention System); and
- Data on referrals to CBOs and County departments from the Probation Department's electronic case management system.

¹ Given the time period of the evaluation, the evaluation includes the eight community-based organizations (CBOs) that were contracted to provide services beginning in Fiscal Year 2013-14. It does not include the additional organizations that were contracted beginning in Fiscal Year 2014-15.



county's broader AB 109 system of supervision and services. This approach is intended to give the County the information necessary to help improve service delivery and client outcomes by building on facilitators of success and helping to mitigate barriers.

There were a total of 1,103 AB 109 clients under the supervision of the Contra Costa County Probation Department at any point between July 1, 2013 and September 30, 2014, with 612 individuals beginning AB 109 supervision during this time period. Of the 1,103 individuals who were under AB 109 supervision at any point during this time, the Probation Department referred 455 individuals to a total of 799 services provided by AB 109-contracted CBOs. Because individuals were sometimes referred to the same service multiple times, there were a total of 922 referrals to CBOs made. Three hundred forty-seven (347) of the 455 probation clients who were referred to CBO services—or more than 76%—decided to engage, enrolling in a total of 561 services. Table 1 below presents an overview of the referrals to and enrollments in the CBOs included in this evaluation.

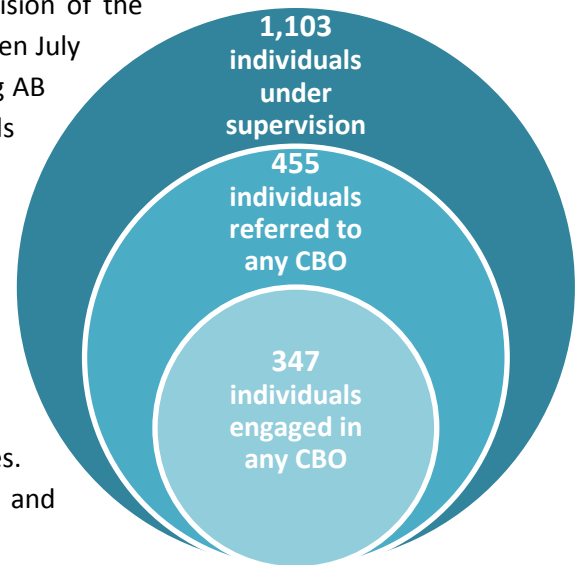


Table 1: Referrals and Enrollments by Provider

Referral Location	Individuals Referred ²	Enrolled
Bay Area Legal Aid	45	61 ³
Brighter Beginnings	<i>n/a</i>	80 ⁴
Center for Human Development	<i>n/a</i>	35
Goodwill Industries	136	77
Men and Women of Purpose	<i>n/a</i>	75
Mentoring ⁵	126	<i>n/a</i>
Reach ⁶	<i>n/a</i>	25
Rubicon	253	164
Shelter, Inc.	238	115
Total	799⁷	632⁸

² This is according to referral records extracted from the Probation Department's Access Database. Many CBOs reported different numbers of individuals referred than the Probation Department's database indicated.

³ The higher number of individuals enrolled than referred by Probation may be the result of referrals BayLegal receives directly from Rubicon as a subcontractor and from its collaborations with Goodwill and Shelter, Inc.

⁴ This number includes participants who were served prior to sentencing; participants may not have ultimately received an AB 109 sentence.

⁵ Prior to October 2014, referrals to mentoring programs, including Brighter Beginnings, Center for Human Development, and Men and Women of Purpose went to the County Office of Education (CCCOE). The CCCOE then referred clients to specific CBOs. We did not receive data from CCCOE for this evaluation detailing the number of referrals received by each CBO.

⁶ As of September 2014, Reach had yet to begin receiving direct referrals from the Probation Department. Service numbers include participants who were served prior to sentencing and as part of Reach's FY 2013-14 contract with the Sheriff's Office; participants may not have ultimately received an AB 109 sentence.



Key Findings

Looking across the services delivered by the eight service providers and the preliminary outcomes of the 347 AB 109 clients who chose to engage in services, a number of important trends emerge.

- Building a reentry infrastructure is still a work in progress. Various elements of this process are still evolving, including the referral process, roles and responsibilities of County and CBO partners, data collection systems, and CBO service delivery models.
- Housing and employment services are in high demand. Goodwill Industries, Rubicon, and Shelter, Inc. each have more service referrals than all mentoring programs combined. In addition, those programs appear to be successfully helping clients address their immediate housing and transitional employment needs. The extent to which that corresponds with long-term housing and employment stability remains to be seen, given limited availability of jobs and housing, as well as the other challenges many clients face.
- Programs appear to best support clients when they combine tangible benefits, such as housing, employment, or vocational certifications, with individualized case management and guidance.
- Limited pre-release access has hampered programs' ability to educate individuals about available services and promote post-release engagement.
- Clients expressed high-levels of satisfaction with services overall, with clients expressing varying levels of satisfaction with the different providers. Although the evaluation can quantify some of the tangible benefits achieved through the employment and housing programs, it is difficult to quantify or measure the impact of those providers who offer more intangible services such as mentoring or family reunification.
- Providers identified the referral process and unmet substance use needs as key barriers to successful service provision. While the referral process has improved, it continues to be challenging for a number of reasons including incorrect client contact information, varying provider capacity, a multiplicity of interrelated client needs, and more. These are elaborated on with greater detail in this report.

Program Strengths and Facilitators of Client Success

1. Program-level factors

Flexible program models

- Contracted providers have consistently adapted and modified their programs and services to better meet the needs of AB 109 clients.

Provision of material benefits

- Programs that provide material benefits such as housing and paid employment are directly meeting the basic needs of reentering individuals.

⁷ This number includes clients who were referred to multiple programs.

⁸ This number includes clients who enrolled in multiple programs.



Combination of structured services and individualized assistance

- Programs that are best able to target individuals' needs operate with a combination of formal activities—some of which use evidence-based models or curricula—and the flexibility to tailor services to individuals' circumstances.
- Programs that combine skill building and relationship building offer optimal support to clients, building clients' hard and soft skills while also providing guidance and motivation. Skill building and relationship building are both necessary program components—but alone may not be sufficient—in supporting participants' success.

Coordination and collaboration

- Several organizations described formal and informal arrangements with other CBOs, which allow them to coordinate service delivery, including formal subcontracts and co-location agreements and informal case conferencing.
- Programs that connect participants to multiple services and resources within their organization support client success by addressing multiple client barriers and providing various opportunities for participants to maintain engagement with the organization.

Data capacity

- Some programs have a high level of data capacity, including electronic case management systems, enabling them to accurately track referrals, enrollments, services provided, and client outcomes. These programs are also well-positioned to use data to inform program modifications.

Client satisfaction

- High client satisfaction levels indicate that clients find the available programs to be helpful.

2. AB 109 system level factors

Supportive approach to supervision and availability of services

- Contra Costa County is building an AB 109 reentry infrastructure that combines supportive supervision and the provision of services. Participants noted that their supportive relationships with their probation officers, in combination with the availability of supportive services, is a marked shift from past supervision experiences and is helping them reenter successfully.

Pre-release contact

- When the County system facilitates pre-release contact with programs in alignment with the Jail to Community model, providers are better positioned to engage participants and can address barriers to employment and housing more quickly.

Coordination of services

- The degree to which County and CBO providers coordinate and communicate about referrals allows the system to better prioritize and match individual needs with available services.
- Most programs reported that Probation's referrals have improved over time—including improved consistency of referrals from different probation officers and a better fit between referrals and



clients' needs—indicating that probation officers are developing greater knowledge about the available services.

- Many individuals receive services from multiple contracted providers. This may indicate that the County is making progress toward building an integrated reentry infrastructure, though at the same time it is important to note possible duplication of services.
- While the evaluation period did not officially include the time during which Reentry Network for Returning Citizens in East and Central County was implemented, some conversations with providers that occurred after October 1, 2014 elicited positive initial feedback in terms of the possibility of greater coordination of services.

Program Challenges and Barriers to Client Success

1. Program-level factors

Program startup

- Because programs spent considerable time and effort launching and refining services during the first contract year, many served fewer clients or for shorter durations than intended; in addition, they may not have achieved target client outcomes.

Program capacity

- Programs vary in their capacity to provide high quality services to the desired number of participants. Some programs reported that had the capacity to serve a greater number of clients. One reported receiving more referrals than they were contracted to provide. Some programs also struggled to consistently carry out their intended program activities.

Data capacity

- A number of programs demonstrated limited capacity to collect and report accurate data on their referrals, clients, and/or service delivery.

Program fit to range of client needs

- While it appears that the available community-based programs are well aligned with the needs of most individuals on AB 109 supervision, there are participants whose level of need is too high for the programs to serve them effectively. For example, it can be difficult to engage individuals with serious mental health issues or untreated substance abuse issues in employment, housing, or family reunification services. By contrast, some participants with greater education, skills, or social networks may feel less aligned with the services available.
- The need for immediate income to cover basic needs and housing costs can make participation in job training workshops difficult and can lead to gaps in time between release and obtaining stable housing.
- The majority of clients in all programs except for Reach are male; as a result, some programs may be less responsive to the needs of female clients, and some female clients may feel less



comfortable in some programs. Some participants also expressed a need for program support outside of normal business hours.

- In addition, program staff commented that some participants are simply not interested in receiving any services.

2. AB 109 system level factors

Service referrals

- While there have been improvements in the rate and timing of referrals, the number of referrals and the referral process itself continue to be major factors impacting service delivery to clients.
- It is not clear how all of the domains assessed by the Probation Department's Correctional Assessment and Intervention System (CAIS) tool align to specific service domains, making it difficult to determine how many individuals could have been referred to each different type of service.
- Clients' multiple and interdependent needs can make it challenging to know how to best prioritize and sequence service referral and delivery.
- Referrals do not always come with correct client contact information, impeding client engagement and follow-up.
- The referral process creates delays and bottlenecks. While the process allows Probation to track referrals and manage clients' cases, it leads to significant back and forth between programs and Probation, often delaying receipt of services.
- The Probation Department is still limited in its capacity to make pre-release referrals.

Timing and frequency of pre-release access

- Programs report that limitations in pre-release access, including the frequency of access, time of day, and/or length of time per visit, negatively affect their ability to engage participants in the critical time prior to reentry. Having the ability to develop those relationships while the client is still in custody benefits their short and long-term success.

Communication and coordination

- While communication and coordination appear to have improved over time, mechanisms for systematic and streamlined communication among CBOs and between CBOs and Probation are still evolving.
- Individuals on AB 109 supervision report receiving limited information about what it means to be under AB 109 supervision or the opportunities available to them.

Gaps in available services

- Housing assistance for AB 109 individuals remains very limited, as there is a limited availability of housing itself and current housing providers are over capacity.
- Transportation assistance came up as a frequent barrier to successfully engaging both with reentry programs as well as with potential and future employers.



3. Broader structural issues impacting the success of reentry programming

It is important to note that there are a number of factors beyond the County's control which nonetheless impact the success of AB 109 programs and the individuals served therein. Below we note some of the most commonly mentioned issues.

Housing and employment for individuals with felony convictions

- For clients with felony convictions or poor credit histories, the limited availability of both stable housing and competitive employment restricts long-term success. As a result, individuals often end up living in places that are not conducive to their recovery or successful reentry.

Access to government assistance

- Across the range of participants, unequal access to government assistance programs including public housing resources and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)/CalFresh for those convicted of drug sales, has served as a significant barrier for reentering individuals in being able to meet basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter.

Resolution of suspended driver's licenses

- Suspended driver's licenses for reentering individuals are a significant barrier to employment. While Homeless Court provides an opportunity to resolve a suspended driver's license, it can be difficult to access Homeless Court as the calendar can be backed up for many months.

Overall, program staff explained that individuals participating in pre-release programs often express hope and good intentions for their lives post release, but when immediate linkage to housing and other supports is not available, it can be difficult to stay afloat: *"Once they get out the system is not there to hold them, so they don't follow through."* When the AB 109 system cannot provide an immediate safety net upon release, individuals are more likely to fall into old habits.

Recommendations

1. Engage in a comprehensive planning process to improve overall system coordination

To date, Contra Costa County has engaged in a number of planning process related to AB 109, including the 2011/12 Public Safety Realignment Implementation Plan; the 2012 AB 109 Operational Plan; the 2013 East and Central County Network Plan; and the 2013 West County Reentry Resource Center Plan. While these efforts have been critical in helping the County begin to lay the groundwork necessary for an AB 109 reentry infrastructure, the development of a coordinated AB 109 system is a work in progress and several issues remain.

In order to develop a coordinated system, we recommend the County engage in a comprehensive planning process involving representatives from all County departments and community-based organizations involved in the AB 109 infrastructure. Specifically, the planning process should address the following issues.



A. Processes for triaging clients with multiple, overlapping needs

Last year's evaluation pointed to the need to ensure that clients' service referrals are adequately prioritized and sequenced, rather than given all at once. The evaluation found several challenges with prioritizing and sequencing referrals:

- **Identification and triage of referrals:** Because domains assessed via the CAIS tool do not all neatly align with service domains, there does not appear to be a clear process regarding how to translate CAIS results into service referrals. In addition, there does not appear to be a systematic approach to triaging services for individuals with a multiplicity of needs. It may be that the County should adopt a second brief tool, such as the GAINS Reentry Checklist (shared in the last report and included here as Appendix D), that can link client needs directly to service referrals, but there needs to be agreement around what tool to use, who should use it (Probation, the Network Field Ops and West County Data Administrator, both), and which referrals should stem from what needs.
- **Behavioral Health Services:** Behavioral health needs were identified as a key barrier to engagement in services; providers stressed that it is important to address individuals' substance abuse and/or mental health needs before they can engage in further services. According to CAIS results, approximately 70% of AB 109 clients have alcohol and/or drug abuse needs; in addition, the Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC) and CDCR estimate that 20% of AB 109 clients have a diagnosed mental health need.⁹ As the referral process currently operates, Probation makes referrals to Behavioral Health Services (BHS) and Probation makes parallel referrals to CBOs and/or Network Field Ops, but there does not appear to be a comprehensive approach to coordinate these referrals. Recent plans for revising the referral process focus on the relationship between Probation and the Network and Reentry Center, without addressing the role of BHS.

B. Communication processes and information flow between the Sheriff's Office, Probation Department, and CBOs

There is an opportunity for improved coordination and communication among the players in the AB 109 system, including 1) among contracted providers; 2) between providers and the Probation Department; 3) between providers, The Probation Department, and Behavioral Health Services; and 4) between providers and the Sheriff's Office. This includes:

- **Communication protocols related to referrals:** One of the challenges with the current referral process is that there is a one-way communication system, with DPOs sending referrals but having no mechanism to follow up to find out if their clients followed through. Similarly, CBOs do not have a clear mechanism to follow up with DPOs to review the appropriateness of the referral, ask questions about the client, seek accurate contact information, etc. Because there is

⁹ <http://www.cpoc.org/assets/Realignment/issuebrief4.pdf>



not a streamlined process for communication between Probation, Behavioral Health, and CBOs, DPOs may not know whether or not their clients are following up to engage and, if not, why not.

- **Status change communication:** CBOs are not regularly updated when their clients return to custody. This can mean that they waste limited staff time trying to connect with clients and it means that they cannot work with Probation and/or the Sheriff's Office to understand why the individual was reincarcerated and try to help address the underlying issues. Limitations with the Sheriff's Office's Jail Management System, noted in the previous evaluation, may also limit the Sheriff's Office's ability to notify Probation about the reincarceration of AB 109 clients if those individuals come in on new charges.
- **Bottlenecks:** While routing all referrals through clients' DPOs is critical for tracking services in a unified place and for allowing POs oversight of their clients, it leads to significant bottlenecks and places undue burden on DPOs who may need to respond to referral requests from multiple CBOs for dozens of clients. Improved communication protocols could help address this issue, but it is also important to broaden the Probation Department's capacity to respond to referrals quickly. One possible option for alleviating the burden on DPOs and reducing this bottleneck is to establish referral coordination as an administrative responsibility in the Probation Department, rather than primarily as the domain of DPOs. If a person or people in administrative positions could receive and respond to referral requests from CBOs, confirm clients' AB 109 status, and record confirmed referrals, this could allow referrals to flow with fewer time delays and without requiring immediate response from DPOs, who may be out in the field and unable to respond.

C. Pre-release case planning and service receipt

The majority of AB 109-contracted service providers do participate in some amount of in-custody service provision; however, all report that this access is insufficient to do the amount of planning necessary to prepare individuals for release. At the same time, providing extensive pre-release access for a multiplicity of CBOs who provide a range of services can be burdensome for the Sheriff's Office, which needs to provide classroom and meeting space, ensure adequate staffing and security, conduct background checks, etc. Again, a coordinated planning process that brings together the Sheriff's Office, Probation, Behavioral Health Services, and CBOs could establish a comprehensive agreement around pre-release access and case planning. Moreover, improved communication, recommended above, could eliminate the need for all partners to engage in separate pre-release planning meetings and processes, instead establishing point people (or point agencies) to lead pre-release planning processes and communicate these plans to other partners.

D. Communication about AB 109 services

Clients, providers, and probation officers alike would benefit from greater knowledge of the available services.



2. Address critical need and service gaps

There are a number of unmet or difficult-to-meet needs to limit the ability of CBOs to adequately support AB 109 clients. Some of these issues are related to services, while others are more related to laws, regulations, employment and housing practices, and supply shortages that are broader than the AB 109 system itself.

A. Service gaps

Providing or augmenting the following services has the potential to reduce the barriers individuals face upon reentry and thereby increase the effectiveness of the AB 109-contracted programming.

- **Transportation assistance.** Both clients and providers noted challenges with transportation as a barrier to service receipt and to other facilitators of success, such as to work. During the prior evaluation period, the evaluation team observed DPOs disseminating transit cards to clients; however, the amount of transportation assistance available may not meet the level of need.
- **Food assistance.** A number of individuals indicated a need for food assistance, particularly individuals who cannot access CalFresh because of certain felony drug convictions. The County should consider short-term food assistance for these individuals. In addition, all AB 109 system partners should make better use of BayLegal's assistance appealing benefit denials by referring these clients to BayLegal services. The County should also ensure that relationships and referral processes are in place with the County's General Assistance administration and CalFresh.
- **Housing availability and funding.** Locating and retaining housing are both challenges for individuals with little to no income, poor credit histories, past evictions, and felony convictions. Moreover, Shelter, Inc., the primary housing service provider is the only CBO to report receiving more referrals than they can respond to. To help address this issue, the County should reallocate unspent housing funding to existing and/or new providers and consider allocating funds for more and/or longer transitional housing.
- **Access to Homeless Court and family law assistance.** Providers emphasized the magnitude of the issue of driver's license suspensions in impacting individuals' ability to obtain employment. While praising the Homeless Court as an avenue for resolving suspensions, they noted that there can be serious Ensure that partnerships and referral pathways are in place with the Family Law Facilitator program

B. Laws, regulations, employment and housing practices, and supply shortages

While employment and housing placement assistance offer critical support to individuals reentering the community, these programs can only go so far; the actual housing and employment options for the reentry population are severely limited. The County should enhance partnerships with employers and landlords/property managers to increase the availability of and access to employment and housing.

- **Availability of and access to competitive employment opportunities.** The County should create a formal partnership with the Workforce Development Board to help identify and link AB 109



individuals to employment opportunities. Further, creating opportunities for CBO staff and/or probation officers to connect directly with employers to provide character references for individuals they are working with and/or supervising. The County should also designate or partner with staff to train employers on

- **Availability of and access to housing.** The County should work with developers and other County offices to discuss options for more affordable, sober living housing options for formerly incarcerated individuals, including both transitional and stable housing. The County should designate or partner with staff to train landlords/property managers in fair housing practices and discrimination.¹⁰

3. Continue to enhance data collection and monitoring capacity

While some CBOs—including Rubicon, Shelter, Inc., and Bay Area Legal Aid—have a high level of data capacity and facility, other CBOs continue to struggle with data capacity. While this capacity will improve as organizations are trained in the ServicePoint system, it will be important to ensure that contracted providers are held to standards and that they receive the capacity development and technical assistance to get there. Either the ServicePoint administrator or the Network Coordinator should review CBO data entry on a monthly basis to ensure accurate and timely data entry. In addition, the County should designate a staff person to validate these data entries against quarterly reports to the CAO to ensure consistent data collection and reporting.

¹⁰ BayLegal is providing information at statewide meetings to discuss potential legislative proposals that might help mitigate barriers to permanent housing for individuals with criminal records. While this effort is ongoing, preliminary meetings have helped to narrow the focus to the expansion of fair housing protections and enforcement to this class of individuals.



Program-Level Findings

Bay Area Legal Aid

Funding Amount: \$80,000 (FY 2013-14); \$80,000 (FY 2014-15)

In Fiscal Year 2014-15, Contra Costa County contracted Bay Area Legal Aid ("BayLegal") to provide legal services for AB 109 clients and educate them about their rights and responsibilities. The legal services BayLegal provides include: obtaining or retaining housing, public benefits, and health care, financial and debt assistance, family law, and obtaining driver's licenses. The program provides post-release legal check-ups for each client to identify legal barriers that are able to be remediated, educates clients about early termination of probation, and assists with fines, and attorneys are also able to meet individually with clients in both jail and prison prior to their release. BayLegal has both formal and informal arrangements with other AB 109 service providers to provide referrals and co-located services, including as a formal subcontractor of Rubicon and in informal partnership with Goodwill.

Table 2: BayLegal Accomplishments, July 2013 - September 2014

Service Delivery	Client Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">74 referrals received61 unduplicated clients served48% (n=29) received employment assistance21% (n=13) received family law services11% (n=7) received benefits assistanceLess than 7% (n=4) received each of the following: housing, healthcare, assistance with financial matters, or miscellaneous assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">31 clients received advice and counsel or brief services26 cases were still pending at the time of data collection4 clients received full representation; all had a favorable outcome

Strengths

Access to legal services

- Bay Area Legal Aid ("BayLegal") provides critical legal assistance along with referrals and linkages to other services to help reentry clients address the legal barriers to their successful reintegration into the community. Some examples of their work include appeals for housing and public benefits denials, driver's license reinstatement, as well as family and consumer debt issues.

Coordinated services

- Through co-location and coordination of services with other AB 109 CBOs, BayLegal is able to reach and assist more clients.
- The ability to educate clients about BayLegal's services can support clients in returning for services at a later point, even if they are not ready at the time of referral.



Improved program capacity

- BayLegal has improved their capacity to engage and follow-up with clients in a timely manner by leveraging the organization's intake coordinator, who schedules meetings for clients with the staff attorneys and follows up with the Probation Department to help track clients.

Data capacity

- BayLegal has a high level of data capacity, including an electronic case management system, enabling them to accurately track referrals, enrollments, services provided, and case outcomes.

Challenges

Continuous client care

- Though BayLegal's intake coordinator has helped in the area of client communication and follow-up, some staff noted that it can be a challenge to maintain timely communication with clients who can be non-responsive or communicate inconsistently due to other challenges they face.

Suitability of referrals

- Some of the referrals that BayLegal receives do not clearly align with the type of support the program provides. This appears to cut both ways, with BayLegal receiving a number of referrals for legal issues that BayLegal cannot help with, while receiving fewer referrals than expected for services they do provide. For example, some clients referred to BayLegal think that BayLegal is a housing provider, rather than a service that helps remove barriers to housing. Some clients come with family law issues in distant counties, where BayLegal does not operate. BayLegal staff expressed that the quality of referrals could be improved through a closer collaboration with Probation.
- Without regard to the quality of the referral, some clients have difficulty following through initially with a referral to BayLegal because their legal issues are secondary to their prevailing needs, including, for example, obtaining substance abuse treatment, mental health care, housing, and employment.

Pre-release activities

- BayLegal would like to enhance participation in a structured transition plan and have pre-release access to releasing AB 109 status probationers in a classroom or "workshop" format in order to educate potential clients about their rights and services BayLegal can and cannot provide (e.g., BayLegal attorneys work on civil legal matters, but not on criminal legal matters).



Brighter Beginnings

Funding Amount: \$54,505 (FY 2013-14); \$66,000 (FY 2014-15)

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2013-14 the County contracted with Brighter Beginnings, a family strengthening organization, to provide services as part of the mentoring collaborative coordinated by the Contra Costa County Office of Education (CCCOE). With a focus on leadership development, Brighter Beginnings' services under this contract included the development and implementation of the Re-Entry Academy for Leaders (REAL Curriculum). In FY 2014-15, the County contracted Brighter Beginnings to provide services in two capacities: 1) as an AB 109 direct service provider, and 2) as the main administrator and coordinator for the County's Mentoring and Family Reunification Program, taking over this role from the Office of Education. This report focuses on the organization's direct service contract only.

Table 3: Brighter Beginnings Accomplishments, July 2013 - September 2014

Service Delivery	Client Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80 participants served* 20 pre-release workshops held 12 participants received a certificate of completion (attended 7 or more sessions)* 2 AB 109 pre-release participants made post-release contact 4 AB 109 participants received a one-on-one coaching session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 pre-release participants made a strategic life plan*

**This number includes participants who were served prior to sentencing; participants may not have ultimately received an AB 109 sentence.*

Strengths

Research-based and flexible curriculum

- The REAL curriculum draws on existing research-based programs, while also allowing for flexibility to best fit participants' needs.

Goal-setting and individualized support

- By helping pre-release program participants make a concrete plan for attaining their personal goals, Brighter Beginnings leads them toward greater stability post-release.
- In addition to leadership training and support, staff provide information and assistance to help individuals address barriers to reentry.
- The REAL curriculum incorporates elements of family and community strengthening, with the goal of broadening the program's impact.

Data capacity

- Brighter Beginnings has the capacity to record client information and outcomes through an electronic case management system in which staff record clients' intake, demographic, and data from the pre- and post-program surveys.



Challenges

Program alignment to AB 109 client needs

- Many individuals who attend Brighter Beginnings' REAL curriculum classes have not been sentenced, thus Brighter Beginnings has faced challenges in targeting its services to AB 109 individuals.
- Many AB 109 clients have a multiplicity of overlapping post-release needs, including housing, employment, substance abuse, and more. The need to address these issues has precluded most AB 109 clients from participating in Brighter Beginnings' leadership and entrepreneurialism training.

Timing and frequency of pre-release access

- The timing and frequency of pre-release access has limited Brighter Beginnings' ability to provide its curriculum consistently and has inhibited the continuity of services post release.
- Staff observed that because participants no longer receive time off their sentences for attending the group—as they did when presented through CCCOE—program attendance and consistency have decreased.

Post-release services and program continuity

- Delays in the coordination of post-release services have prevented Brighter Beginnings from expanding post-release REAL curriculum classes.
- Brighter Beginnings is working to refine its coaching model to allow for longer-term follow-up with individuals.
- Because Brighter Beginnings does not follow most REAL curriculum participants over time, it is not possible to assess the extent to which Brighter Beginnings' services have resulted in improved individual and family stability post release.



Center for Human Development

Funding Amount: \$51,204 (FY 2013-14); \$66,666 (FY 2014-15)

The Center for Human Development (CHD) operates the Community and Family Reunification Program (CFRP) for Contra Costa County's AB 109 Community Programs' Mentoring Program, providing reunification services to returning citizens, their families, and friends, in addition to providing community support throughout Contra Costa County. Services include large and small group pre-release presentations and workshops at West County Detention Facility and Marsh Creek Detention Facility. CHD also provides post-release large and small group presentations and workshops to returning citizens at partner agencies and other locations throughout the County.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2014-15, the County contracted CHD to maintain 12 enrolled participants from the previous contract year in their reunification program, enroll 24 new participants, and provide 36 returning citizens with community and family conferencing under their five-stage reunification process. The contract also specified that the program recruit and train a minimum of five new volunteers to coach returning citizens, engaging a total of 12 continuing and new volunteers to provide 360 hours of reunification services, including two refresher trainings. The County also contracted CHD to provide reunification informational workshops to 15 agencies or groups. In FY 2013-14, CHD was part of the consortium of three mentoring organizations, which as a whole were contracted to provide services to 100 participants.

Table 4: Snapshot of CHD Accomplishments, July 2013 - September 2014

Service Delivery	Client Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 32 clients referred• 24 clients received an intake• Currently working with 9 participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 21 completed Stage 1• 16 completed Stage 2• 7 completed Stage 3• 1 completed Stage 4

Strengths

Evidence-based and adaptive program model

- CHD has modeled their program on an evidence-based community mediation model, while at the same time making modifications to the model to better fit the needs of the reentry population.

Trusting relationships with skilled providers

- Skilled family reunification providers support successful reunification by fostering three-way trust between the program, returning citizens, and their families and loved ones. The trust that clients and families build in the process of reunification can help the clients stay on the right path through their reentry.



Consistent and organized services

- CHD's clients expressed satisfaction with the program's services and follow-through; with consistent follow-through from the staff, clients begin to build optimism for achieving reunification goals with the program.

Outreach and coordination

- CHD's outreach efforts, including their pre-release workshops, help them solicit reverse referrals from Probation.
- Due to more knowledgeable referrals from Probation and horizontal referrals from other CBOs, CHD staff report more beneficial, frequent, and consistent meetings with clients

Challenges

Family issues outside of clients' control

- CHD's program model is built on the expectation that clients and their families will engage in mediation, but clients' family members do not always have the interest or ability to participate in relationship building.

Program capacity

- While CHD has implemented a plan to recruit volunteer mediators and has been successful recruiting volunteers from faith, civic, and other social groups in the community, CHD has struggled to retain volunteers due to the intensive time commitment required for the services and volunteers' school or work demands. Compounding this challenge, CHD has only one paid staff person, which limits the program's capacity to serve the target number of clients and to expand their programs further into the community.
- With limited staff capacity, CHD demonstrated an ability to collect and report data on its referrals, clients, and service delivery, but would benefit from greater capacity to consistently update and utilize service data.

Service referrals and coordination

- CHD often has to wait for a formal probation referral before engaging with clients. These delays can slow down the reunification process.
- Many individuals have substance abuse and mental health needs; these issues can interfere with the reunification process if they are not addressed prior to enrollment.

Limited pre-release access

- CHD currently provides pre-release informational workshops about the program's services, but would like to be able to provide skill-building workshops around family conflict and reunification.



Goodwill

Funding Amount: \$600,000 (FY 2013-14); \$600,000 (FY 2014-15)

The Bridges to Work program of Goodwill Industries of the Greater East Bay (Goodwill) facilitates the County's Employment Support and Placement Services to provide employment support and placement services in Central County. Participants can engage in up to 90 days of transitional, paid employment at local Goodwill stores or other partner agencies, in addition to receiving job search assistance for competitive employment opportunities. Goodwill also serves as a service hub for other providers. In Fiscal Years 2013-14 and 2014-15 the program was contracted to serve up to 120 participants in Central County.

Table 5: Snapshot of Goodwill Accomplishments, July 2013 - September 2014

Service Delivery	Client Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 136 clients referred (per probation) 76 clients served 45% (n=34) were contacted within 24 hours 95% (n=72) enrolled in transitional employment 95% (n=72) completed a job readiness workshop, surpassing the target of 70% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 57% (n=43) obtained documents needed for employment 92% (n=70) created or updated a resume 84% (n=64) attained a job readiness vocational certificate, surpassing the target of 50% 7 clients enrolled in higher education 54% (n=41) completed transitional employment, under the target of 70% 32% (n=24) were placed in an unsubsidized job and/or educational opportunity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average of 150 days from referral to permanent job placement 75% retained employment after 30 days (target = 70%)* 46% retained employment after 60 days (target = 60%)* 38% retained after 90 days (target = 50%)*

**Some participants may not have passed the date for measurement at the time of data collection*

Strengths

Direct job creation

- Goodwill's Bridges to Work program provides almost immediate access to transitional employment for individuals upon release, which allows them to quickly begin addressing their basic needs while also building positive job skills and habits.

Program model that supports client engagement and skill development

- Bridges to Work allows clients to ease into the responsibilities of a work environment, with low barriers to entry, quick onboarding, flexible scheduling, and incentives for job readiness workshop attendance.
- Bridges to Work helps clients build job readiness through a combination of formal workshops and on-the-job coaching and guidance that addresses both vocational and interpersonal skills.
- Goodwill's program model includes case management, which offers a high level of staff availability to support clients during their times of need.



Contra Costa County

AB 109 Program Evaluation

- Once participants enroll with Goodwill, they can continue to access the supports and resources the program offers, which helps clients receive continuous support at every phase of their job development and search.
- Clients develop solid affiliations with the program and staff, and continue to reach out for support after graduating from the program.

Connections to permanent employment

- Goodwill staff actively increase the job opportunities available to AB 109 individuals by forming relationships with local employers.
- Individuals who come in with higher levels of job readiness can participate in Goodwill's job services with the goal of being placed outside of the Goodwill store.

Coordinated services

- Through co-location of services and referrals to other AB 109 and County service providers, Goodwill sustains a safety net of strong support for their clients, which helps participants address barriers to employment (e.g., food, transportation) and work toward greater stability.

Challenges

Program capacity

- Goodwill indicated a capacity to serve a greater number of clients than are being referred; at the same time, the Bridges to Work program experienced turnover in the program coordinator position and was without two of its key staff positions for most of the contract period.
- The program's capacity to accurately track and report on client referrals, enrollments, and services has been limited.

Program fit

- Though participants noted the staff's empathy and support, the pay is low compared to the cost of living in the Bay Area. The 90-day duration of transitional employment makes some participants nervous about what will happen after; however, they can be re-referred to Goodwill for another round of transitional employment.
- The transitional employment opportunities available to clients are limited to working in the Goodwill stores and a few other options, though Goodwill is making efforts to expand these options.
- Clients and probation officers feel pressure for individuals to begin making an income immediately after release; however, some individuals are not ready for enrollment because of mental health and/or substance abuse issues.

Pre-release access

- The ability to gain access to the jails to make pre-release presentations would help Goodwill inform potential participants about the services Goodwill offers, and would enable participants to begin securing documentation needed for employment.



Men and Women of Purpose

Funding Amount: \$55,000 (FY 2013-14); \$50,900 (FY 2014-15, Employment and Education Liaison); \$66,666 (Mentoring)

Men and Women of Purpose (MWP) has two CAO contracts for AB 109 services in Fiscal Year (FY) 2014-15. The first contracts MWP to provide employment and education liaison services for the County jail facilities, for which the program facilitates four employment and education workshops every month at the County's jails and works with Mentor/Navigators to assist the workshop participants with the documentation required to apply for employment, education, and other post-release activities. MWP is contracted to screen at least 40 participants per month to assess employment and education preparedness.

MWP is also contracted to provide pre- and post-release mentoring services for West County using the organization's evidence-based program Jail to Community model. The program provides one-on-one mentoring, as well as weekly mentoring groups that focus on employment and recovery. The contract specifies that the program recruit at least 50 volunteer mentors using the Insight Prison Project curriculum, but does not specify a target number of clients to be served. In FY 2013-14, MWP was part of the consortium of three mentoring organizations, which as a whole were contracted to provide services to 100 participants. MWP employs eight full- and part-time staff and counselors for its contracted services.

In FY 2013-14 and 2014-15 MWP was also contracted by the Sheriff's Office to provide a Jail to Community (JTC) Program to both AB 109 and non-AB 109 individuals, encompassing pre-release classes, individual counseling, the creation of a treatment plan and exit plan, and documentation assistance.

Table 6: Snapshot of MWP Accomplishments, July 2013 - September 2014

Service Delivery	Client Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 145 referrals requested by MWP• 92 referrals received from Probation (others pending)• 70 clients enrolled• 41 clients were matched with a mentor• 28 clients participated in group mentoring• Trained 43 mentors in the first two quarters of the contract year, on track to surpass the target of 50	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 client was reported to have successful family reunification

Strengths

Jail to Community model

- The ability to have contact with individuals while still in custody enables MWP to provide clients with essential information about resources, as well as develop relationships that encourage clients to continue their engagement post release.



Individualized assistance and linkages

- Mentors work with clients to identify resources to meet their individual needs, and will physically transport and accompany clients to appointments to ensure they are linked to services.
- MWP supports coordinated service delivery to clients by working with Probation to send referrals to other AB 109 service providers, and by co-locating reentry specialists at Rubicon's Antioch office.

Trusting relationships with capable staff

- The development of close, trusting relationships between staff and participants provides participants with crucial emotional support, guidance, and hope that both keeps them engaged in services and supports them in keeping their behavior on track.
- Participants particularly called out the benefit of working with staff who have similar life experiences and personally understand what they are going through.
- MWP demonstrates strong staff capacity; MWP has adequate staff numbers and time to provide close, one-on-one assistance to clients. The program has also trained a number of new mentors.

Challenges

Service referrals and coordination

- MWP often has to wait for a formal probation referral before engaging with clients. These delays can slow down the client engagement process.
- Referrals do not always come with correct client contact information, impeding client engagement and follow-up.
- Many individuals have multiple, intersecting needs, including substance abuse, mental health, and employment, and housing. It can be difficult to engage and follow up with clients when their behavioral health needs have not been addressed.
- Some clients expressed frustration and discouragement with the pace at which their needs were being addressed; however, it is not clear the extent to which this relates to issues with MWP's service provision or to broader barriers in accessing housing, employment, and other county resources.

Pre-release access

- While the time allotted for individual meetings has improved over time, pre-release workshops can only serve a limited number of individuals, pre-release classes are over capacity. While the time allotted for individual meetings has improved over time, pre-release workshops can only serve a limited number of individuals and pre-release classes are over capacity.

Data capacity

- MWP's capacity to consistently track data about their clients and services has been somewhat limited; as such, it is difficult to document the concrete outcomes that MWP clients have achieved. MWP has received tablets and training in the ServicePoint electronic case management system through their current contract.



Reach

Funding Amount: \$53,500 (FY 2014-15)

Centering their program services on women, Reach Fellowship International (Reach) provides weekly workshops in West County Detention Facility (WCDF), in addition to pre- and post-release one-on-one case management. The program has two core staff people and also hires several clients as staff. Reach has three County contracts with the CAO, the Sheriff's Office, and the Probation Department.

Reach is one of the newer providers in the AB 109 network, and in the previous year only had contracts through the Sheriff's Office and Probation Department. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2014-15 the CAO contracted Reach to provide employment and education liaison services to female returning citizens in fulfillment of the County's Reentry Into The Community Program. Reach also acts as a lead information specialist for County jail facilities for the AB 109 program. The CAO contracted Reach to provide four workshops a month to introduce employment and educational opportunities to participants, to work with Mentor/Navigators to assist 50 incarcerated and returning citizens with obtaining the paperwork required for those opportunities, and to screen at least 10 participants each month for employment and educational preparedness.

Table 7: Snapshot of Reach Accomplishments, July 2013 - September 2014

Service Delivery	Client Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 26 clients referred (pre-release)* 23 clients served (pre-release) 12 clients' families were served during client's incarceration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 91% (n=21) had temporary housing within five days of release 65% (n=15) completed paperwork for employment or education documentation prior to release <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 clients began work or education within two months of release 9 clients achieved reduced sentences 6 clients achieved and maintained recovery at three-month follow-up 4 clients received positive child reunification outcomes

**This number includes participants who were served prior to sentencing and as part of Reach's FY 2013-14 contract with the Sheriff's Office; participants may not have ultimately received an AB 109 sentence.*

Strengths

Gender-responsive program model

- Reach designed its program to fill a gender-specific service gap in existing reentry programs.
- Reach's proprietary "Sistah-to-Sistah" model draws from successful practices in other sectors, such as team building approaches used in the corporate sector.

Targeting immediate needs

- In addition to efforts to link clients to housing within 72 hours of release, Reach is able to directly house up to eight women at a time and has hired several clients as paid staff.
- Staff collaborate and build relationships with other AB 109 CBOs and public sector agencies to provide solutions that address their clients' immediate housing and employment needs.



Combination of structured services and individualized assistance

- A combination of pre-designed workshops and the flexibility to tailor services to individuals' circumstances allows Reach to adapt its services to the needs of each client.

Combination of skill building and relationship building

- Reach combines an emphasis on skill building and developing close relationships with clients through which they provide guidance and support

Pre-release contact

- Workshops and meetings with women in jail enables the program to help the clients develop reentry plans and identify critical pathways to success.

Challenges

Service referrals

- During FY 2013-14, Reach's only AB 109 contract was with the Sheriff's Office; they therefore received no official AB 109 referrals from Probation.
- In FY 2014-15, Reach has received fewer referrals than anticipated from Probation, and as a result have been able to serve fewer female clients than expected.

Program capacity

- Because Reach, as a newer program, has considerable time and effort launching its services, some clients found the program to be disorganized and not at full capacity.
- Although Reach reported feeling underutilized, the program also struggled to consistently follow through with clients and provide promised services to clients; while participants emphasized their appreciation for the Reach program, they also noted that staff have not always been able to deliver on promises for certain resources or services, in particular housing.
- While Reach has hired several clients as staff for their Antioch and Richmond offices, some participants noted that Reach's supervising staff are not always available when clients show up at one of the offices. Staff also identified the need for more program volunteers to teach the Sistah-to-Sistah curriculum.
- Reach's capacity to accurately and consistently track data about their clients and services has been very limited. Reach has received a computer and training in the ServicePoint electronic case management system through their current contract.

Pre-release capacity

- Clients expressed that Reach's pre-release classes are difficult to access, as only 10 women from each module are able to attend.



Rubicon

Funding Amount: \$1,400,000 (FY 2013-14); \$1,400,000 (FY 2014-15)

Rubicon is contracted to provide employment support and placement services, integrated with other supports, to participants in East County and West County. Rubicon's program includes pre-release engagement; job readiness workshops; educational and vocational training; transitional employment; individualized career coaching; legal services; financial stability services; and domestic violence prevention and anger management. In order to provide a continuum of services, Rubicon partners with a number of other organizations through formal subcontracts, including vocational training partners, AB 109 providers, and other community-based organizations. The FY 2013-14 contract specified that Rubicon would serve up to 280 participants, including 160 in East County and 120 in West County. The FY 2014-15 contract slightly reduced these numbers, with a contract to serve up to 210 participants, including 120 from East County and 90 from West County. This year, Rubicon is not providing subsidized employment to participants but continues to provide transitional employment.

Table 8: Snapshot of Rubicon Accomplishments, July 2013 - September 2014

Service Delivery	Client Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 362 clients referred 161 clients served 62% (n=100) engaged in career coaching/job search assistance 75 clients enrolled in Financial Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 36 clients removed barriers to employment 34 clients created or updated a resume 81% (n=63) of those who started the job readiness curriculum completed it, meeting the 80% target 41% (n=41) of clients who engaged in career coaching subsequently engaged in transitional work, vocational training, or subsidized employment, meeting the 40% target 32% (n=32) of clients who engaged in career coaching subsequently obtained competitive employment. It took an average of 99 days to obtain employment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 81% retained employment for 30 days, meeting the 80% target 63% retained employment for 60 days, falling below the 70% target 15 clients successfully enrolled in benefits 2 clients enrolled in basic skills and GED prep classes

Strengths

Enhanced employability through training and certificates

- Rubicon's service model provides training and certifications that enhances participants' employability, while simultaneously addressing barriers to employment and providing opportunities for transitional employment to get participants back on their feet financially.

Combination of formal activities and individualized services

- Rubicon provides structured job readiness workshops, while also working individually with clients to identify and address their barriers.



- Rubicon targets clients' skill development through both formal workshops and informal interactions, while the close and trusting relationship participants build with staff provides participants with crucial emotional support and guidance that helps them stay engaged and supports them in keeping their behavior on track. Rubicon also creates an open office atmosphere where clients can spend their free time and engage with staff.

Coordinated services

- Rubicon is able to facilitate participants' success by connecting them with multiple Rubicon services that address different needs. Staff from Rubicon also facilitate coordinated service delivery through formal subcontracts and informal communication with staff from other contracted organizations.

Strong data capacity

- Rubicon has a high level of data capacity, including an electronic case management system, enabling them to accurately track referrals, enrollments, services provided, and client outcomes.

Challenges

Client referrals and engagement

- Many individuals have multiple, intersecting needs, including substance abuse, mental health, and employment, and housing, which can make it difficult to prioritize and triage referrals. It is particularly challenging for Rubicon to engage clients who have unmet substance abuse and/or mental health needs.

Limited pre-release access

- Limited pre-release access limits the ability to connect with clients earlier and to educate potential clients about the services Rubicon can and cannot provide.

Program capacity

- As a result of the above factors, Rubicon has the capacity to serve a greater number of clients than the current number of referrals. At the same time, Rubicon's partner agencies that provide vocational training programs often have waiting lists.

Program fit

- Rubicon services may not be an ideal fit for clients with very high needs (e.g., with high substance abuse and mental health needs) as their program requires a high degree of commitment and functioning. While job readiness workshops may not be fitting for clients with a higher level of job skills or education, Rubicon is able to accelerate these participants into the job search phase by waiving the workshop requirement.
- Female clients reported that because most Rubicon clients are male, Rubicon's services may not feel as accessible or tailored to female clients.
- Several clients at other CBOs expressed that the need for immediate employment was a barrier to participating in Rubicon's job readiness workshops.



Shelter, Inc.

Funding Amount: \$500,000 (FY 2013-14); \$500,000 (FY 2014-15)

Shelter, Inc. operates the County's AB 109 Short and Long-term Housing Access Program. This program assists incarcerated and formerly incarcerated persons who are referred to them under the AB 109 Community Programs to secure and maintain stabilized residential accommodations. Shelter, Inc. provides a two-phased approach to clients seeking housing assistance. Before the program will refer a client to the Housing Services section, the staff conducts social service assessment/intake procedure to ensure the client will have success. The program places the majority of their clients into transitional housing situations (such as room or apartment shares) to allow them time to develop the resources for stable housing.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2014-15, the County contracted Shelter, Inc. to initiate contact with 175 clients referred from Probation and provide eligibility screening for at least 70% (125) of those (down from 144 in FY 2013-14). Shelter, Inc. was contracted to provide case management services for at least 85% of the screened referrals; housing access assistance to at least 80% of the screened referrals; and housing placement assistance to at least 65% of those who received case management.

Table 9: Snapshot of Shelter, Inc. Accomplishments, July 2013 - September 2014

Service Delivery	Client Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 230 clients referred 50% (n=115) were contacted and screened for eligibility, under the 70% target 84% (n=98) received housing access assistance, surpassing the 80% target 43% (n=50) received housing placement assistance, over the 40% target Changes across quarters in numbers referred/served Fidelity/evolution of program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 43% (n=50) clients secured housing, meeting the 40% target <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average of 22 days from referral to housing 30 clients were placed in master leased housing, under the target of 38 20 clients were placed in alternative housing (e.g., healthy living), under the target of 32 84% (n=42) retained housing at six-month follow-up, meeting the 80% target** 16% (n=8) had an unsuccessful program exit at six-month follow-up, meeting the target of less than 20%

Strengths

Housing linkage and financial support

- Shelter, Inc.—the only service provider that provided housing-related services during the evaluation time period—successfully links people with housing and supports their ability to stay housed through its financial assistance services.
- In addition to helping AB 109 clients find and obtain housing, Shelter, Inc.'s financial assistance helps participants retain their housing while they get on their feet after being released from prison or jail.



Case management support

- In addition to helping people secure housing, Shelter, Inc.'s case management model ensures participants are removing barriers and following through on their goals—assistance that goes beyond the realm of housing to address clients' other reentry-related needs.

Coordinated services

- Shelter, Inc. works closely with the Probation Department and with other CBOs to coordinate additional services for their clients.

Program modifications to meet client needs

- Shelter, Inc. has continually made efforts to adapt their program and service delivery to better meet clients' needs, including bringing its AB 109 program into greater alignment with the Housing First model

Challenges

Housing clients with criminal histories and no income

- Despite Shelter, Inc.'s adoption of a "Housing First" model, it can be challenging to find appropriate housing for clients who cannot immediately connect with employment or income.
- Many landlords do not want to rent to people with criminal histories.

Meeting client expectations with reality

- There is often a mismatch between clients' desire and the reality of what is available to them.

Service referrals and coordination

- Referrals do not always come with correct client contact information, impeding client engagement and follow-up.
- While the referral process allows Probation to track referrals and manage clients' cases, it leads to significant back and forth between programs and Probation, often delaying receipt of services.
- Many individuals have multiple, intersecting needs, including substance abuse, mental health, and employment, and housing, which can make it difficult to prioritize and triage referrals.
- The Probation Department is still limited in its capacity to make pre-release referrals.

Limited pre-release access

- Limited pre-release access limits the ability to start the housing process earlier and restricts Shelter, Inc.'s ability to educate potential clients about the services they can and cannot provide.



I. Introduction

Background

In November 2013, Contra Costa County contracted with Resource Development Associates (RDA) to support the implementation and evaluation of the County's Assembly Bill (AB) 109, or Public Safety Realignment, efforts. To date, this support has included the following efforts:

- An assessment of the County's capacity and infrastructure for data collection and reporting;
- The development of baseline datasets to establish the number of AB 109 individuals supervised and served in the County from the start of realignment until the beginning of this project (October 2011-December 2013);
- A memo on the data collection needs and practices of AB 109-designated Police Officers in four local law enforcement agencies supported through County AB 109 contracts;
- Development of data dashboards to facilitate data sharing across AB 109 partner departments;
- An interim evaluation of the County's implementation of its AB 109 program, with recommendations for improvements as well as longer-term evaluation efforts.

The key recommendations that came out of those efforts were as follows.

Coordination and Administration of AB 109 Implementation

- Enhance coordination and integration of AB 109 services
- Conduct additional cross-agency and department-specific training
- Improve ability to track AB 109 clients, services, and outcomes
- Assign lead departments for implementing each CCP decision

Pre-Release

- Build capacity to expand use of pretrial assessments and pre-sentence needs assessments
- Provide judicial training to increase awareness of and knowledge about AB 109 programs and services
- Create and disseminate an AB 109 "fact sheet" and increase dissemination of the existing Reentry Resource Guide
- Evaluate the impact of early representation and assessment on pretrial release and sentencing decisions
- Increase the number and type of in-custody programs and services
- Establish a formal pre-release planning process, including a reentry transition plan
- Consider hiring an AB 109 in-custody case manager to help navigate available programs

Post-Release

- Develop comprehensive case plans for AB 109 supervisees
- Increase capacity for case coordination meetings
- Streamline the referral process
- Consider expanding community-based programming
- Partner with the Workforce Development Board and private employers to increase job opportunities
- Clarify and support law enforcement roles and responsibilities



Current Evaluation

In implementing AB 109, Contra Costa County, along with all California counties, ultimately hopes to see long-term impacts including improvements in recidivism rates, quality of life, and fiscal efficiency. This report builds on the first year's efforts by evaluating the implementation and preliminary outcomes of the County's contracted AB 109 service providers.

The AB 109 program logic model, presented in Appendix C, forms the foundation of the current evaluation. As shown in the logic model, long-term outcomes of AB 109 are achieved through a logical sequence of short- and intermediate-term outcomes that occur on the pathway to achieving the County's ultimate aims under Realignment. The theory of change underlying the logic model is that program and service delivery, along with community supervision, lead to improvements in behavioral, employment, and housing outcomes for AB 109 individuals. Individual-level improvements, along with additional County public safety measures, in turn, lead to reduced recidivism, improved quality of life, maximized public safety, and greater financial efficiency for the County.

In order to begin documenting the intermediate-term outcomes of the County's AB 109 plan, this year's evaluation focuses on the initial implementation and preliminary outcomes of the County's AB 109-contracted services during their first 15 months of implementation, from July 1, 2013 through September 30, 2014. The evaluation explored the extent to which AB 109-contracted community-based organizations (CBOs) are implementing their program activities as intended and the extent to which those activities are leading to positive outcomes among individuals receiving services.

Given the time period of the evaluation, the evaluation includes the eight community-based organizations (CBOs) that were contracted to provide services beginning in Fiscal Year 2013-14. It does not include the additional organizations that were contracted beginning in Fiscal Year 2014-15. It is also important to note that, while the focus of this report is primarily on the CBOs themselves, because the CBOs operate as part of a larger County AB 109 reentry infrastructure, evaluating the CBOs necessarily involves an assessment of that infrastructure as well. Although we did not focus on collecting data from County departments for this report, we do draw on the findings from the previous evaluation to support our understanding and evaluation of the County's AB 109 reentry infrastructure.

Evaluation Methods

The evaluation team collected a range of qualitative and quantitative data. For more detail on the evaluation methods, see Appendix A.

- Interviews and meetings with service providers;
- Focus groups with program participants, including current participants and individuals who enrolled in programs and subsequently discontinued participation;
- Quantitative data on client enrollment and service provision from service providers;
- AB 109 clients' risks and needs as assessed by the Probation Department using the CAIS (Correctional Assessment and Intervention System); and
- Data on referrals to CBOs and County departments from the Probation Department's electronic case management system.



Contra Costa County

AB 109 Program Evaluation

This report presents findings on strengths and challenges that were similar across programs, as well as strengths and challenges for each individual CBO. Findings highlight factors related to the programs themselves, as well as to the county's broader AB 109 system of supervision and services. This approach is intended to give the County the information necessary to help improve service delivery and client outcomes by building on facilitators of success and helping to mitigate barriers.

Despite the volume of data collected, it is important to note that the results presented here are preliminary; while they can be used to support data-driven decision making, there are a number of considerations that readers should take into account. First, the County's reentry infrastructure is still evolving. While the AB 109 service contracts took effect on July 1, 2013, some of the CBOs providing AB 109 services did not begin providing services until several months later. Moreover, the reentry infrastructure has already changed since this evaluation began, with the Reentry Network for Returning Citizens in East and Central County coming online in October 2014, and the reentry infrastructure will continue to change as the West County Reentry Resource Center opens. As such, some of the findings presented in this report may no longer be applicable, as processes have changed and progress has been made.

Finally, AB 109 services are provided by eight different CBOs, which provide a range of services. Some of these services, such as housing assistance and employment, have very clear and measureable outcomes, namely, being housed and having a job. By contrast, services such as mentorship and family reunification often have intangible outcomes that are harder to document and measure. To the extent possible, this evaluation makes note of measurable outcomes, such as housing and employment attainment. More broadly, however, this evaluation does not only address outcomes, but also focuses on the factors at both the program and the system level that act as facilitators to or barriers of desirable outcomes.

The report is organized as follows:

- **Key Findings** presents context about the number of individuals on AB 109 supervision and the numbers referred to and enrolled in the contracted CBOs, along with high-level takeaways about the County's progress and challenges in implementing its AB 109 infrastructure and achieving client outcomes.
- **Program Strengths and Facilitators of Client Success** discusses factors both at the level of CBOs and the broader AB 109 system that appear to facilitate effective program delivery, as well as the success of AB 109 clients.
- **Program Challenges and Barriers to Client Success** discusses factors both at the level of CBOs and the broader AB 109 system that pose challenges to effective program delivery, as well as the success of AB 109 clients. This section also discusses broader structural issues impacting the success of AB 109 implementation.
- **Recommendations** to improve system coordination and service delivery.
- **Appendices:** Appendix A: Evaluation Methods; Appendix B: Individual Program Reports; Appendix C: AB 109 Logic Model; Appendix A: GAIN Reentry Checklist



II. Key Findings

Context

There were a total of 1,103 AB 109 clients under the supervision of the Contra Costa County Probation Department at any point between July 1, 2013 and Sept. 30, 2014, with 612 individuals beginning AB 109 supervision during this time period. Of the 1,103 individuals who were under AB 109 supervision at any point during this time, the Probation Department referred 455 individuals to a total of 799 services provided by AB 109-contracted CBOs. Because individuals were sometimes referred to the same service multiple times, there were a total of 922 referrals to CBOs made. Three hundred forty-seven (347) of the 455 probation clients who were referred to CBO services—or more 76%—decided to engage, enrolling in a total of 561 services. Table 10 below presents an overview of the referrals to and enrollments in the eight CBOs included in this evaluation.

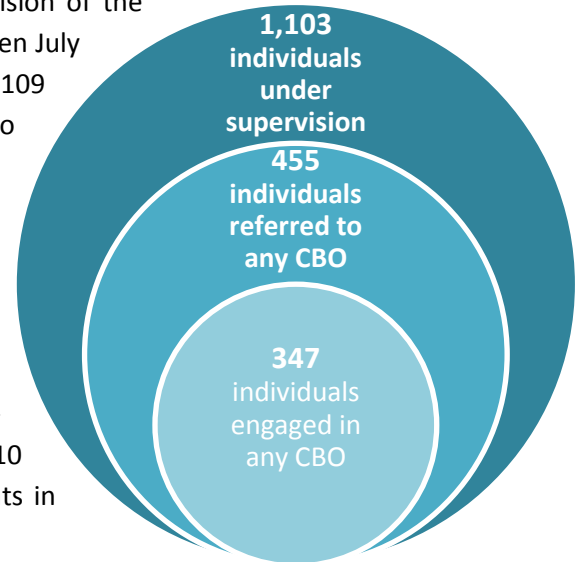


Table 10: Referrals and Enrollments by Provider

Referral Location	Individuals Referred ¹¹	Enrolled
Bay Area Legal Aid	45	61 ¹²
Brighter Beginnings	<i>n/a</i>	80 ¹³
Center for Human Development	<i>n/a</i>	35
Goodwill Industries	136	77
Men and Women of Purpose	<i>n/a</i>	75
Mentoring ¹⁴	126	<i>n/a</i>
Reach ¹⁵	<i>n/a</i>	25
Rubicon	253	164
Shelter, Inc.	238	115
Total	799¹⁶	632¹⁷

¹¹ This is according to referral records extracted from the Probation Department's Access Database. Many CBOs reported different numbers of individuals referred than the Probation Department's database indicated.

¹² The higher number of individuals enrolled than referred by Probation may be the result of referrals Bay Legal receives directly from Rubicon as a subcontractor and from collaborations with Goodwill and Shelter, Inc.

¹³ This number includes participants who were served prior to sentencing; participants may not have ultimately received an AB 109 sentence.

¹⁴ Prior to October 2014, referrals to mentoring programs, including Brighter Beginnings, Center for Human Development, and Men and Women of Purpose went to the County Office of Education (CCOE). The CCOE then referred clients to specific CBOs. We did not receive data from CCOE for this evaluation detailing the number of referrals received by each CBO.

¹⁵ As of September 2014, Reach had yet to begin receiving direct referrals from the Probation Department. Service numbers include participants who were served prior to sentencing and as part of Reach's FY 2013-14 contract with the Sheriff's Office; participants may not have ultimately received an AB 109 sentence.



Evaluation Findings

Looking across the services delivered by the eight service providers and the preliminary outcomes of the 347 AB 109 clients who chose to engage in services, a number of important trends emerge.

- Building a reentry infrastructure is still a work in progress. Various elements of this process are still evolving, including the referral process, roles and responsibilities of County and CBO partners, data collection systems, and CBO service delivery models.
- Housing and employment services are in high demand. Goodwill Industries, Rubicon, and Shelter, Inc. each have more service referrals than all mentoring programs combined. In addition, those programs appear to be successfully helping clients address their immediate housing and transitional employment needs. The extent to which that corresponds with long-term housing and employment stability remains to be seen, given limited availability of jobs and housing, as well as the other challenges many clients face.
- Programs appear to best support clients when they combine tangible benefits, such as housing, employment, or vocational certifications, with individualized case management and guidance.
- Limited pre-release access has hampered programs' ability to educate individuals about available services and promote post-release engagement.
- Clients expressed high-levels of satisfaction with services overall, with clients expressing varying levels of satisfaction with the different providers. Although the evaluation can quantify some of the tangible benefits achieved through the employment and housing programs, it is difficult to quantify or measure the impact of those providers who offer more intangible services such as mentoring or family reunification.
- Providers identified the referral process and unmet substance use needs as key barriers to successful service provision. While the referral process has improved, it continues to be challenging for a number of reasons including incorrect client contact information, varying provider capacity, a multiplicity of interrelated client needs, and more. These are elaborated on with greater detail in this report.

Table 11 below presents an overview of the services that the eight contracted CBOs delivered to 347 AB 109 clients during the evaluation period, as well as initial client outcomes.

¹⁶ This number includes clients who were referred to multiple programs.

¹⁷ This number includes clients who enrolled in multiple programs.



Table 11: Service Delivery and Initial Client Outcomes by Provider, July 2013-September 2014

CBO	Service Delivery	Client Outcomes
Bay Area Legal Aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 74 referrals received¹⁸ 61 unduplicated clients served 48% (n=29) received employment assistance 21% (n=13) received family law services 11% (n=7) received benefits assistance Housing, healthcare, assistance with financial matters, or miscellaneous assistance were provided to fewer than 4 people each 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 31 clients received advice and counsel or brief services 26 cases were still pending at the time of data collection 4 clients received full representation; all had a favorable outcome
Brighter Beginnings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80 participants served¹⁹ 20 pre-release workshops held 12 participants received a certificate of completion (attended 7 or more sessions) 2 AB 109 pre-release participants made post-release contact 4 AB 109 participants received a one-on-one coaching session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 pre-release participants made a strategic life plan
Center for Human Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 32 clients referred 27 clients enrolled Actively working with 9 participants at time of evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21 completed Stage 1 of reunification process 16 completed Stage 2 of reunification process 7 completed Stage 3 of reunification process 1 completed Stage 4 of reunification process
Goodwill Industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 136 clients referred (per probation) 76 clients served 45% (n=34) were contacted within 24 hours 95% (n=72) enrolled in transitional employment 95% (n=72) completed a job readiness workshop, surpassing the target of 70% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 57% (n=43) obtained documents needed for employment 92% (n=70) created or updated a resume 84% (n=64) attained a job readiness vocational certificate, surpassing the target of 50% 7 clients enrolled in higher education 54% (n=41) completed transitional employment, under the target of 70% 32% (n=24) were placed in an unsubsidized job and/or educational opportunity 38% retained after 90 days (target = 50%)

¹⁸ Probation data shows 45 referrals to Bay Area Legal Aid. The difference in referral numbers recorded by Probation and by BayLegal may be the result of referrals BayLegal receives directly from Rubicon as a subcontractor and from its collaborations with Goodwill and Shelter, Inc.

¹⁹ This number includes participants who were served prior to sentencing; participants may not have ultimately received an AB 109 sentence.



CBO	Service Delivery	Client Outcomes
Men and Women of Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 145 referrals requested by MWP 92 referrals received from Probation (others pending) 70 clients enrolled 41 clients matched with a mentor 28 clients participated in group mentoring Trained 43 mentors in the first two quarters of the contract year, on track to surpass the target of 50 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the evaluation time period, MWP did not have a method of electronically tracking client outcomes, thus the evaluation could not confirm these.
Reach Fellowship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 26 clients referred (pre-release)²⁰ 23 clients served (pre-release) 12 clients' families were served during client's incarceration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 91% (n=21) had temporary housing within five days of release 65% (n=15) completed paperwork for employment or education prior to release 4 clients began work or education within two months of release 9 clients achieved reduced sentences 6 clients maintained recovery at three-month follow up 4 clients received positive child reunification outcomes
Rubicon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 362 clients referred 161 clients served 62% (n=100) engaged in career coaching/job search assistance 75 clients enrolled in Financial Services 2 clients enrolled in basic skills and GED prep classes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 36 clients removed barriers to employment 34 clients created or updated a resume 81% (n=63) of those who started the job readiness curriculum completed it, meeting the 80% target 41% (n=41) of clients who engaged in career coaching subsequently engaged in transitional work, vocational training, or subsidized employment, meeting the 40% target 32% (n=32) of clients who engaged in career coaching subsequently obtained competitive employment. It took an average of 99 days to obtain employment. 15 clients successfully obtained benefits

²⁰ For Fiscal Year 2013-14 Reach was contracted only by the Sheriff's Office to provide pre-release services. The service numbers reflect participants who may not have received an AB 109 sentence.



Contra Costa County
AB 109 Program Evaluation

CBO	Service Delivery	Client Outcomes
Shelter, Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 230 clients referred²¹• 50% (n=115) were contacted and screened for eligibility, under the 70% target• 84% (n=98) received housing access assistance, surpassing the 80% target• 43% (n=50) received housing placement assistance, over the 40% target	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 43% (n=50) clients secured housing, meeting the 40% target• 84% (n=42) retained housing at six-month follow-up, meeting the 80% target²²• 16% (n=8) had an unsuccessful program exit at six-month follow-up, meeting the target of less than 20%

²¹ Probation records show 238 referrals to Shelter, Inc.

²² No individuals had been enrolled for 12 months during the evaluation period. Since then, 8 people have made it to the 12 month retention: 6 people made it through transitional housing and 2 obtained permanent housing.



III. Program Strengths and Facilitators of Client Success

1. Program-level factors

Flexible program models

Contracted providers have consistently adapted and modified their programs and services to better meet the needs of AB 109 clients.

While program fidelity is, in general, an important indicator of successful program implementation, it is important that programs are given the time to get their programs off the ground and be responsive to clients' needs before being held to strict fidelity measures. For many providers, serving the reentry population has been a new endeavor; for all providers, serving the AB 109 population has been new. This speaks to the extent to which both County and community-based providers are "building the plane while flying it." To varying degrees, all programs described "learning as we go" and shared ways that they have updated and improved programs to better serve clients.

- Goodwill and Rubicon made modifications to their job readiness workshops in order to place greater emphasis on cognitive behavioral skills.
- Shelter, Inc. began providing housing to clients before they secured employment or income, in order to see if providing housing first would support and encourage clients in securing employment.
- The Center for Human Development increased the number of meetings with clients in each stage of family reunification, recognizing that the reentry population had distinct needs that required an expansion of evidence-based mediation models.

Provision of material benefits

Programs that provide material benefits such as housing and paid employment are directly meeting the basic needs of reentering individuals.

Contracted organizations meet individuals' housing and employment needs by providing direct connections to housing and paid transitional employment.

- Shelter, Inc. successfully placed 50 clients in housing. Of these, 84% retained housing at six-month follow-up, meeting the program's 80% target.
 - *"Shelter Inc. is paying for me. I got a deposit down for \$1000 and they paid 3 months of my rent at my apartment right now. I had to go through a family shelter just to get to my own apartment. But Shelter Inc. paid for that whole transaction."*
- Reach acquired a house in which they can house up to eight reentering women at a time.
- Goodwill enrolled 72 clients in transitional employment.
 - *"Barriers come with not making any money at all—so the transitional employment helps them with a paycheck to get on their feet."*



- Rubicon engaged 41 clients in transitional work, vocational training, or subsidized employment.

Combination of structured services and individualized assistance

Programs that are best able to target individuals' needs operate with a combination of formal activities—some of which use evidence-based models or curricula—and the flexibility to tailor services to individuals' circumstances.

Focus group and interview data suggest that a combination of a structured approach to service delivery and individualized case management allows programs to best identify and serve individual needs.

- Rubicon and Goodwill both provide structured job readiness workshops, while also working individually with clients to identify and address their barriers.
- Reach offers workshops in West County Detention Facility, while also providing clients with a range of individualized assistance, including support to clients' families, attending court hearings, and helping clients manage their health and medical needs.
 - *"When I was in jail, Reach threw a birthday party for my daughter. They helped me keep in contact with my mom and my kids. And we were working on them helping to supervise visits [with my child], and they've mediated between me and my mom."*

Organizations that connect participants to more than one program or service within their organization support client success by addressing multiple client barriers and providing various opportunities for participants to maintain engagement with the organization. Two organizations observed that individuals with multiple barriers benefit from being connected to multiple services or programs within their organization. These organizations have achieved positive client outcomes by leveraging other programs and resources within their organization.

- Shelter, Inc. has leveraged non-AB 109 shelters and transitional housing within their organization.
- Rubicon supports client engagement by addressing multiple barriers: *"We don't just provide employment and career coaching; for example, one person may work with a career coach, a housing coach, a financial coach, and a fatherhood coach."*

Programs that combine skill building and relationship building offer optimal support to clients, building clients' hard and soft skills while also providing guidance and motivation.

Data from focus groups and interviews suggest that skill building and relationship building are both necessary program components—but alone may not be sufficient—in supporting participants' success. All contracted programs are building clients' skills, whether through a formal workshop curriculum (e.g., Rubicon, Goodwill) or through informal skill-building integrated into one-on-one interactions. Programs target a combination of hard and soft skills, including technical skills (e.g., job readiness training, vocational certifications), cognitive behavioral coaching, and anger management. These all help participants gain critical tools for obtaining tangible resources and benefits as well as managing their own behavior.



Contra Costa County

AB 109 Program Evaluation

- Rubicon helped 32 clients obtain competitive employment.
 - *"When I first got here I didn't know nothing. If you said fill out an application, I didn't know nothing. Now if they ask if I'm convicted of a felony, I say, 'Yes but I would like to speak to you in private in an interview.' Since I been here I've made progress."*
 - *"At Rubicon I was led in the right direction, from them, I was told what to do in interviews, and because of that I have three jobs."*
- Goodwill assisted 24 clients in obtaining an unsubsidized job and/or educational opportunity and supported 64 clients in attaining a job readiness vocational certificate.
 - *"You had the staff helping you out with every step. They are really helpful. Always posting jobs and checking on you to make sure you are doing what you should be doing. They are helpful to me. I found a job and I'm still applying for other jobs."*
 - *"Learning about the disease of addiction is a big success that could help a lot of people. A few of the classes helped us with mindful thinking."*

Along with skill-building support, the development of close, trusting relationships between staff and participants provides participants with crucial emotional support, guidance, and hope that both keeps them engaged in services and supports them in keeping their behavior on track. Across the board, participants highlighted that their relationships with program staff allow them to feel like they have someone to turn to when they feel on the edge of doing something that could land them back in jail. Participants across programs particularly called out the benefit of working with staff who have similar life experiences and personally understand what they are going through. Many organizations also create an open office environment where participants can spend their free time, which keeps them from engaging in behavior that could cause them to recidivate.

- *"[At Goodwill] they all have compassion. I'm not sure if their background has to do with some of ours, but they have a compassion for us. They want to see us succeed. They had their own personal part in my journey."*
- *"What I like about MWP was they were guys like me, they have been to jail been to prison, have substance abuse problems and have gotten their lives together."*
- *"I come [to Rubicon] where I can't get into havoc [in my old neighborhood]. It gave me a chance to get around my career coach all day."*

Data capacity

Some programs have a high-level of data capacity, including electronic case management systems, which allows them to accurately track referrals, enrollments, services provided, and client outcomes. These programs are also better positioned to use data to inform program modifications.

A number of AB 109-contracted providers, including Rubicon; Shelter, Inc.; Goodwill Industries; and Bay Area Legal Aid, have electronic case management systems which they use to collect data on service referrals, program enrollments, service delivery, client outcomes and more.



Client satisfaction

High client satisfaction with services indicates that clients find the available programs to be helpful.

Overall, participants expressed mostly positive feedback about the programs they are participating in, sharing largely positive feedback about program services and staff. While client satisfaction does not necessarily equate to positive client outcomes, it is an indicator that clients experience the available programs as beneficial.

2. AB 109 system level factors

Supportive approach to supervision and availability of services

Contra Costa County is building an AB 109 reentry infrastructure that supports participants by adopting a less punitive approach to supervision and increasing the availability of services and supports.

Many individuals under AB 109 supervision have prior experience being under correctional supervision. These clients overwhelmingly noted that they are doing better under AB 109 supervision compared to previous experiences on probation or parole, with many echoing the sentiment that *“this time it’s completely different.”* Many said AB 109 supervision was the first time they’ve been offered help, and the first time their probation officers are not “out to get them.” Providers and clients alike highlighted the importance of the two core components of AB 109 legislation: the shifting focus of probation to a less punitive approach to supervision and the availability of services through community-based programs, as well as enhanced behavioral health services.

- *“They are starting to realize the people are not needing to be in jail. All three of us got an issue with drugs. Why not fix that issue instead of throwing us away? That’s why I like AB 109.”*

Both providers and clients noted that having a good relationship with a client’s probation officer was an important factor in reentry success. Clients expressed vastly improved relationships with AB 109 probation officers compared to previous probation or parole officers, and felt that most AB 109 probation officers focus on providing help rather than finding ways to violate their probation. Improved relationships. Several participants also noted that cognitive behavioral coaching provided by pre-release programs and through Probation’s Thinking for Change (T4C) have been helpful in changing the way they think and act after release.

- *“I have seen changes. My PO is awesome. When I went in, she went through this survey with me and followed up with MWP; she referred me to Shelter Inc., she explained the law about child custody.”*

At the same time, while many participants stressed the importance of their individual readiness of change, it may be that the very availability of services and supports has contributed to the internal feeling that AB 109 is different. This mutually reinforcing relationship between the availability of support and participants’ readiness to change sheds light on the promise that AB 109 shows for client success.



Pre-release contact

When the County system facilitates pre-release contact with programs, programs are better positioned to engage participants after release and more quickly begin to address barriers to employment and housing.

When staff are able to begin meeting with participants prior to their release they develop rapport and trust, which increases the chance that participants will follow through on referrals to these programs post release. Addressing participants' barriers to employment and/or housing prior to release (e.g., suspended driver's licenses, identification of housing options) supports participants in transitioning more quickly to a stable situation. Providers expressed that the shorter the time between release and engagement, the more successful participants tend to be. Speedy connection to housing and employment is crucial in terms of meeting immediate needs; having these supports in place allows participants the chance to succeed in their transition back to the community not only by meeting basic needs, but also by keeping them busy and providing safe environments away from the neighborhoods and people they used to associate with.

- Staff from several organizations noted that their access to WCDF has improved in FY 2014-15 and emphasized the importance of maintaining and increasing the days and times they are able to meet with incarcerated individuals.
 - *"We would talk about when we planned to get out what our plans were, what our goals were – try to set up an exit plan, and what we were looking into doing, if we were going back to school, housing, what we needed, what kind of job we were looking for. We filled out [mock] applications to get you ready and [practiced] how to answer questions about your charges."*
- Fiscal Year 2014-15 contracts with Reach and Men and Women of Purpose for Employment and Education liaison services are designed to address documentation barriers prior to release.

Coordination of services

The degree to which County and CBO providers coordinate and communicate about referrals allows the system to better prioritize and match individual needs with available services.

It is clear that many AB 109 individuals reentering the community face a multitude of barriers to achieving stable housing, employment, and family life. We found that many individuals receive services from multiple contracted providers. This may indicate that the County is making progress toward building an integrated reentry infrastructure, though at the same time it is important to note possible duplication of services, as some providers expressed some concerns about clients "double dipping" in employment services (e.g., Rubicon, Goodwill, Prepare My Sheep, and MWP). While in some cases multiple services may be useful, in some cases they may not.



Table 12: Number of CBO Enrollments per Client

Number of CBOs where clients enrolled	Number of Clients	Percentage of Clients
Any	347	100%
1	215	62%
2	75	22%
3	36	10%
4	17	5%
5	4	1%

In terms of referrals from Probation to CBOs, most programs reported that Probation's referrals have improved over time—including improved consistency of referrals from different probation officers and a better fit between referrals and clients' needs, indicating that probation officers are developing greater knowledge about the available services. Providers also noted that the case coordination meetings convened by Probation have been useful in coordinating clients' care. Some clients also shared stories of successful coordination of referrals beginning prior to release:

- *"I got released and went to report a few hours after I got out and the next day people were calling me. My probation officer told me what was available. Some guy came a few weeks before I got out and told me where to report and asked me what I needed, and then they just started calling me. Shelter Inc., Bay Area Legal Aid, and [CHD] all called me."*

While the evaluation period did not officially include the time during which Reentry Network for Returning Citizens in East and Central County was implemented, some conversations with providers that occurred after October 1, 2014 elicited positive initial feedback in terms of the possibility of greater coordination of services. One focus group participant also spoke about meeting with one of the Field Operations Coordinator:

- *"Pat Mims [Field Operations Coordinator] is my AB 109 liaison who is there and I met with him and he is the one that told me about Rubicon, Shelter Inc., therapy, and everything."*

In terms of coordination among CBOs themselves, CBO staff explained that direct communication and coordination among CBOs facilitates the identification of client needs and allows providers to initiate referral processes to connect individuals to needed services. Several organizations described formal and informal arrangements that allow them to coordinate service delivery, including formal subcontracts and co-location agreements and informal case conferencing.

- Beginning in FY 2014-15, Rubicon created a formal subcontract with MWP with the idea that fostering pre-release client engagement with MWP would improve post-release enrollment in Rubicon's services.



- Part of Goodwill's service delivery model is to offer space for staff from other CBOs to meet with clients onsite. Bay Area Legal Aid has weekly office hours during which clients know they can meet with BayLegal staff, and staff from Shelter, Inc. regularly meet with clients at the Goodwill offices. Providers from all involved CBOs emphasized that this co-location is immensely useful in engaging clients and connecting them quickly to services that can meet their evolving needs.
 - When one client had to bring in documentation for BayLegal to use in his case, he was able to meet with BayLegal's attorney before reporting to work at the Goodwill store: *"I'd be working and here she was coming by [Goodwill], so I'd see her before going to work."*
- When staff are able to help coordinate referrals for clients, clients are more likely to experience the system as smooth and not requiring the type of complex navigation that many spoke of. *"Rubicon has made everything easy and convenient for me."*

Table 13: Clients Enrolled in Multiple CBOs

Programs or Services	Number of Individuals
Rubicon & Shelter Inc.	44
Goodwill & Shelter, Inc.	41
Bay Area Legal Aid & Goodwill	36
Bay Area Legal Aid & Shelter, Inc.	32
Rubicon and Men & Women of Purpose	26
Goodwill & Rubicon	23

Table 14: Client Enrollments in County Services

Referral Location	Individuals Enrolled
Alcohol and Other Drugs (AODS)	159
Homeless Program	53
Mental Health	32



IV. Program Challenges and Barriers to Client Success

1. Program-level factors

Program startup

Because programs spent considerable time and effort launching and refining services during the first contract year, many served fewer clients or for shorter durations than intended; in addition, they may not have achieved target client outcomes.

As noted above, AB 109 and/or reentry services have been new to many of the contracted providers. As such, some have experienced slow starts and encountered bumps along the way, and most programs did not serve as many participants as indicated in their contracts. While this is to be expected with any new rollout of services, because programs have refined their service model while rolling out service delivery, some clients experienced the challenges that come along with the implementation of new programs or organizations. They perceived that some program models were not fully formed and that services seemed disorganized or not fully in place. For example, participants in several programs expressed a similar sentiment that the program *"[is] not fully grown yet, hasn't all been put together."*

Program capacity

Programs vary in their capacity to provide high quality services to the desired number of participants.

Some programs reported that they were underutilized and had the capacity to serve a greater number of clients. Some programs struggled to consistently carry out their intended program activities for what appeared to be a combination of challenges related both to the program and the broader AB 109 system. One reported receiving more referrals than they were contracted for and thus struggled to meet the need for services.

- Rubicon, Goodwill, and Bay Area Legal Aid reported a capacity to serve more participants than the number of referrals they have received.
- While Reach also reported feeling underutilized, the program also appeared to have the lowest capacity to consistently follow through with clients and provide promised services to clients.
- Goodwill and Center for Human Development also encountered staffing shortages, staff turnover, and/or difficulty recruiting or retaining staff or volunteers.
- Shelter, Inc. was the only program that noted receiving more referrals than outlined in their contract and noted it was a challenge to keep up with the number of incoming referrals.



Data capacity

A number of programs demonstrated limited capacity to collect and report accurate data on their service delivery and their clients.

A review of organizations' client and service delivery data, as well as their quarterly reports to the CAO, revealed that many programs have limited capacity to consistently collect and report accurate client data. While this capacity will improve as organizations are trained in the ServicePoint system, programs' data capacity during the period of this evaluation was concerning, as several programs did not have complete service data with which to monitor service delivery and inform program improvement.

- CBOs and the Probation Department frequently reported different numbers of client referrals.
- Quarterly report data often appeared incomplete and/or did not align with Probation data.

Program fit to range of client needs

While it appears that the available community-based programs are well aligned with the needs of most individuals on AB 109 supervision, the services may not be an ideal fit for certain individuals.

While it appears that the available community-based programs are well aligned with the needs of most individuals on AB 109 supervision, there are participants whose level of need is too high for the programs to serve them effectively. For example, it can be difficult to engage individuals with serious mental health issues or untreated substance abuse issues in employment, housing, or family reunification services. By contrast, some participants with greater education, skills, or social networks may feel less aligned with the services available.

- Until the fourth quarter of 2014, Shelter, Inc. attempted to ensure that participants had an income in order to be placed in housing. This often led to gaps in the time between participants' release and obtaining housing.
- Because transitional employment and transitional housing programs are short in duration, many worried about where they will go after.
- Most programs are targeted toward high-risk individuals and may not be an ideal fit for the minority of individuals on AB 109 supervision with more work experience and/or education. However, programs such as Rubicon and Goodwill are able to adapt their programs for these participants by waiving their workshop requirement and routing these participants directly into the job search phase.
- The majority of clients in all programs except for Reach are male; as a result, some programs may be less responsive to the needs of female clients, and some female clients may feel less comfortable in some programs.
- Some participants expressed a need for program support outside of normal business hours.
 - *"When I am having problems at 6pm, no one is around because this is an 8 to 5 gig. My life is not 8-5."*



- In addition, program staff commented that some participants are simply not interested in receiving any services.

2. AB 109 system level factors

Service referrals

While there have been improvements in the rate and timing of referrals, the number of referrals and the referral process itself continue to be major factors impacting service delivery to clients. Below we summarize the key issues with the referral system that emerged from our conversations with staff and our analysis of CBO and Probation referral data. Because this year's evaluation did not focus on County systems, these findings are drawn from interviews and focus groups with CBO staff and clients, along with data from the Probation Department's electronic case management system. It is important to note that we did not interview probation officers or County behavioral health services staff about these issues, although we have done so in the past and do draw on our findings from past evaluation reports.

It is not clear how all of the domains assessed by the Probation Department's Correctional Assessment and Intervention System (CAIS) tool align to specific service domains, making it difficult to determine how many individuals could have been referred to each different type of service.

Nearly all organizations noted that they have received fewer referrals from Probation than they expected or that were laid out in their contracts. They explained that referrals were slow to start when the CBOs were contracted beginning in July 2013, and have picked up since then.

- Reach reported not receiving any referrals from Probation for many months of their contract.
- Bay Area Legal Aid staff reported receiving fewer referrals for certain types of cases (e.g., housing, healthcare, and certain public benefits cases) than they expected. They are not sure whether this is due to a lack of need or a failure to identify need.
- Rubicon reported that they have the capacity to receive many more referrals than are currently coming in.

According to the Correctional Assessment and Intervention System (CAIS) administered by the Probation Department, almost three-quarters (73.7%) of AB 109 clients have a Criminal Orientation upon release; almost 70% of AB 109 have Alcohol and/or Drug Abuse-related needs, and almost half (47.64%) need Vocational Skills. Because it is not clear how many of the most commonly assessed risk and need factors align with service needs, it is difficult to determine how many clients could have been referred to each CBO or service type. In addition, it is important to note that the decision to enroll in either behavioral health or CBO-services is completely voluntary, so probation officers may not both to refer clients who openly acknowledge that they are not interested in service engagement.



Table 15: Need Domains as Indicated by CAIS Tool: All AB 109 Supervisees

Domain	All AB 109 Supervisees		Individuals Assessed 7/2013-9/2014	
	N	%	N	%
Abuse/Neglect and Trauma	42	3.61	17	3.96
Alcohol and/or Drug Abuse	809	69.44	311	72.49
Basic Needs	50	4.29	21	4.90
Criminal Orientation	858	73.65	331	77.16
Emotional Factors	645	55.36	263	61.31
Family History	454	38.97	169	39.39
Interpersonal Manipulation	509	43.69	208	48.48
Isolated Situational	138	11.85	39	9.09
Physical Safety	16	1.37	7	1.63
Relationships	77	6.61	33	7.69
Social Inadequacy	329	28.24	89	20.75
Vocational Skills	555	47.64	231	53.85

While providers across the board agreed that the suitability of referrals has improved over time, they noted that some referrals they received did not seem to be the best match for the client's needs. Staff observed that client engagement in services could be improved if probation officers had a more thorough understanding of services available from each provider, as well as if the county more actively promoted or incentivized program participation.

- Bay Area Legal Aid staff explained that they sometimes receive referrals for legal issues that are not in their area of work. Staff wondered if this was a result of probation officers seeing BayLegal as a catchall for any legal issue, rather than an organization specializing in particular areas of law.
- Reach perceived that the low number of referrals they have received might be because probation officers do not yet view the organization as a key location to which female clients should be referred.

Some programs also noted that the number of referrals they receive is not consistent from month to month, which inhibits their ability to plan for their program activities.

- The number of individuals referred per quarter ranged, from low to high, from 17 to 35 for Goodwill; from 41 to 78 for Rubicon; and from 23 to 70 for Shelter, Inc.

Clients' multiple and interdependent needs can make it challenging to know how to best prioritize and sequence service referral and delivery.

As noted by providers and clients, and demonstrated in the CAIS results, most clients have a multiplicity of needs.



Table 16: Number of Assessed Need Domains

Number of Need Domains	All AB 109 Supervisees		Individuals Assessed 7/2013-9/2014	
	N	%	N	%
0	27	2.32	5	1.17
1	113	9.7	29	6.76
2	211	18.11	82	19.11
3	191	16.39	67	15.62
4	178	15.28	66	15.38
5	186	15.97	84	19.58
6	151	12.96	59	13.75
7	68	5.84	22	5.13
8	21	1.8	5	1.17
9	11	0.94	7	1.63
10	5	0.43	3	0.70
11	3	0.26	0	0

Last year's evaluation pointed to the need to ensure that clients' service referrals are adequately prioritized and sequenced, rather than given all at once. For example, Bay Area Legal Aid noted that for the most part, legal needs will often develop once a client encounters barriers to housing or employment, so while it is helpful to educate clients on their post-release legal rights early on, referrals to legal aid may best be given later in the client's reentry process.

Conversations with providers highlighted that upon release behavioral health, housing, and basic needs such as food are the needs that must be met most immediately. They identified unmet substance abuse and mental health needs as one of the biggest barriers to client engagement in programs and to their overall success in reentry. Program staff stressed that in order for their programs to be effective, clients' behavioral health issues must be addressed before employment or housing can be prioritized. For many clients, staff explained, residential substance abuse treatment is the first step.

- One provider shared: *"We understand that 55 percent of the [reentry] population has dual diagnosis issues, and many are not coherent to make the proper decisions [upon release]. The lag in time is where we lose people."*

At the same time, discussions with providers and clients elucidated several challenges with prioritizing and sequencing referrals. Many of the services designed to address clients' needs are interdependent—for example, in order to meet basic needs such as housing and food, clients need an income, for which they often need employment services. Because of the need for immediate income, individuals on AB 109 supervision—and, in turn, their probation officers—feel pressured to immediately pursue employment services before ensuring that clients' mental health and substance use are stable. These factors can result in inappropriately timed and/or duplication of services. Further complicating this issue, clients may be much more eager to engage in employment service than in behavioral health



services, even though their ability to become and remain employed may depend on their ability to address substance use and/or mental health needs.

- For example, staff noted that in some cases probation officers may refer clients to Rubicon for job readiness and job placement assistance, and if Rubicon clients are not able to find employment quickly, the probation officer may make a referral to Goodwill's transitional employment program so the participant can begin earning income immediately. Data show that 23 individuals received services from both Rubicon and Goodwill.
- Shelter, Inc. has taken note of the bind that clients face themselves in. They have begun placing clients in housing before they have confirmed employment.

Referrals do not always come with correct client contact information, which impedes client engagement and follow-up, leading to discrepancies between the numbers of individuals referred and enrolled.

All programs noted that at the time clients are first referred to them, they often have incomplete or incorrect contact information for those individuals. This greatly hinders their ability to engage clients and provide them with continuous service. Some staff did note that the contact information they have received from Field Operations Coordinators from the Reentry Network for Returning Citizens in East and Central County tends to be more up to date, which they said has helped with client engagement. Programs shared:

- *"We have participants whose file we closed because can't find them, can't reach them—no matter how inspirational we've been. We need to be able to catch them and keep them."*
- *"On a simple scale, phone numbers are a big trip-up post release. That's where the biggest disconnect starts—particularly if they're already released, getting a hold of them. That's where the falloff starts."*

Data on client referrals and enrollments in **Error! Reference source not found.** on page **Error! Bookmark not defined.** shows the discrepancies between the number of individuals who were referred and engaged in services. Staff noted that this discrepancy in referrals and enrollments was largely because of difficulty establishing initial contact and/or engagement with individuals who had been referred, in addition to the fact that not all individuals who are referred choose to engage in services.

The referral process to contracted providers creates delays and bottlenecks. While the process allows Probation to track referrals and manage clients' cases, it leads to significant back and forth between programs and Probation, often delaying receipt of services and causing frustration for staff and clients.

While programs noted some improvements in the referral process, they observed that the process of routing referrals through Probation can lead to bottlenecks and time lags, which continues to cause delays in service delivery. Several organizations felt that the time lags were exacerbated with the turnover in the Probation staff responsible for fielding requests for referrals from CBOs. This lag in time between requests and referrals is particularly concerning as it cuts into the crucial time period for post-release engagement.



Contra Costa County

AB 109 Program Evaluation

- At the time of data collection, Men and Women of Purpose reported that they were waiting on Probation to confirm at least 10 requests for referrals, and CHD was waiting for at least 11 referrals, leading to a delay in starting service delivery with the identified clients.
- Clients also experienced the delay that can occur as a result of the referral process: *"Everything you do is with someone different. It is kinda confusing. It makes it harder to get things done. He has to send a referral, that has to go through, you gotta wait for them to call you."*

The Probation Department is still limited in its capacity to make pre-release referrals.

While the designated deputy probation officer is able to assess and refer individuals prior to release, staff from several organizations commented that having only one probation officer who can perform this task seems insufficient to meet the need.

Timing and frequency of pre-release access

Programs report that limitations in the timing and frequency of pre-release access negatively affects their ability to engage participants in the critical time prior to reentry. Having the ability to develop those relationships while the client is still in custody benefits their short and long-term success.

The Jail to Community model is an evidence-based model developed with the knowledge that pre-release contact is a key determinant of an individual's likelihood to engage in services post release and facilitates clients' successful reentry. As one client said, *"They need to plant that seed early so that even if [reentering individuals] are walking that fence, they can get back on."*

Although many of the contracted CBOs do have agreements in place with the Sheriff's Office to obtain pre-release access, all of the programs stated that their access is insufficient for the type of one-on-one services they feel would most benefit clients, in terms of the frequency they are allowed access, the time of day, and/or the length of time per visit. That said, there are a number of barriers to increasing pre-release access, including limited classroom space available in the jails; security classification issues, especially in Martinez Detention Facility; a time consuming background check and clearance process; and fitting program visits into the jails' operating schedules and processes. It is important to note that the evaluation did not interview Sheriff's Office staff for this report, although we did speak to multiple staff from the Sheriff's Office for the prior evaluation. Providers raised the following concerns:

- All programs wish they could access the jails with more frequency and have more opportunities for one-on-one meetings with participants.
- Center for Human development is limited to informing incarcerated individuals about family reunification services, but would like to be able to conduct workshops.
- Shelter, Inc. and Goodwill have not received clearance to access participants in jail.

Some clients raised this issue as well.

- *"AB 109 doesn't [care] about you until you're released. What they need to do, the people with weaker minds are going to go right back to the drugs. For those people they need to start this*



process while they're in jail so that they have somewhere to go so they don't go back to using drugs."

Communication and coordination

While communication and coordination appear to have improved over time, mechanisms for systematic and streamlined communication among CBOs and between CBOs and Probation are still evolving.

CBOs have developed informal and formal ways to communicate and coordinate. They noted that these opportunities are useful and they would benefit from greater coordination. Staff also spoke about opportunities for communication and coordination between clients and probation. Several organizations mentioned that the case conferences convened by Probation had a hiatus of about six months. Staff noted that they appreciated the opportunity for networking that the case conferences provided. Staff also noted that programs are not systematically informed when clients are re-incarcerated, which inhibits their ability to maintain engagement with clients who may be in jail.

- Some clients also shared experiences that the AB 109 system was at times challenging to navigate. A number of participants also recalled times when they had trouble getting in touch with their probation officer.
 - *"Everything you do is with someone different. It is kinda confusing. It makes it harder to get things done."*
 - *"I've been asking for food vouchers besides EBT and clothing vouchers. The thing is everything is contracted out. I gotta go to everyone else and AB 109 has all these branches."*

Individuals on AB 109 supervision report receiving limited information about what it means to be under AB 109 supervision or the opportunities available to them.

Participants identified a lack of consolidated information for clients about AB 109 services. Although the County commissioned a resource guide with the available AB 109 programs, no clients reported having received this guide. Based on their comments, it was clear that many participants were unclear about the purview of AB 109 and conflated "programs" and the AB 109 system as a whole.

Gaps in available services

Housing assistance for AB 109 individuals remains very limited, as there is a limited availability of housing itself and current housing providers are over capacity.

Providers and clients highlighted the extremely limited availability of both transitional housing and stable housing for returning citizens. In addition, while the County has since contracted with another housing assistance provider, during the current evaluation period Shelter, Inc. was over capacity as the only contracted provider for housing placement assistance. Providers across the board stressed the importance of immediate access to housing, including shelters and transitional housing, upon release.



- *"If [clients] could find a way to not have to spend so much time hitting the ground running and fending for themselves...maybe get beds or shelters that would allow them to rest for a minute and look for something, get [their] medication in place, their mental health.... We don't have a pathway to directly identify them and get them a place to stay so we can get them the services they need so they can have a chance."*

Transportation assistance came up as a frequent barrier to successfully engaging both with reentry programs as well as with potential and future employers.

Many participants expressed frustration with the lack of assistance for transportation to get places such as job interviews and mental health appointments. Some stated that, as a result, they felt that illegally entering BART without paying was their only option.

- *"Another thing is that AB 109 wants me to go to work, meet my PO, go to mental health, to do all these things, and I've been asking for transportation vouchers for 4 months."*
- *"My problem with the transportation is, I go see my PO and he only gives me one ticket to get to his office and one ticket to get home, nothing else. POs know that if we don't qualify for food stamps we're spending all our money on food, but I'm spending too much money on transportation."*

While some organizations currently provide transportation assistance for their particular programs, or are pursuing ways to provide broader assistance with transportation, overall there is limited funding for this type of assistance.

3. Broader structural issues impacting the success of reentry programming

It is important to note that there are a number of factors beyond the County's control which nonetheless impact the success of AB 109 programs and the individuals served therein. Below we note some of the most commonly mentioned issues.

Housing and employment for individuals with felony convictions

For clients with felony convictions or poor credit histories, the limited availability of both stable housing and competitive employment restricts long-term success.

While employment training programs, transitional employment and housing placement assistance offer critical assistance to individuals reentering the community, these programs can only go so far; the availability of actual housing and employment options for the reentry population is severely limited.

Although programs like Goodwill and Rubicon are actively identifying and forming relationships with potential employers, the fact remains that many employers will not hire someone with a felony conviction. In focus groups, participants shared again and again about experiences where they were almost offered a job, or they were offered a job, only to be told, "I'm sorry" when their background check came through. A further challenge is that while individuals are expected to obtain employment



almost immediately after release, the combination of often limited work habits and experience means that it takes time, training, and practice for individuals to develop new habits and skills. Many clients shared a sense of discouragement and felt that the lack of employment opportunities could lead them to turn back to illegal activities.

- *“I’ve got kids, I’ve got a grandbaby. I’m doing everything in my power to keep from doing what I used to do. But there’s no jobs available.”*

Staff and clients also highlighted a shortage of transitional housing options in which individuals could be immediately placed upon release. In terms of finding long-term stable housing, Shelter, Inc. described the difficulty in finding landlords who are willing to rent to individuals with a criminal history. As a result, individuals often end up living in places that are not conducive to their recovery or successful reentry. Moreover, individuals commonly experience a mismatch between their desires for a better life and the reality of what is available to them, which contributes to a sense of discouragement. For example, staff at Shelter, Inc. described that one of the greatest challenges for individuals is the reality of what their income is versus their ideal housing situation. The combination of individuals’ multiple barriers to reentry and their extremely limited options for employment and housing leaves many individuals feeling discouraged. Further, staff from Reach highlighted that the housing challenges faced by women are unique. They noted that men often go back to a woman’s home when they are released, while women may not have anywhere to go. It is therefore important to maintain an awareness of the intersection of gender with other barriers to reentry.

Overall, program staff explained that individuals participating in pre-release programs often express hope and good intentions for their lives post release, but when immediate linkage to housing and other supports is not available, it can be difficult to stay afloat: *“Once they get out the system is not there to hold them, so they don’t follow through.”* When the AB 109 system cannot provide an immediate safety net upon release, individuals are more likely to fall into old habits.

Access to government assistance

Across the range of participants, unequal access to government assistance programs came up frequently as a barrier to meeting individuals’ basic needs.

While some laws will be changing, the inability to access government assistance, including public housing resources and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) for those convicted of drug sales, has served as a significant barrier for reentering individuals in being able to meet their most basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter. Without these basic needs taken care of, clients are more likely to fall into despair or turn to old habits.

- One client shared: *“We need clothing vouchers, food vouchers, transportation to get us started. Otherwise we’re just going to keep drinking and using, mask our pain with stupidity. With those vouchers, we could have better opportunity to succeed.”*



Resolution of suspended driver's licenses

While the Education and Employment Liaison contracts with the CAO are intended to address barriers to employment such as driver's licenses and other paperwork, there remain broader barriers to regaining driver's licenses in a timely manner.

Staff from many organizations stressed the magnitude of the issue of suspended driver's licenses for reentering individuals, which serves as a significant barrier to employment: *"People have jobs lined up and are waiting to get that license back."* Pointing to a broader barrier within the current system for resolving this issue, staff from Bay Area Legal Aid noted that while Homeless Court provides an opportunity to resolve a suspended driver's license, the Homeless Court calendar can be backed up for many months, delaying the resolution of this issue.

V. Recommendations

1. Engage in a comprehensive planning process to improve overall system coordination

To date, Contra Costa County has engaged in a number of planning process related to AB 109, including the 2011/12 Public Safety Realignment Implementation Plan; the 2012 AB 109 Operational Plan; the 2013 East and Central County Network Plan; and the 2013 West County Reentry Resource Center Plan. While these efforts have been critical in helping the County begin to lay the groundwork necessary for an AB 109 reentry infrastructure, the development of a coordinated AB 109 system is a work in progress and several issues remain.

In order to develop a coordinated system, we recommend the County engage in a comprehensive planning process involving representatives from all County departments and community-based organizations involved in the AB 109 infrastructure. Specifically, the planning process should address the following issues.

A. Processes for triaging clients' with multiple, overlapping needs

Last year's evaluation pointed to the need to ensure that clients' service referrals are adequately prioritized and sequenced, rather than given all at once. The evaluation found several challenges with prioritizing and sequencing referrals:

- **Identification and triage of referrals:** Because domains assessed via the CAIS tool do not all neatly align with service domains, there does not appear to be a clear process regarding how to translate CAIS results into service referrals. In addition, there does not appear to be a systematic approach to triaging services for individuals with a multiplicity of needs. It may be that the County should adopt a second brief tool, such as the GAINS Reentry Checklist (shared in the last report and included here as Appendix D), that can link client needs directly to service referrals, but there needs to be agreement around what tool to use, who should use it (Probation, the



Network Field Ops and West County Data Administrator, both), and which referrals should stem from what needs.

- **Behavioral Health Services:** Behavioral health needs were identified as a key barrier to engagement in services; providers stressed that it is important to address individuals' substance abuse and/or mental health needs before they can engage in further services. According to CAIS results, approximately 70% of AB 109 clients have alcohol and/or drug abuse needs; in addition, the Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC) and CDCR estimate that 20% of AB 109 clients have a diagnosed mental health need.²³ As the referral process currently operates, Probation makes referrals to Behavioral Health Services (BHS) and Probation makes parallel referrals to CBOs and/or Network Field Ops, but there does not appear to be a comprehensive approach to coordinate these referrals. Recent plans for revising the referral process focus on the relationship between Probation and the Network and Reentry Center, without addressing the role of BHS.

B. Communication processes and information flow between the Sheriff's Office, Probation Department, and CBOs

There is an opportunity for improved coordination and communication among the players in the AB 109 system, including 1) among contracted providers; 2) between providers and the Probation Department; 3) between providers, The Probation Department, and Behavioral Health Services; and 4) between providers and the Sheriff's Office. This includes:

- **Communication protocols related to referrals:** One of the challenges with the current referral process is that there is a one-way communication system, with DPOs sending referrals but having no mechanism to follow up to find out if their clients followed through. Similarly, CBOs do not have a clear mechanism to follow up with DPOs to review the appropriateness of the referral, ask questions about the client, seek accurate contact information, etc. Because there is not a streamlined process for communication between Probation, Behavioral Health, and CBOs, DPOs may not know whether or not their clients are following up to engage and, if not, why not.
- **Status change communication:** CBOs are not regularly updated when their clients return to custody. This can mean that they waste limited staff time trying to connect with clients and it means that they cannot work with Probation and/or the Sheriff's Office to understand why the individual was reincarcerated and try to help address the underlying issues. Limitations with the Sheriff's Office's Jail Management System, noted in the previous evaluation, may also limit the Sheriff's Office's ability to notify Probation about the reincarceration of AB 109 clients if those individuals come in on new charges.
- **Bottlenecks:** While routing all referrals through clients' DPOs is critical for tracking services in a unified place and for allowing POs oversight of their clients, it leads to significant bottlenecks and places undue burden on DPOs who may need to respond to referral requests from multiple CBOs for dozens of clients. Improved communication protocols could help address this issue, but

²³ <http://www.cpoc.org/assets/Realignment/issuebrief4.pdf>



it is also important to broaden the Probation Department's capacity to respond to referrals quickly. One possible option for alleviating the burden on DPOs and reducing this bottleneck is to establish referral coordination as an administrative responsibility in the Probation Department, rather than primarily as the domain of DPOs. If a person or people in administrative positions could receive and respond to referral requests from CBOs, confirm clients' AB 109 status, and record confirmed referrals, this could allow referrals to flow with fewer time delays and without requiring immediate response from DPOs, who may be out in the field and unable to respond.

C. Pre-release case planning and service receipt

The majority of AB 109-contracted service providers do participate in some amount of in-custody service provision; however, all report that this access is insufficient to do the amount of planning necessary to prepare individuals for release. At the same time, providing extensive pre-release access for a multiplicity of CBOs who provide a range of services can be burdensome for the Sheriff's Office, which needs to provide classroom and meeting space, ensure adequate staffing and security, conduct background checks, etc. Again, a coordinated planning process that brings together the Sheriff's Office, Probation, Behavioral Health Services, and CBOs could establish a comprehensive agreement around pre-release access and case planning. Moreover, improved communication, recommended above, could eliminate the need for all partners to engage in separate pre-release planning meetings and processes, instead establishing point people (or point agencies) to lead pre-release planning processes and communicate these plans to other partners.

D. Communication about AB 109 services

Clients, providers, and probation officers alike would benefit from greater knowledge of the available services.

2. Address critical need and service gaps

There are a number of unmet or difficult-to-meet needs to limit the ability of CBOs to adequately support AB 109 clients. Some of these issues are related to services, while others are more related to laws, regulations, employment and housing practices, and supply shortages that are broader than the AB 109 system itself.

A. Service gaps

Providing or augmenting the following services has the potential to reduce the barriers individuals face upon reentry and thereby increase the effectiveness of the AB 109-contracted programming.

- **Transportation assistance.** Both clients and providers noted challenges with transportation as a barrier to service receipt and to other facilitators of success, such as to work. During the prior evaluation period, the evaluation team observed DPOs disseminating transit cards to clients; however, the amount of transportation assistance available may not meet the level of need.



- **Food assistance.** A number of individuals indicated a need for food assistance, particularly individuals who cannot access CalFresh because of certain felony drug convictions. The County should consider short-term food assistance for these individuals. In addition, all AB 109 system partners should make better use of BayLegal's assistance appealing benefit denials by referring these clients to BayLegal services. The County should also ensure that relationships and referral processes are in place with the County's General Assistance administration and CalFresh.
- **Housing availability and funding.** Locating and retaining housing are both challenges for individuals with little to no income, poor credit histories, past evictions, and felony convictions. Moreover, Shelter, Inc., the primary housing service provider is the only CBO to report receiving more referrals than they can respond to. To help address this issue, the County should reallocate unspent housing funding to existing and/or new providers and consider allocating funds for more and/or longer transitional housing.
- **Access to Homeless Court and family law assistance.** Providers emphasized the magnitude of the issue of driver's license suspensions in impacting individuals' ability to obtain employment. While praising the Homeless Court as an avenue for resolving suspensions, they noted that there can be serious Ensure that partnerships and referral pathways are in place with the Family Law Facilitator program

B. Laws, regulations, employment and housing practices, and supply shortages

While employment and housing placement assistance offer critical support to individuals reentering the community, these programs can only go so far; the actual housing and employment options for the reentry population are severely limited. The County should enhance partnerships with employers and landlords/property managers to increase the availability of and access to employment and housing.

- **Availability of and access to competitive employment opportunities.** The County should create a formal partnership with the Workforce Development Board to help identify and link AB 109 individuals to employment opportunities. Further, creating opportunities for CBO staff and/or probation officers to connect directly with employers to provide character references for individuals they are working with and/or supervising. The County should also designate or partner with staff to train employers on
- **Availability of and access to housing.** The County should work with developers and other County offices to discuss options for more affordable, sober living housing options for formerly incarcerated individuals, including both transitional and stable housing. The County should designate or partner with staff to train landlords/property managers in fair housing practices and discrimination.²⁴

²⁴ BayLegal is providing information at statewide meetings to discuss potential legislative proposals that might help mitigate barriers to permanent housing for individuals with criminal records. While this effort is ongoing, preliminary meetings have helped to narrow the focus to the expansion of fair housing protections and enforcement to this class of individuals.



3. Continue to enhance data collection and monitoring capacity

While some CBOs—including Rubicon, Shelter, Inc., and Bay Area Legal Aid—have a high level of data capacity and facility, other CBOs continue to struggle with data capacity. While this capacity will improve as organizations are trained in the ServicePoint system, it will be important to ensure that contracted providers are held to standards and that they receive the capacity development and technical assistance to get there. Either the ServicePoint administrator or the Network Coordinator should review CBO data entry on a monthly basis to ensure accurate and timely data entry. In addition, the County should designate a staff person to validate these data entries against quarterly reports to the CAO to ensure consistent data collection and reporting.



VI. Appendices

Appendix A: Methods	A-2
Appendix B: Program-Level Reports	A-4
Bay Area Legal Aid	A-5
Brighter Beginnings	A-11
Center for Human Development.....	A-16
Goodwill	A-23
Men and Women of Purpose	A-30
Reach.....	A-34
Rubicon.....	A-39
Shelter, Inc.	A-46
Appendix C: Logic Model	A-Error! Bookmark not defined.
Appendix D: GAINS Reentry Checklist.....	A-52



Appendix A: Methods

The RDA evaluation team used a mixed-methods approach for this evaluation, collecting and analyzing a variety of qualitative and quantitative data, including interviews and focus groups with service providers; focus groups with program participants, including individuals who enrolled in programs and subsequently discontinued participation; quantitative data on client engagement and service provision from service providers; client enrollment data; AB 109 clients' risks and needs as assessed by the Probation Department using the CAIS™ (Correctional Assessment and Intervention System); and data on referrals to CBOs and County departments from the Probation Department's electronic case management system. The evaluation addresses the following key questions:

1. To what extent are AB 109-contract service providers delivering services with fidelity to their program models?
2. To what extent are AB 109 clients achieving intended short-term outcomes, such as housing, employment, family reunification, etc.?
3. What factors facilitate successful service delivery and client outcomes?
4. What barriers exist to successful service delivery and client outcomes?

The sections below describe the data collection activities and approach to data analysis in greater detail.

Evaluation Activities

Qualitative Data Collection

Documentary Data

The evaluation team collected two different types of documentary data from the County Administrator's Office (CAO): AB 109 contracts to CBOs and Quarterly Reports submitted by CBOs to the CAO. We commenced data collection by reviewing County AB 109 contracts to understand service delivery and intended outcomes for each service provider. As part of this process the evaluation team developed a data collection and outcome matrix that guided interviews and focus groups with CBOs and clients, as well as quantitative data collected from providers. We also reviewed quarterly reports that CBOs provided to the CAO as a means of assessing the consistency of the data that they reported relative to the data that we received.

Interviews with Service Providers

The evaluation team conducted two rounds of interviews with AB 109-contract service providers. The first of these were conducted after our review of AB 109 contracts and allowed us to understand the program service delivery model, staff training and program capacity, intended client outcomes, and data collection activities. The second interviews, conducted after the evaluation team had conducted client focus groups and analyzed provider quantitative data reports, were used to explore the referral and enrollment process and to examine gaps between intended and actual service delivery and client outcomes.



Focus Groups with Current and Former Program Clients

We coordinated with the service provider organizations to conduct focus groups with clients, including current clients and those who had enrolled in program services but ultimately discontinued them.²⁵ These open-ended conversations sought to understand how clients came to be referred to and enrolled in each program; what activities they were or had participated in, their satisfaction with those services, and their initial outcomes related to those services. We also sought to understand challenges in service receipt, reasons for disengagement, and participation in other AB 109 programs and services.

Quantitative Data Collection

The evaluation team worked in collaboration with the CAO, contracted CBOs and the Probation Department to carry out several quantitative evaluation activities.

CBO Data

RDA worked with each of the eight service providers to collect data related to service delivery and client outcomes, such as number of clients referred, screened, and enrolled overall and for different program components; program completion rates; services delivered; and documented outcomes. The specific data points collected varied by provider based on their service delivery models and intended client outcomes. In addition to these service and outcome reports, the evaluation team also obtained client-referral and enrollment lists from each provider to assess cross-program participation.

Probation Data

RDA worked with the Contra Costa County Probation Department to obtain two different datasets: one on probation referrals to both CBOs and County Services, and one on AB 109 clients' risks and needs as determined by the Correctional Assessment and Intervention System™ (CAIS). We analyzed the client referral dataset to determine how many AB 109 clients' were referred to services, which services they were referred to, what service combinations were common, and any trends in the timing of referrals. This data was also used to validate CBO-reported referral data. The CAIS dataset was used to evaluate the common risk and need domains of AB 109 clients in order to understand the landscape of issues within which programs are operating.

Data Analysis and Products

RDA analyzed quantitative data to generate an integrated picture of service provision to date in Contra Costa County, and to identify challenges related to service provision and client outcomes. The evaluation team conducted a thematic analysis of qualitative data to validate and explain quantitative findings and to assess trends both within and across AB 109 programs.

²⁵ At the time of this report, the evaluation team was in the process of making contact with clients from Brighter Beginnings. Findings from client conversations will be included as an addendum to this report.



Appendix B: Program-Level Reports

Bay Area Legal Aid.....	A-5
Brighter Beginnings.....	A-11
Center for Human Development	A-16
Goodwill	A-23
Men and Women of Purpose.....	A-30
Reach.....	A-34
Rubicon	A-39
Shelter, Inc.	A-46



Bay Area Legal Aid

Funding Amount: \$80,000 (FY 2013-14); \$80,000 (FY 2014-15)

Snapshot of Program Accomplishments, July 2013-Sept. 2014

Service Delivery

- 74 referrals received²⁶
- 61 unduplicated clients served
- 48% (n=29) received employment assistance
- 21% (n=13) received family law services
- 11% (n=7) received benefits assistance
- Less than 7% (n=4) received each of the following: housing, healthcare, assistance with financial matters, or miscellaneous assistance

Client Outcomes

- 31 clients received advice and counsel or brief services
- 26 cases were still pending at the time of data collection
- 4 clients received full representation; all had a favorable outcome

Overview of Program

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2014-15, Contra Costa County contracted with Bay Area Legal Aid (“BayLegal”) to provide legal services for AB 109 clients and educate them about their rights and responsibilities. The legal services BayLegal provides include: obtaining or retaining housing, public benefits, and health care; financial and debt assistance; family law, and obtaining driver’s licenses. The program provides post-release legal check-ups for each client to identify legal barriers that can be remediated; educates clients about early termination of probation; and assists with fines. BayLegal attorneys also meet individually with clients in both jail and prison prior to their release. Two staff attorneys provide services to AB 109 participants.

BayLegal has both formal and informal arrangements with other AB 109 service providers to provide referrals and co-located services. BayLegal is a formal subcontractor of Rubicon and informally provides services at the Goodwill location. Neither the FY 2013-14 nor 2014-15 contract specified a target number of clients to be served. Variation in the nature of their cases can lead to a wider range of turnaround times for resolution for each client.

²⁶ Probation data shows a slightly smaller number of referrals to BayLegal. The difference in referral numbers recorded by Probation and by BayLegal may be the result of referrals BayLegal receives directly from Rubicon as a subcontractor, and from its collaborations with Goodwill and Shelter, Inc.



Strengths

Access to legal services and linkages

BayLegal provides critical legal advice, assistance, and representation, along with referrals and linkages to other legal services, to help reentry clients address the legal barriers to their successful reintegration into the community.

BayLegal staff's legal expertise and their willingness to invest significant time and effort into clients' cases are both essential to the program's ability to find appropriate avenues for legal relief, which may include full legal representation or advice and referral to other legal resources. For example, the staff help clients access Homeless Court to address fines preventing them from obtaining or recovering their driver's license, obtain waivers for acceptable non-payment of child support, and affordable plans for restitution payments.

Between July 1, 2013 and Sept. 30, 2014, BayLegal provided advice and counsel or brief legal services to 31 clients and full representation to four clients (with 26 cases still pending). The four completed cases all had favorable court outcomes. Of the clients served, nearly half (48%) received assistance related to employment, with staff noting that driver's license issues were frequently involved in these cases. In addition, one in five clients (21%) received family law services, and just over 10% received benefits assistance.

Participants spoke highly about the help they received from BayLegal's attorneys, describing assistance with driver's licenses and Homeless Court, lowering restitution payments, Medi-Cal enrollment and hospital bills, and child support—including accompanying participants to appointments when necessary:

She'll connect [you] to whatever kind of lawyer you need. Like, I couldn't get my driver's license because of my child support. She cleaned my license.

They cleaned my whole driving record, \$21,000 in fees and fines. [They also] helped with my child support.

She helped me get on Medi-Cal and that cut everything off for the medical bills—I don't owe it anymore.

BayLegal has developed formal and informal relationships with other Contra Costa AB 109 programs to provide opportunities for clients to learn about and connect to legal assistance.

Recognizing that legal issues are most often not clients' primary need upon release—with the exception of public benefits denials and driver's license issues—BayLegal has made a concerted effort to educate potential clients about their services in order to ensure that clients' legal needs can be addressed when they arise or become more pressing. In this way, even though clients may not need legal services immediately, they are aware of the services should a need arise down the line. Staff explained:



Contra Costa County AB 109 Program Evaluation

Often there's someone who's originally referred for a simple driver's license issue, trying to figure out how to restore their license, and down the line they come up with a housing issue, and they know who to contact then.

BayLegal has successfully built or leveraged relationships with other AB 109 providers in order to increase awareness and utilization of their services among AB 109 clients. By co-locating BayLegal staff at Goodwill and Rubicon offices, BayLegal has been able to work with clients who were not initially referred to their services. Staff noted that one of the most effective means of identifying and referring clients with legal issues has been the weekly office hours they hold at Goodwill in Central County. The convenience of having BayLegal on site allows Goodwill to seamlessly connect their clients with legal consultation. Clients are also aware of the arrangement and know that there is a regular time every week when they can access legal support. When one client had to bring in documentation for BayLegal to use in his case, he was able to meet with BayLegal's attorney before reporting to work at the Goodwill store: *"I'd be working and here she was coming by [Goodwill], so I'd see her before going to work."* Another participant shared:

They had Legal Aid that comes to [Goodwill] and helps us out every Friday. With that it's helped me a lot. This [attorney] she has gone using all the loopholes to help me out. I found out about that service through Goodwill.

In addition to available staff hours at Goodwill, BayLegal facilitates legal education at Rubicon through "Know Your Rights" workshops. Participants described the integration of these workshops and the services available at Rubicon:

[It's about] what employers are and are not allowed to ask you. And about legal services at Rubicon. [They] told us about our credit score, did our credit report.

In addition to educating clients about their legal rights, BayLegal attorneys noted that the opportunity to connect with clients early on more likely to engage with BayLegal at some point in their reentry process:

It does happen quite a bit, especially with the clients I meet in Central at Goodwill. I might meet for a basic history, consult, and later down the line they will come back with a more extensive issue.

Service data on program enrollments demonstrate the importance of these relationships. Of the 61 individuals BayLegal served during the evaluation period, 36 were also Goodwill clients and 17 were also Rubicon clients.

BayLegal also has relationships with County departments outside of the AB 109 system, which they can leverage to assist clients. For example, the organization has a partnership with the Department of Child Support, which supports BayLegal's family law work.



Improved program capacity

BayLegal has improved its capacity to engage and follow-up with clients in a timely manner by leveraging the organization's intake coordinator, who schedules meetings for clients with the staff attorneys and follows up with the Probation Department to help track clients.

When BayLegal initially began its AB 109 contract, program staff struggled to establish and maintain contact with a highly transient population. Recognizing that coordination-related issues were taking an inordinate amount of staff time and inhibiting their ability to service clients effectively, the organization hired an intake coordinator, who is responsible for gathering and assessing all intakes. This person schedules meetings for clients with the staff attorneys and provides follow-up with the Probation Department to help track clients. In addition, the creation of this position has enabled BayLegal to continue to manage clients' care and coordinate services even when a client's attorney is out in the field or working with other clients.

Challenges

Suitability of referrals

Staff attorneys reflected that sometimes the referrals that BayLegal receives do not clearly align with the type of support the program provides. This appears to cut both ways, with the agency receiving some referrals for legal issues that it cannot help with, while receiving fewer referrals than expected for services they do provide.

One of the challenges BayLegal noted was a mismatch between the needs of referred clients and the services the program provides. On the one hand, the program has received a number of referrals for a range of legal issues that are outside the program's scope of services.

Some of the referrals are not quite [suitable] or are very vague...Maybe they did it as a default—some kind of legal issue was flagged and they send it over. I think there's an opportunity for both sides to engage each other and learn more about how the other operates.

In addition, the program has received very few referrals for a range of other issues they address. Staff attorneys observed that they would have expected a greater number of cases for individuals facing housing denials or evictions, Medi-Cal enrollment denials, and General Assistance or CalFresh denials. Between July 2013 and Sept. 2014, Bay Area Legal Aid provided benefits assistance to only seven individuals and housing or healthcare assistance to only four individuals. Staff commented that they were unsure whether the lower number of cases was because clients were actually not facing these issues, or because the referrals were not coming in. Staff shared regarding housing cases:

I thought we'd see more housing cases—cases of people getting denied or evicted because of record. I'm not sure what's happening between transitional to permanent housing, maybe



people are figuring it out on their own, or staying with friends and family...I would be curious to know.

Regarding public benefits cases, staff noted that they partner with County departments involved in public benefits, who can flag individuals who have been denied and refer them for legal assistance. In the arena of General Assistance and CalFresh benefits, BayLegal staff were unclear whether a similar type of identification and referral was occurring:

With SSI we have our partners with the public benefits team that helps people apply for it, and they can flag if people are denied and in some cases refer people to us. I'm not sure if anyone is doing the flagging for the food stamps and the GA.

In addition to lower than expected referrals for particular types of cases, at least one staff member was surprised at the low number of female referrals, observing that this may highlight a gap in referrals or may simply be a reflection of the gender makeup of the county's AB 109 population.

As a result of the program's expectation of higher numbers of cases, BayLegal has capacity to service more clients than their current number of referrals.

While the sequencing of referrals to AB 109 programs has improved over time, some referrals to legal services may still be premature.

As noted by staff above, individuals benefit most from legal assistance when their most immediate reentry needs are stabilized—including substance abuse, housing, and income needs. Thus the timing of referrals to legal services is important. While staff expressed that the sequencing of referrals has greatly improved over time, they noted that occasionally “the clients themselves aren’t ready to engage.” However, as noted above, the opportunity to connect with clients early on, even if they are not yet ready for legal assistance, can increase their awareness of available services and therefore the likelihood that they will engage in services at a later point.

Pre-release outreach and education

While staff attorneys have access to meet with individual clients prior to release, BayLegal would like to enhance participation in a structured transition plan and have pre-release access to releasing AB 109 status probationers in a classroom or "workshop" format in order to educate potential clients about their rights and services BayLegal can and cannot provide (e.g., BayLegal attorneys work on civil legal matters, but not on criminal legal matters).



Service coordination

Staff capacity for timely client follow-up, coupled with challenges in tracking participants, can hinder the program's ability to consistently follow-up with clients in a timely manner.

Though BayLegal's intake coordinator has helped in the area of client communication and follow-up, some staff noted that it can be a challenge to maintain timely communication with clients who can be nonresponsive or communicate inconsistently due to other challenges they face.

Further, BayLegal staff noted that they are not regularly informed when clients are reincarcerated for a new offense, which inhibits their ability to follow up with clients who may be in jail.

BayLegal identified family law as an area where partnerships with County services would be of benefit to clients.

While BayLegal can provide information, advice and referrals for clients facing family law issues, due to limited capacity, BayLegal provides representation in family law matters only for clients who are survivors of domestic violence. BayLegal refers other clients to the County's Family Law Facilitator program, which assists clients in completing their own paperwork. Staff noted that there may be an opportunity for the County to expand or make a more direct connection to this program by designating time for reentry clients to meet with a family law facilitator.



Brighter Beginnings

Funding Amount: \$54,505 (FY 2013-14); \$66,000 (FY 2014-15)

Snapshot of Program Accomplishments, July 2013-Sept. 2014

Service Delivery

- 80 participants served*
- 20 pre-release workshops held
- 12 participants received a certificate of completion (attended 7 or more sessions)*
- 2 AB 109 pre-release participants made post-release contact
- 4 AB 109 participants received a one-on-one coaching session

Client Outcomes

- 5 pre-release participants made a strategic life plan*

**This number includes participants who were served prior to sentencing; participants may not have ultimately received an AB 109 sentence.*

Overview of Program

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2013-14 the County contracted with Brighter Beginnings, a family strengthening organization, to provide services as part of the mentoring collaborative coordinated by the Contra Costa County Office of Education (CCCOE). With a focus on leadership development, Brighter Beginnings' services under this contract included the development and implementation of the Re-Entry Academy for Leaders (REAL Curriculum). In FY 2014-15, the County contracted Brighter Beginnings to provide services in two capacities: 1) as an AB 109 direct service provider, and 2) as the main administrator and coordinator for the County's Mentoring and Family Reunification Program, taking over this role from the Office of Education. This report focuses on the organization's direct service contract only.

In FY 2014-15, Brighter Beginnings was contracted to provide leadership and entrepreneurialism training services to clients in conjunction with John F. Kennedy University (JFKU), utilizing a three-phased approach with the goal of achieving leadership skill development and business creation education for participants. The first phase of the program begins in custody and includes a 10-week leadership-training program. Phase II, which begins post-release, involves twice-monthly REAL Curriculum group meetings and one-on-one coaching. In the third phase of the program, which has not happened yet, Brighter Beginnings was to collaborate with JFKU to deliver an integrated program of leadership (REAL Curriculum groups) with JFKU's Intra-preneurship curriculum (career readiness). In addition, as part of Phase III, Brighter Beginnings was to identify potential candidates for JFKU's Institute of Entrepreneurial Leadership (IEL) certificate program. Brighter Beginnings' staff for its AB 109-funded programs includes a program coordinator, a program manager, and a contract administrator.



Strengths

Research-based and flexible curriculum

The REAL curriculum draws on existing research-based programs, while also allowing for flexibility to best fit participants' needs.

The REAL curriculum draws on a curriculum developed as part of a program for returning citizens in Ohio, as well as *Leaders for Change: Protective Factors in Action*, a 20-hour training program for family leaders developed by the Parent Services Project (PSP) in California.

In implementing the curriculum, staff have maintained fidelity to the program's core goal of developing a strategic life plan, while also adapting their teaching styles to best fit participants' needs. Based on the feedback and questions they receive, staff discern the participants' level of understanding to ensure the program is accessible for participants from varied educational backgrounds. In the pre-release setting, staff have also adapted the curriculum to focus on developing shorter-term strategic goals in addition to longer-term life plans.

Goal-setting and individualized support

By helping pre-release program participants make a concrete plan for attaining their personal goals, Brighter Beginnings leads them toward greater stability post-release.

The program's goal is to teach participants self-reliance and stability through successfully achieving their goals. Over the course of the REAL curriculum groups, participants prioritize personal goals in a strategic life plan. Through interactions with the participants during the group sessions, program staff can discern participants' readiness for change. The staff then works to build participants' critical thinking and planning skills by guiding them through a process to discern attainable goals from unlikely goals.

The heart of the program is the development of a personal strategic life plan.... We talk specifically about the steps for making that happen. If they remain in the program at least two to three sessions, I'm able to get feedback from them on how they're working towards those goals.

Brighter Beginnings staff observed that during the pre-release program, a number of participants have set and achieved short-term goals related to their own self-control and interactions with other incarcerated individuals. Facing these goals pre-release helps participants prepare for similar challenges on the outside. While Brighter Beginnings has limited data on the post-release outcomes of their REAL curriculum participants, staff shared the example of one participant who contacted staff to express gratitude for the Brighter Beginnings program.

I got a call from a graduate. She said, 'You told me to let you know when I finally land and feel like I'm stable, and I want you to know I'm doing ok. I'm back with my husband. Thank you very much.'



In addition to leadership training and support, staff provide information and assistance to help individuals address barriers to reentry.

Staff provide participants with concrete information and assistance to help link them to a variety of resources, including housing, education, court services, and financial benefits. In many cases, individuals need to meet these basic needs before they can move forward with further educational or career goals. Staff shared the example of one individual who expressed interest in higher education, but first needed to obtain a source of income. *“One example is a man waiting for his SSI—he has a support system, but he didn’t know how to access some of the services that are available to him in order to achieve his goals.”* Staff explained that after helping this client obtain a source of income, *“Then we’ll look at the next steps, now that he has that income: contacting the school of his choice, beginning to look at housing.”*

The REAL curriculum incorporates elements of family and community strengthening, with the goal of broadening the program’s impact.

The Brighter Beginnings program model aims to impact family and community stability, beginning by strengthening the individual. Though many participants first focus on stabilizing themselves, staff emphasize that as their personal lives and families begins to stabilize, participants should look toward their communities and find broader ways to contribute.

If they don’t have immediate family, who do they have in their circle of influence? Because everyone connects with someone. I try to make it applicable to whatever the situation the person is in. The goal is for them to continue to expand the circle, to not be satisfied at one level, to keep it going.

Data capacity

Brighter Beginnings has the capacity to record client information and outcomes through an electronic case management system in which staff record clients’ intake, demographic, and data from the pre- and post-program surveys.

Challenges

While Brighter Beginnings has had success in rolling out its REAL Curriculum groups, the program has not achieved full implementation and has reached few AB 109-identified clients. This section discusses several factors that have hindered the implementation of the three-phase program.

Program alignment to AB 109 client needs

Many individuals who attend Brighter Beginnings’ REAL curriculum classes have not been sentenced, thus Brighter Beginnings has faced challenges in targeting its services to AB 109 individuals.



Only five out of 169 individuals served by Brighter Beginnings have been AB 109 clients. Brighter Beginnings staff noted that because the majority of individuals in custody are not sentenced identifying those who are either sentenced under or eligible for AB 109 has been a challenge. Staff noted that if all phases of the program were open to individuals beyond those sentenced under AB 109, it would broaden the pool of possible program participants.

Many AB 109 clients have a multiplicity of overlapping post-release needs, including housing, employment, substance abuse, and more. The need to address these issues has precluded most AB 109 clients from participating in Brighter Beginnings' leadership and entrepreneurialism training.

Because of the need to address immediate reentry barriers such as housing and income, few participants have continued from the REAL curriculum to further services. Six participants have engaged in post-release one-on-one coaching, and no participants have enrolled in Phase III training through JFKU (though it is possible that some individuals have been referred directly to JFKU by Field Ops Coordinators). Staff noted that the Phase III certificate program with JFKU is a rigorous certificate program, and observed that it may be appropriate for only a small subset of returning citizens. For similar reasons, Brighter Beginnings has not been able to initiate the community projects component of its service model. Brighter Beginnings' program coordinator shared:

In terms of the readiness, what I've found is that the vast majority of those in the program, by my assessment, were not ready to go to that next level, nor were they necessarily seeking after that. The participants are looking for basic survival, their needs are around the basic things—a place to live, to sustain themselves, reconnect with their children.

In terms of pre-release services, while real-time curricular modifications are a program strength, Brighter Beginnings designed the program model with the assumption that some participants would have exposure to college-level education. Staff noted that in actuality, many participants have only a partial high school education or a GED. In addition, Brighter Beginnings has not regularly held individual meetings with individuals at WCDF, which may be due to issues including participant readiness or interest, staff capacity, and pre-release access. As noted above, staff do provide some individual support following the class sessions.

Timing and frequency of pre-release access

The timing and frequency of pre-release access has limited Brighter Beginnings' ability to provide its curriculum consistently and has inhibited the continuity of services post release.

In FY 2013-14, Brighter Beginnings provided REAL curriculum classes to both men and women at WCDF during allotted CCCOE class time. This allowed the program to have a regular time slot each week, with consistent program participants. However, staff noted that in FY 2014-15, because the mentoring agencies no longer work through the CCCOE, they have more limited access to the jails. In addition, because Brighter Beginnings staff was not able to accommodate the Sunday evening time slot the Sheriff's Office offered for men's classes, Brighter Beginnings only offered their curriculum to women.



Additionally, Brighter Beginnings designed a weekly curriculum, but this year only had access to offer their women's classes twice monthly. During the longer two week period, participants may decide to stop attending classes or may be released from jail. This inhibits the program's ability to provide consistent services and plan for post-release continuity of services. Furthermore, because participants no longer receive time off their sentences for attending the group—as they did when presented through CCCOE—staff note that this has negatively impacted program attendance. Brighter Beginnings saw an average of six to 12 participants this year, compared to 15 participants last year, and there has been lower consistency among participants. Most participants average about four out of the 10 curriculum sessions, with few participants receiving a certificate of program completion. Finally, while Brighter Beginnings is able to give informational presentations at Marsh Creek Detention Facility, Brighter Beginnings does not currently have access to provide REAL classes at the facility.

Post-release services and program continuity

Delays in the coordination of post-release services have prevented Brighter Beginnings from expanding post-release REAL curriculum classes.

Currently, Brighter Beginnings provides the REAL curriculum at Discovery House, a 90-day substance abuse treatment program in Martinez. Brighter Beginnings has been in negotiations with Goodwill and Rubicon, as well as with Field Ops Coordinators, to expand to other sites in Central and East County, including No Wrong Door sites.

Brighter Beginnings is working to refine its coaching model to allow for longer-term follow-up with individuals.

Brighter Beginnings' program model does not intend to follow all clients from pre- to post-release, as staff note that not all clients are ready for or seeking to engage in one-on-one follow-up coaching. In these cases, Brighter Beginnings staff makes an effort to link REAL class participants to services and resources that they need in order to achieve stability post-release. However, because Brighter Beginnings does not follow most REAL curriculum participants over time, it is not possible to assess the extent to which Brighter Beginnings' services have resulted in improved individual and family stability post release.



Center for Human Development

Funding Amount: \$51,204 (FY 2013-14); \$66,666 (FY 2014-15)

Snapshot of Program Accomplishments, July 2013-Sept. 2014

Service Delivery

- 35 clients referred
- 24 clients received an intake
- Currently working with 9 participants

Client Outcomes

- 21 completed Stage 1
- 16 completed Stage 2
- 7 completed Stage 3
- 1 completed Stage 4

Overview of Program

The Center for Human Development (CHD) operates the Community and Family Reunification Program (CFRP) for Contra Costa County's AB 109 Community Programs' Mentoring Program, providing reunification services to returning citizens, their families, and friends, in addition to providing community support throughout Contra Costa County. Services include large and small group pre-release presentations and workshops at West County Detention Facility and Marsh Creek Detention Facility. CHD also provides post-release large and small group presentations and workshops to returning citizens at partner agencies and other locations throughout the County. The program designed these presentations and workshops to enlist and engage returning citizens and all reconnecting parties in the process of meeting together to resolve conflict, promote healthier interactions, and rebuild their relationships. The CFRP employs one part-time staff person, and, at the time of the evaluation interview, had three volunteer family mediators.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2014-15, the County contracted CHD to maintain 12 enrolled participants from the previous contract year in their reunification program, enroll 24 new participants, and provide 36 returning citizens with community and family conferencing under their five-stage reunification process.

1. One-on-one intake meeting with returning citizen; pre or post release
2. One-on-one meeting(s) with returning citizen to assess strengths, accomplishments, and goals; pre or post release
3. Meeting(s) with returning citizen's family or friends to understand goals
4. Collective meeting(s) with all parties to form agreed upon plan/solutions
5. Setting a follow-up plan agreed upon by all parties

The contract also specified that the program recruit five new volunteers to coach returning citizens and 12 new volunteers to provide 360 hours of reunification services, including two refresher trainings. The County also contracted CHD to provide reunification informational workshops to 15 agencies or groups. In FY 2013-14, CHD was part of the consortium of three mentoring organizations, which as a whole were contracted to provide services to 100 participants.



Strengths

Flexible program model based on research

CHD has modeled its program on evidence-based and researched practices in family reunification, while at the same time making modifications to the model to better fit the needs of Contra Costa County's AB 109 population.

CHD's five-stage family reunification model was developed using documented research on engaging families in reentry, drawing from the 2007 Prisoner Reentry Initiative Grant Program sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice, as well as the program model used by Community Mediation Maryland, a reunification program found to have significant effects on participants' likelihood of rearrest. Over the course of the contract period, CHD determined that the AB 109 population needed a more intensive level of engagement than the Maryland community mediation model entails. As such, CHD adapted its program to allow for more frequent and longer meetings for each stage of the reunification process.

CHD's clients express satisfaction with the program's consistent structure and the frequent contact they received from program staff, with one client sharing,

This is the only program that is organized. We have a meeting once a month and they call a few times during the month.

In addition, CHD's program model allows their family reunification providers to tailor their approach for each client, adjusting the time and duration of services provided to clients' and families' particular circumstances in a manner that is consistent with evidence-based practices. Staff explained that the length of time providers spend working with each client varies depending on the needs of each individual client and family. Reunification providers may tailor the number of meetings per Stage of reunification, and the total length of time that providers work with clients may vary as well. Staff explained:

One of the things that some of our program directors have discovered is that the AB 109 process is a little different from the community mediations—their meeting is maybe one three-hour meeting that concludes whatever [the issue] is. But ours is really family by family. There's no one set way. Families are so different.

Strong relationships between CHD and clients

Trusting relationships with trained CHD staff have been a defining factor of clients' positive experience with family reunification services.

CHD staff pointed out that, first and foremost, trust between participants and providers is necessary to beginning a successful reunification process. Participants concurred, sharing wholly positive feedback about program staff, observing that staff have training in counseling, genuinely care about them, and are able to work effectively with participants and their families. As one participant put it, working with



CHD gives them *“the feeling that someone is out there in the system who actually does care, and not just throw us in jail.”*

Clients spoke about the importance of reunification and shared ways in which staff had guided them toward progress in improving their family relationships:

I have an 11 year old daughter who had been out of the house since a month after she was born. [The word] reunification I had never heard before. The word alone made me think about healing and fulfilling the circle of my obligations as a father.

This client went on to share the beginnings of progress:

Yesterday for the first time my ex-wife met with Paul. The family is all in.

Speaking about the help that his reunification provider had given him, another client shared:

He tries to get to our issues and why we don't get along and stuff like that...if it wasn't for him talking to me before I got home, I would have flipped out....

This client's partner, who accompanied him to the focus group, agreed that CHD's staff has helped him. This help goes beyond family reunification and ripples out to impact clients' overall ability to maintain a healthier lifestyle after release.

I can see improvement in him. He has been clean since he's been out. He does not go back at all. He can walk completely away. He is moving forward, he is starting to look for jobs, and care a lot more. I'm proud of him.

Pre-release connection

The ability to meet with individuals prior to their release allows CHD to inform clients about available services and begin to form a foundation of trust that supports participants in continuing the reunification process after release.

In pre-release workshops, CHD staff provide currently incarcerated individuals with knowledge about family reunification services. Through this awareness, CHD builds hope for family resolution when the client is released, while also mitigating fears clients might have. Family reunification can seem daunting to individuals in jail, and pre-release meetings give CHD the chance to neutralize the emotions clients may feel when thinking about family conflict. Staff shared, *“When you work with them pre-release, [you] encourage them to work on themselves.”*

In addition, staff noted that their pre-release access to clients has been expanded; they are now able to schedule regular meetings with clients on Fridays. Staff noted that the opportunity for more regular and frequent contact with clients is an important advantage in engaging clients and beginning the reunification process earlier on. Clients shared how the pre-release connection helped them engage in the reunification process:



If you go to the DEUCE [substance abuse] program, they will tell you what programs they have. That's how I met Paul. He came in and did a lecture on what their program provides.

I met Paul in jail. I put in the application myself to reunify with my mom and my dad. As soon as I got out of jail, he called me. Ever since then I've been coming every month.

Service referrals and coordination

CHD staff report that as a result of receiving targeted referrals for family reunification services in the second contract year, there is a better fit between the program and clients.

CHD staff reported that in FY 2014-15, once family reunification services were separated from the consortium of mentoring organizations, CHD began receiving a greater number of referrals for clients who were genuinely interested in, and motivated to, pursue family reunification process. Staff observed, *"Now the referrals are more specific and because they are, we're getting people who are really interested in the reunification services."* Staff noted that when referrals are appropriately timed and address clients' needs, the clients are more likely to follow through with services.

Focus group participants expressed high hopes toward re-establishing connections, resolving conflict, and rebuilding relationships with family. Staff noted that with more motivated clients, providers are able to have more frequent and consistent meetings, which in turn builds stronger relationships between program staff and the participants, thereby supporting the reunification process.

The fact that we're able to meet early and frequently with the participants, that relationship and trust building has set in. So that gives us an advantage for moving forward with the process.

CHD also noted that they have begun to receive referrals from the Reentry Network for Returning Citizens in East and Central County; staff observed that thus far this process has improved the coordination of care by facilitating access to clients. Staff explained:

The referrals we are getting through the Network, we're able to jump on them earlier than before. That's because the Network is closer to Probation than we are.

In addition to supporting clients through the reunification process, CHD staff also work closely with clients to identify additional areas for support and communicate with Probation to facilitate referrals to other services within the AB 109 network.

In order to support clients in addressing multiple barriers to successful reentry, CHD works closely with clients to connect them with other resources within the AB 109 system as needed. Staff described that this process of "handholding" is essential for clients with multiple needs who may be overwhelmed trying to navigate the AB 109 system following their release. Client service data demonstrates the high level of cross-enrollment between CHD services and other AB 109 programs. Of the 24 clients who received an intake between July 1, 2013 and Sept. 30, 2014, the majority were enrolled in other



programs as well, with half enrolled in Men and Women of Purpose, Rubicon, and/or Shelter, Inc. and a smaller number enrolled in BayLegal (5 clients) or Goodwill (7 clients) services.

Challenges

Despite improvements in referrals and service delivery over time, CHD has engaged in family reunification with fewer clients than anticipated over the course of its contract, due to a confluence of factors related to referrals, client engagement, program capacity, and clients' family circumstances. While in the first contract year CHD made initial contact with the target number of participants, as of September 30, 2014, the vast majority of clients had only completed the initial stages of the five-stage reunification process. According to CHD's records, 21 clients had completed Stage 1, 16 completed Stage 2, seven completed Stage 4, and one had completed Stage 4. As of the beginning of January 2015, CHD staff noted that two clients had recently completed Stage 5.

Service referrals and awareness

The lack of targeted referrals for family reunification in the first contract year led CHD to engage fewer clients for family reunification than anticipated.

It is important to note that in the first contract year, clients sometimes had dual and triple referrals to some or all of the mentoring service providers simultaneously. As a result, many of the clients referred to CHD were not explicitly interested in engaging in the full family reunification mediation process, but rather in more general mentoring or counseling. Staff explained:

[In] a couple of the situations...the kinds of services we provide was not clear to the participants, and so when I explained that our services are more mediative—we're not counseling or therapy—they were looking for counseling and therapy work.

For staff, this underscores the importance of pre-release education for clients, as well as for better communication with probation officers about the scope of CHD's services.

While probation referrals have become more fitting over time, delays in receiving formal probation referrals, along with challenges in tracking clients, can slow down the family reunification process.

At the time of data collection, CHD staff identified 11 clients who were waiting for Probation to process a formal referral, most of which were pre-release referrals. Further, CHD staff noted that there have been several times when they were not notified about clients' rearrests, indicating a lack of communication between CHD and Probation.

In addition, CHD staff noted that many individuals have substance abuse and mental health needs; these issues can interfere with the reunification process if they are not these are not addressed prior to enrollment.



Program capacity

CHD has struggled to retain enough volunteer mediators to meet their contract targets due to the intensive time commitment required for the services.

CHD's program model was designed to utilize volunteers as family reunification specialists. However, while CHD has implemented a plan to recruit volunteer mediators and has been successful recruiting volunteers from faith, civic, and other social groups in the community, CHD has struggled to retain volunteers due to the intensive time commitment required for the services and volunteers' school or work demands. CHD also intends to recruit returning citizens themselves as volunteer mediators, but has faced challenges ensuring they meet all of CHD's requirements. As a result, at the time of the evaluation, the program had only three volunteers, and the program's paid staff person was taking on the majority of the reunification cases, limiting the organization's capacity to provide intensive services to a greater number of clients. Staff noted that the family reunification process would be more successful with a lower ratio of staff or volunteers to clients.

Compounding this challenge, the family reunification program has only one paid staff person, which limits the program's capacity to serve the target number of clients.

CHD noted that it is difficult to coordinate the family reunification program with only one part-time paid staff person. Moreover, CHD staff noted that the program would be more effective if they could provide trainings on conflict resolution and relationship enhancement with groups such as local colleges, formerly incarcerated adults, seniors, and faith communities, but they do not currently have the capacity to do so.

With regard to pre-release services, though the staff are able to present informational workshops about CHD's services, staff observed that there would be increased benefit to clients if CHD were able to conduct skill-building workshops around family conflict and reunification. CHD would need expanded pre-release access as well as greater staff capacity in order to accomplish this goal.

With only one part-time paid staff and no electronic case management system, CHD demonstrated an ability to collect and report data on its referrals, clients, and service delivery, but would benefit from greater capacity to consistently update and utilize service data. In addition, much of the information captured for each client, such as client history and written assessments, is stored in paper files.

Family issues outside of clients' control

CHD's program model is built on the expectation that clients and their families will participate in mediation; however, clients' family members do not always have the interest or ability to engage in relationship building.

Staff noted that although clients may be motivated to engage in family reunification, successful engagement in this process relies on the interest and ability of family members and loved ones to engage in the process as well. Staff shared several examples of circumstances that impeded the



reunification process. Some participants decided that the disconnect with the family was too great to continue; both of these clients had partners, and they decided to move forward with their partner rather than go through the process of repairing their family relationships. One client explained:

I wanted to get back in close with my mom because she wasn't there when I was growing up. [Working with CHD] helped me realize I don't want that relationship with my mom because she is not stable in her mind.

In cases where there may be a restraining order or past domestic violence, CHD staff may determine that the client is unable to participate in reunification services.

Further, considering clients' needs holistically, family reunification may not always be the idea goal for the client. Clients shared:

I am not trying to get custody [of my child] because I gotta take care of myself first. I'm not trying to do drugs, I'm just trying to get a job and a place to stay and be able to live around him.

If we get hung up in the family drama or the things we know will get to us, it could trigger us. If I wouldn't see my daughter for a complete year in order to save my own life [I would do that].



Goodwill

Funding Amount: \$600,000 (FY 2013-14); \$600,000 (FY 2014-15)

Snapshot of Program Accomplishments, July 2013-Sept. 2014

Service Delivery

- 136 clients referred (per Probation)
- 76 clients served
- 45% (n=34) were contacted within 24 hours
- 95% (n=72) enrolled in transitional employment
- 95% (n=72) completed a job readiness workshop, surpassing the target of 70%

Client Outcomes

- 57% (n=43) obtained documents needed for employment
- 92% (n=70) created or updated a resume
- 84% (n=64) attained a job readiness vocational certificate, surpassing the target of 50%
- 7 clients enrolled in higher education
- 54% (n=41) completed transitional employment, under the target of 70%
- 32% (n=24) were placed in an unsubsidized job and/or educational opportunity
 - Average of 150 days from referral to permanent job placement
 - 75% retained employment after 30 days (target = 70%)*
 - 46% retained employment after 60 days (target = 60%)*
 - 38% retained after 90 days (target = 50%)*

**Some participants may not have passed the date for measurement at the time of data collection*

Overview of Program

The Bridges to Work program of Goodwill Industries of the Greater East Bay (Goodwill) facilitates the County's Employment Support and Placement Services to provide reentry support to incarcerated and formerly incarcerated persons. Goodwill provides a comprehensive and integrated approach to reduce recidivism and achieve stability within the community through employment support and placement services in Central County. Participants can engage in up to 90 days of transitional, paid employment at local Goodwill stores or other partner agencies, in addition to receiving job search assistance for competitive employment opportunities. Goodwill staffs five full time employees with expertise working with this population; in some cases, staff may be returning citizens. Goodwill also serves as a service hub for other providers. In both Fiscal Year 2013-14 and 2014-15, the program was contracted to serve up to 120 participants in Central County.



Strengths

Immediate access to employment

Goodwill's Bridges to Work program provides almost immediate access to transitional employment for individuals upon release, which allows them to quickly begin addressing their basic needs while also building positive job skills and habits.

Because clients are eager to begin earning an income immediately after release, clients show a great deal of enthusiasm for Goodwill's transitional employment opportunities, and Goodwill enrolls nearly all clients who are referred. Of the 76 clients who participated in the program during the evaluation period, Bridges to Work enrolled 72 clients (95%) in transitional employment. By providing the participants with an income, Bridges to Work helps participants get on their feet. Staff shared:

The highlight is transitional employment. That's the biggest allure of our AB 109 program. Being able to reenter society and obtain a paycheck and focus on eliminating barriers to getting paid permanent employment. Barriers come with not making any money at all—so the transitional employment helps them with a paycheck to get on their feet.

Clients also shared their experience with the quick connection to transitional employment. For one participant, receiving an income through Goodwill's program led to greater goals and successful outcomes for his entire family.

It was pretty much right away. You got connected, you come in here, you do an assessment on the computer that takes 15 minutes and then the real paperwork gets started and that takes an hour or two and then if you want to work that day you start working that day.

For me it's stable work. I got an interview at UPS and a roof over my kids' head. I got that. I stay with food in the fridge. All the things that come with a house. I worked towards that since I've been here. I worked for everything I have now. Everything is because of "Bridges to Work" and AB 109.

Bridges to Work allows clients to ease into the responsibilities of a work environment, with low barriers to entry, quick onboarding, flexible scheduling, and incentives for job readiness workshop attendance.

Upon enrolling in Bridges to Work, clients are offered choices as to when they would like to start working, and for how many hours a week. This allows flexibility for different clients' needs. The program also incentivizes workshop attendance and progress through the program phases by providing additional work hours for attendance, which in turn increases clients' incomes. They must also complete the benchmarks in order to receive the workshop stipend. In the first contract year, when workshop attendance itself was paid, staff and clients reported that some clients would show up to get paid for their attendance. Goodwill also adjusted their intake process to separate it from assessment. This allows the program to ensure client motivation for enrolling in their transitional employment program. Previously, Goodwill would enroll many clients who would either drop off or not show up.



Comprehensive program model

Goodwill's comprehensive program model helps clients build job skills and experience while also providing supporting them with case management and other services.

Bridges to Work helps clients build job readiness through a combination of formal workshops and on-the-job coaching and guidance that addresses both vocational and interpersonal skills. Goodwill participants must complete job readiness workshops in order to work in the Goodwill store. In this way, clients participate in training designed to teach both hard and soft skills related to employment.

Goodwill reported that through the workshops, 92% (n=70) of enrolled clients created or updated a resume. Clients spoke about the job-related skills they gained through their participation:

When I first got here I didn't know nothing. If you said fill out an application, I didn't know nothing. Now if they ask if I'm convicted of a felony, I say, 'Yes but I would like to speak to you in private in an interview.' Since I been here I've made progress.

Over the course of its contract, Bridges to Work augmented its curriculum to incorporate a greater emphasis on anger management elements and cognitive behavioral training. One participant shared that learning about addictive behavior has been especially useful:

Most [of our criminal] cases have to do with drugs and alcohol. If we weren't using or drinking most likely we wouldn't have done that.... Learning about the disease of addiction is a big success that could help a lot of people. A few of the classes helped us with mindful thinking.

In addition to formal skill-building, participants receive on-the-job experience and training at the Goodwill stores. By fostering a supportive work environment, clients work on self-improvement, maintain their attendance and engagement, and build their job skills. Clients pointed to the structure of having a job—as much if not more so than the income—as incredibly useful in helping them maintain legal behaviors and learn important work habits:

I've never had a job in my life—well a legit job, legit money coming in. At this program you were making \$8 an hour and could only work 25 hours a week—so you weren't bringing in more than \$300 for two weeks. But the money wasn't the problem; the problem was for me to get into that constant getting up at the right time, constantly showing up.

Employment was not something that I yearned for for money; I yearned for it to interact with regular people and stay with the crowd. I use it like counseling so I can talk to and meet regular people.

Goodwill sites also treat clients with a high degree of respect, which develops the confidence needed to obtain and sustain a job after the program ends. Staff explained, “They like that they know when they come here they’re just another employee, not a probationer.” The staff also strive to develop a positive



and supportive work environment for participants by creating an arrangement with Probation that local law enforcement cannot enter the property.

Goodwill's program model includes case management and an open office environment, which offers a high level of staff availability to support clients both emotionally and in addressing barriers to reentry.

The case manager helps clients navigate the services of AB 109's infrastructure and provides clients with off-hours support to prevent behavior that would cause them to recidivate. Through individualized assistance, participants can also work on removing barriers to employment. Goodwill reported that during the evaluation period, 57% (n=43) obtained documents needed for employment. Clients also experienced benefit from individualized services:

Services come about according to my needs. My GED. I've been reimbursed for taking it. I've been reimbursed for several different things. I'm repairing my credit right now. I'm going to submit those payments to see if I can be reimbursed from that program. I see with my situation services have been offered according to my needs at different times.

Clients develop solid affiliations with the program and staff, and the Goodwill office provides an open environment where clients can spend their free time, use the office computers to work on their job search, and connect with other AB 109 CBOs. Once participants enroll with Goodwill, they can continue to access the supports and resources the program offers beyond the six-month program period—including getting re-referred to the program—which helps clients receive continuous support at every phase of their job development and search.

They all have compassion. I'm not sure if their background has to do with some of ours, but they have a compassion for us. They want to see us succeed. They had their own personal part in my journey.

This is like a safe zone. I find myself coming here when I'm not busy or even if something is bothering me. I find myself stopping by here a lot. I talk with the staff and they know my business. I share everything with them.

Just this place to come to kept me from doing something stupid.

Connections to competitive employment

Goodwill assists clients with their job search, while also actively increasing the job opportunities available to AB 109 individuals by forming relationships with local employers.

Goodwill reported that during the evaluation period, 84% (n=64) of clients attained a job readiness vocational certificate, surpassing the target of 50%. Approximately one-third (32%) of clients were placed in an unsubsidized job and/or educational opportunity. Clients shared their experiences with Goodwill's job search assistance:



Contra Costa County AB 109 Program Evaluation

They are constantly every minute of the day putting up job applications, jobs up, they get calls, from you know like Chili's or places like that.

You had the staff helping you out with every step. They are really helpful. Always posting jobs and checking on you to make sure you are doing what you should be doing. They are helpful to me. I found a job and I'm still applying for other jobs.

They set you up with everything. I'm about to have a \$24 an hour job in construction.

Further, for participants who have their I-9 ready, are doing well in transitional employment, have a resume completed, and have successful relationships with their coworkers and supervisors, Goodwill staff will make efforts to identify and connect them to permanent employment earlier than the 90 day transitional employment phase.

The strength of Goodwill's partnerships and relationships within the community serves as a strength to the broader AB 109 system because those partnerships create paying opportunities for the participants. Staff have also linked participants with Goodwill Academy, which has hired four participants into permanent positions. The job developer has also been meeting with private sector employers to open up transitional work sites in broader fields than manual labor. For example, one employer, Express Employment in Concord, is employing participants in the administrative field, so clients can learn administrative and office skills. Staff shared:

We did six job placements last month—even with the referrals being a little bit slower, we were able to place six people. We worked closely with UPS and another automotive company—major companies. Through the relationships our job developer is building with them, it creates jobs.

Goodwill also recognizes that competitive employment may not be the short-term goal for all clients, and thus assists some clients in pursuing higher education. During the evaluation period, seven clients enrolled in higher education.

Coordinated services

Through co-location of services and referrals to other AB 109 service providers, Goodwill sustains a safety net of resources for their clients to work toward greater stability.

A core tenet of Goodwill's program model is the co-location of services. Bay Area Legal Aid comes to the office every Friday to provide legal services to the clients.

[The CBOs] come onsite, because a lot of the people they're working with they can't get out to their office; this is a central location where participants have to be anyways... Every other day someone is in here meeting with someone.

Goodwill staff also proactively seek solutions and partnerships to address the array of challenges clients encounter, including pursuing a contract with the food bank for basic food needs, providing transportation help, and contracting with an agency that provides work-appropriate clothing. The



program added a new worksite and maintains connections with other parts of the Goodwill network. For example, when a client moves, or if a site is full, the staff can connect West County participants with the Oakland office instead of turning them away.

Challenges

Program capacity

Goodwill indicated a capacity to serve a greater number of clients than are being referred; at the same time, the Bridges to Work program experienced turnover in the program coordinator position and was without two of its key staff positions for most of the contract period.

Goodwill noted that their program currently has the capacity to enroll a greater number of participants in transitional employment than are being referred by Probation. Staff explained that in order to meet their contractual obligations for participation, the program must receive at least 12 to 15 referrals every month. Staff noted that the first contract year, they were about 75% full; are now about 50% full.

At the same time, the program only enrolled half (55%) of the clients referred by Probation; quarterly reports show that in Q1 and Q2, Goodwill enrolled all clients who were referred, while in Q4 and Q5, more clients were referred than enrolled. Staff noted that this discrepancy in referrals and enrollments was largely because of difficulty establishing initial contact and/or engagement with individuals who had been referred, and staff stated that Goodwill has the capacity to enroll all participants who are referred. In addition, not all participants who are referred choose to utilize the transitional employment option, and may instead choose to utilize the job search component of the program.

Regarding the suitability of referrals, staff noted that clients and probation officers alike feel pressure for individuals to begin making an income immediately after release; however, some individuals are not ready for enrollment because of mental health and/or substance abuse issues. Thus while Goodwill successfully enrolled nearly all referrals in transitional employment, only about half (54%) completed transitional employment during the evaluation period (some may not have passed their 90 day mark at the time of data collection). One participant noted that he did not think the trade-off for working inside the program's parameters was worth it to him: *"If I want to work I will work, but if I want to maintain a lifestyle like I used to, I will."* Staff also noted that it can be hard for clients to maintain motivation and encouragement when the job search process is challenging.

The program has also experienced staffing challenges over the course of the two contract years. Changes in the program coordinator position, along with vacancies in two key program positions until the end of 2014, have impeded the program's ability to operate smoothly and fully provide all services. In addition, the program's capacity to accurately track and report on client referrals, enrollments, and services has been limited.



Pre-release access

The ability to gain access to the jails to make pre-release presentations would help Goodwill inform potential participants about the services Goodwill offers, and would enable participants to begin securing documentation needed for employment.

Goodwill staff also noted that delays in their ability to provide pre-release presentations impedes their ability to get clients started early on obtaining the necessary documentation for employment documentation barriers to employment. Though other AB 109 organizations under contract with the County now perform some similar functions, Goodwill staff see that pre-release presentations would also have the benefit of informing potential participants about the services they offer.

Program fit

While overall, participants shared very positive feedback about the Bridges to Work program, they noted some areas in which the program did not fully meet their needs, including the hourly pay, the range of transitional employment options, and the 90-day duration of the program.

Participants noted that while they are grateful for the opportunity to receive immediate access to employment, the pay at Goodwill stores is low compared to the cost of living in the Bay Area. The 90-day duration of transitional employment also makes some participants nervous about what will happen after the end of the transitional period; however, participants noted that because they can be re-referred to Goodwill for another round of transitional employment, this mitigates their worries. Participants shared:

Nine dollars an hour for a single mom doesn't cut it. Welfare says I make too much money and it's [frustrating]. So I got two nine dollars an hour jobs.

Goodwill [is] good but negatives are I can't live off the nine dollars an hour...and a 3 month work program at Goodwill is not enough.

The specific transitional employment opportunities available to clients are limited to working in the Goodwill stores and a few other transitional employment options, though Goodwill is making efforts to expand these options.



Men and Women of Purpose

Funding Amount: \$55,000 (FY 2013-14); \$50,900 (FY 2014-15, Employment and Education Liaison); \$66,666 (Mentoring)

Snapshot of Program Accomplishments, July 2013-Sept. 2014

Service Delivery

- 145 referrals requested by MWP
- 92 referrals received from Probation (others pending)
- 70 clients enrolled
- 41 clients matched with a mentor
- 28 clients participated in group mentoring
- Trained 43 mentors in the first two quarters of the contract year, on track to surpass the target of 50

Client Outcomes

- During the evaluation time period, MWP recorded clients' progress in case notes, rather than database fields, thus we were not able to access an electronic report with client outcomes.

Overview of Program

Men and Women of Purpose (MWP) has two CAO contracts for AB 109 services in Fiscal Year (FY) 2014-15. The first contract outlines MWP's provision of employment and education liaison services in the County jail facilities, where the program facilitates four in-custody employment and education workshops per month and works with Mentor/Navigators to assist workshop participants to obtain documentation required to apply for employment, education, and other post-release activities. MWP is contracted to screen at least 40 participants per month to assess employment and education preparedness.

MWP is also contracted to provide pre- and post-release mentoring services for West County using the organization's evidence-based Jail to Community program model. The program provides one-on-one mentoring, as well as weekly mentoring groups that focus on employment and recovery. The contract specifies that the program recruit at least 50 volunteer mentors using the Insight Prison Project curriculum, but does not specify a target number of clients to be served. In FY 2013-14, MWP was part of the consortium of three mentoring organizations, which as a whole were contracted to provide services to 100 participants. MWP employs eight full- and part-time staff and counselors for its contracted services.

In FY 2013-14 and FY 2014-15, MWP was also contracted by the Sheriff's Office to provide a Jail to Community (JTC) Program to both AB 109 and non-AB 109 individuals, encompassing pre-release classes, individual counseling, the creation of treatment plan and exit plan, and documentation assistance.



Strengths

Jail to Community continuum of care

The ability to have contact with individuals while still in custody enables MWP to provide clients with essential information about resources, as well as develop relationships that encourage clients to continue their engagement post release.

MWP estimated that they had contact with slightly over half of their clients before release. One program mentor shared,

Being able to connect with them inside the jail and helping them to change their thinking...is what impacts them the most to get out and want to seek MWP and do well in [substance abuse] treatment.

Clients also shared that pre-release contact had been useful:

When [MWP] came to the jailhouse, the information I got, it was really useful when I got out. What I had to do with my child support—the paper they gave me had a direct number to call a supervisor at child support, I bypassed other people [I would have had to deal with] when I called.

I met MWP in West County [Detention Center], would go to their classes once a week there. I found it helpful because it was brothers who were older and who had grown up in similar circumstances, neighborhood to me so I could relate to them.

Intensive individual support and service linkage

MWP provides one-on-one assistance to address participants' individual barriers and coordinates referrals to other AB 109 organizations and resources.

Mentors work with clients to identify resources to meet their individual needs, and will physically transport and accompany clients to appointments to ensure they are linked to services. For example, MWP has worked closely with clients to help them resolve suspended driver's licenses and enroll in educational opportunities. One client shared:

I got a DUI in 2009 and didn't have MWP to help me. Now, MWP and my mentor represented me in Homeless Court. Frank called me and was on the phone with me every day. I went to Homeless Court and had tickets from when I first moved to Contra Costa and they helped represent me. They also referred me to Rubicon and Clean Slate.

MWP supports coordinated service delivery to clients by working with Probation to send referrals to other AB 109 service providers, and by co-locating a reentry specialist at Rubicon's Antioch office on certain weekdays. As a formal subcontractor for Rubicon, some clients experienced that being a client of



MWP facilitated a smooth connection with Rubicon. One client shared, “I went to Rubicon, and after saying I was a part of [MWP], it did speed things up for me.” Other clients commented:

I got my job [at Goodwill] through my PO first, then MWP came to Goodwill and that’s how I met them.

I met [MWP] in jail. Since I got out they referred me to Homeless Court and Shelter, Inc.

Trusting relationships with capable staff

The development of trusting and nonjudgmental relationships between staff and participants provides participants with crucial emotional support and guidance that both keeps them engaged in services and helps keep their lives on track.

Staff shared that with the development of trust, participants are more likely to contact MWP staff either before or after they have done something that might be illegal. In this way, participants begin to understand that it is ok to “mess up” and that they can come back to MWP “even in the worst scenario.” Participants particularly called out the benefit of working with staff who have similar life experiences and personally understand what they are going through.

What I like about MWP was they were guys like me, they have been to jail been to prison, have substance abuse problems and have gotten their lives together.

These brothers coming to the jailhouse every Friday night, I looked forward to it because I can relate to these guys. They’ve been through what I’ve been through.

MWP also demonstrates strong staff capacity to provide individualized services and has made progress in training new mentors to join the program.

Despite the intensive nature of the work they do, MWP appears to have adequate staff capacity and time to provide close, one-on-one assistance to clients. The program has also trained a number of new mentors. One client expressed her experience that MWP had followed through, while other programs had not.

I met Monique from MWP in jail, I had hooked up with another program which did not come through—they didn’t pick me up. I got here and Frank drove me to Rubicon.

Challenges

Service referrals and coordination

MWP has not served as many clients as expected, as there have been delays in the referral process and some referred clients are not ready for services.



MWP staff noted that they often have to wait for a formal probation referral before engaging with clients. These delays can slow down the client engagement process. In addition, referrals do not always come with correct client contact information, impeding client engagement and follow-up.

Sometimes that process stalls right from the start, because we can't find them or they don't return calls.

In addition, many individuals have multiple, intersecting needs, including substance abuse, mental health, and employment, and housing. It can be difficult to engage and follow up with clients when their behavioral health needs have not been addressed. Staff emphasized, *"Employment comes after recovery."*

Some clients expressed frustration and discouragement with the pace at which their needs were being addressed; however, it is not clear the extent to which this relates to issues with MWP's service provision or to broader barriers in accessing housing, employment, and other county resources. Some potential clients also refuse services. In these cases, MWP staff noted, clients have generally refused all AB 109 services—*"They didn't want to be part of the AB 109 process, period."*

Pre-release access

MWP staff and clients indicated that the program would benefit from enhanced frequency of pre-release workshops.

While the time allotted for individual meetings has improved over time, pre-release workshops can only serve a limited number of individuals, and both staff and clients report that the classes are over capacity. One client shared:

I thought the class should have been twice a week because there were so many people trying to attend the class and they only had an hour to get the information out to all the people there. It'd be more impactful if they could have longer class or more classes during the week.

Data collected during the prior evaluation appears to validate this, with individuals incarcerated under AB 109 noting the difficulty of enrolling in in-custody AB 109 classes amid more interest than space.

Data capacity

MWP's capacity to consistently track data about their clients and services has been somewhat limited; as such, it is difficult to document the concrete outcomes that MWP clients have achieved.

MWP has received tablets and training in the ServicePoint electronic case management system through their current contract.



Reach

Funding Amount: \$53,500 (FY 2014-15)

Snapshot of Program Accomplishments, July 2013-Sept. 2014

Service Delivery*

- 26 clients referred (pre-release)
- 23 clients served (pre-release)
- 12 clients' families were served during client's incarceration

Client Outcomes

- 91% (n=21) had temporary housing within five days of release
- 65% (n=15) completed paperwork for employment or education documentation prior to release
 - 4 clients began work or education within two months of release
- 9 clients achieved reduced sentences
- 6 clients achieved and maintained recovery at three-month follow up
- 4 clients received positive child reunification outcomes

**This includes participants who were served prior to sentencing and as part of Reach's FY 2013-14 contract with the Sheriff's Office; participants may not have ultimately received an AB 109 sentence.*

Overview of Program

Centering their program services on women, Reach Fellowship International (Reach) provides weekly workshops in West County Detention Facility (WCDF), in addition to pre- and post-release one-on-one case management. The program has two core staff people and also hires several clients as staff. Reach has three County contracts with the CAO, the Sheriff's Office, and the Probation Department.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2014-15, the CAO contracted Reach to provide employment and education liaison services to female returning citizens in fulfillment of the County's Reentry Into The Community Program. Reach also acts as a lead information specialist for County jail facilities for the AB 109 program. The CAO contracted Reach to provide four workshops a month to introduce employment and educational opportunities to participants, to work with Mentor/Navigators to assist 50 incarcerated and returning citizens with obtaining the paperwork required for those opportunities, and to screen at least ten participants each month for employment and educational preparedness.

Reach is one of the newer providers in the AB 109 network, and in the previous year only had contracts through the Sheriff's Office and Probation Department. In FY 2013-14, the Sheriff's Office contracted Reach to provide up to eight participants (both AB 109 and non-AB 109) with temporary housing, as well as provide a maximum of 70 clients with gender-specific mentoring, family reunification, employment and job training, assistance in shortening sentences, and health and wellness services. Reach continues



to provide these services in FY 2014-15. In both FY 2013-14 and FY 2014-15, Reach was contracted by the Probation Department to provide AB 109 post-release support that encompasses one-on-one case management, workshops, family reunification programming, housing placement in Reach housing, and housing assistance for temporary/transitional housing.

Strengths

Gender-responsive services

Reach's women-specific programming fills a service gap in existing reentry programs.

Reach developed the "Sistah-to-Sistah" program in response to what staff saw as a lack of gender-specific services that address the needs of the female reentry population. Staff designed the program model drawing from research and successful practices in other sectors, such as team building approaches used in the corporate sector. Clients appreciated the program's focus on women, noting the lack of other programs designed for their gender-specific needs.

I've been going to prison since 2006, every time there's programs out there but it's catered to the male. There's really not that many resources for females, so I was excited about this.

Skill building and individualized support

By beginning to work with women while they are in custody, Reach helps them prepare both emotionally and practically for their return to the community.

Reach begins working with women while they are incarcerated, providing workshops and support designed to build skills and unity among women. When working with the women in custody, Reach's program staff noticed that the women had not created an exit strategy and had limited plans for their reentry. They started to design a program that worked with their clients to create an exit plan to help them achieve necessary life tasks upon reentry. Staff and participants noted:

When we started doing the exit plan... We saw those that didn't participate in the exit plan come back [to jail]. – Staff

We would talk about when we planned to get out what our plans were, what our goals were – try to set up an exit plan, and what we were looking into doing, if we were going back to school, housing, what we needed, what kind of job we were looking for. – Participant

Noting that many clients have limited job skills and work habits, Reach staff assist women with job readiness prior to reentry through role playing and other job readiness activities. According to Reach's data, 65% (n=15) completed paperwork for employment or education documentation prior to release, and four clients began work or education within two months of release.



Contra Costa County AB 109 Program Evaluation

We filled out [mock] applications to get you ready and [practiced] how to answer questions about your charges. I never had been in jail before so I was nervous about having to look for a job and having to explain.

In addition to structured workshops, the Sistah-to-Sistah program aims to build unity among women. Staff observed that the program has helped cut down the jail violence among some of the women who previously had conflicts.

Both pre- and post-release, Reach responds to clients' individual needs by tailoring their services and connecting clients with external resources.

Reach works with women to identify and provide support tailored to their immediate needs, which have included housing, employment, family services, advocacy in court, and attending to clients' medical needs. Finding that housing is generally the most important need that women have upon release, Reach reported that 21 of the 23 clients they served prior to release had temporary housing within five days of release. Reach is able to directly house up to eight women at a time in the house they own and operate in Richmond.

Recognizing the need for immediate income upon reentry, Reach has hired several clients to work in their offices as program staff. In this way, Reach helps women develop skills and a positive job history after being in custody, which can help them obtain a stable career. Some of the clients have professional skills from before their time in custody, but still face barriers seeking employment because of their criminal records. The program has also helped at least one of these clients more easily meet her restitution obligations by working with Probation to match half of her pay toward restitution. In addition, when Reach hires and trains clients in the skills and tasks they need in order to help other recently-released women, Reach also helps women support each other and creates a sense of unity.

For the clients they are unable to hire directly, Reach has developed relationships with other public service agencies, employment CBOs outside the County's AB 109 service network, and reentry friendly employers, including the Workforce Development Board and Opportunity Junction.

A unique component of the program's gender-responsive services is family stabilization, which involves working with the families of incarcerated women to provide support and resources. In helping to stabilize the families themselves, women are able to transition more smoothly and successfully when they are released.

Because women are often the center of families, Reach designed its family resolution services to focus on family stabilization in addition to reunification. Staff described that as a result of services provided directly to clients' families, clients have seen increase in family support, including reignited connections with family members. Reach reported providing services to the families of 12 of its 23 pre-release clients. Of these, four clients have had positive child reunification outcomes. One client described:

A couple times they brought food to my mom and for my kids. During that time they dealt a lot with my family. My mom would talk to them and tell them what she needed, they would say we



talked to your mom this is what happened. Just the support while being incarcerated [was helpful].

Another participant shared that when she was in jail, Reach helped her stay in contact with her mother and kids, including throwing a birthday party for her daughter. After she was released, Reach staff mediated between her and her mother, and Reach has begun the process of working with her attorney to get approval to supervise her visits with her daughter.

Challenges

Service referrals

In the current fiscal year, Reach has received fewer referrals than anticipated from Probation, and as a result have been able to serve fewer female clients than expected.

During FY 2013-14, Reach's only service contract was with the Sheriff's Office for pre-release services; they therefore received no official AB 109 referrals from Probation. In the current fiscal year, Reach staff noted that they had received very few referrals. Staff expressed concern and confusion about the lack of referrals, noting that most referrals have come through word-of-mouth and through their pre-release workshops, but not through the AB 109 referral process, observing that some female clients were being routed to other organizations, rather than Reach. Staff ventured that because Reach is a newer organization in the AB 109 service system and has not yet established solid relationships with other CBOs and players in the County's AB 109 infrastructure, this has resulted in lower referrals than expected.

Program capacity

Despite receiving fewer referrals than expected, Reach is struggling to follow through on their promises to clients and to track accurate data on clients and services.

Because Reach, as a newer program, has considerable time and effort launching its services, some clients found the program to be disorganized and not at full capacity. Although Reach reported feeling underutilized, the program also struggled to consistently follow through with clients and provide promised services to clients. While participants emphasized their appreciation for the Reach program, they also noted that staff have not always been able to deliver on promises for certain resources or services, in particular housing. Some clients expressed that the lack of follow through may cause potential clients to lose trust in the program.

[They] kind of get your hopes up maybe. They have high intentions but maybe fill their plate too much. I'm not trying to bad mouth them, because I love them, they helped me a lot with my family. And I'm obviously still coming.



Reach has a really good goal. For them to be gender specific because most places they cater to the men because that's the bulk of their population... But they told me I had a place when I got out, and that didn't happen. I know of other people that happened to with Reach, and they're like 'never mind, this is just like all the programs'...

While employment through Reach may provide essential immediate income, it may not be a viable long-term option for participants. For example, despite gratitude for maintaining employment at Reach, one participant noted the amount of work hours provided could not provide her with sufficient income.

In addition, while Reach has hired several clients as staff for their Antioch and Richmond offices, some participants noted that Reach's supervising staff are not always available when clients show up at one of the offices. Staff also identified the need for more program volunteers to teach the Sistah-to-Sistah curriculum.

Reach's capacity to accurately and consistently track data about their clients and services has also been very limited. The program was not able to provide the evaluation with a complete list of all clients' served or all service provided, making it impossible to validate their service and outcome numbers. Reach has received a computer and training in the ServicePoint electronic case management system through their current contract.

Gender-specific needs

Women face different challenges and needs due to family structures, gender roles, and societal expectations. Reach faces challenges meeting these needs because the existing resources and services may not be adequate for their unique population.

The AB 109 system provides limited gender responsive services, which affects the quality of services that reentering women can access. Their needs upon reentry are often different than men's. However, the majority of incarcerated individuals are male, so the majority of reentry programs and populations cater to the needs of men by default. In particular, the mental health needs of the Reach clientele may be different than the mental health needs of their male counterparts. The program staff note awareness of sensitivities and trauma-informed approaches in their programs.

When we look at the mental health of women when we do Sistah-to-Sistah; some women have been raped more than I can even discuss.

Many existing job opportunities for the reentry population relate to manual labor. The sector is ill suited to the employment needs of many women. The same is true for housing, as many women carry additional family obligations compared to men.



Rubicon

Funding Amount: \$1,400,000 (FY 2013-14); \$1,400,000 (FY 2014-15)

Snapshot of Program Accomplishments, July 2013-Sept. 2014

Service Delivery

- 362 clients referred
- 161 clients served
- 62% (n=100) engaged in career coaching/job search assistance
- 75 clients enrolled in Financial Services
- 2 clients enrolled in basic skills and GED prep classes

Client Outcomes

- 36 clients removed barriers to employment
- 34 clients created or updated a resume
- 81% (n=63) of those who started the job readiness curriculum completed it, meeting the 80% target
- 41% (n=41) of clients who engaged in career coaching subsequently engaged in transitional work, vocational training, or subsidized employment, meeting the 40% target
- 32% (n=32) of clients who engaged in career coaching subsequently obtained competitive employment. It took an average of 99 days to obtain employment.
 - 81% retained employment for 30 days, meeting the 80% target
 - 63% retained employment for 60 days, falling below the 70% target
- 15 clients successfully enrolled in benefits

Overview of Program

Rubicon is contracted to provide employment support and placement services, integrated with other supports, to participants in East County and West County. Using a Jail to Community model, Rubicon's ELEVATE (Expanding Long-Term Employment and Vocational Access through re-Entry) program includes pre-release engagement; job readiness workshops; educational and vocational training; transitional employment; individualized career coaching; legal services; financial stability services; and domestic violence prevention and anger management.

Rubicon follows a Financial Opportunity Center model for all of its services. Based on the Center for Working Families model developed by The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Financial Opportunity Centers aim to support clients through integrated employment, financial, and income services. In order to provide a continuum of services, Rubicon partners with a number of other organizations through formal subcontracts, including vocational training partners, AB 109 providers, and other community-based organizations.

The FY 2013-14 contract specified that Rubicon would serve up to 280 participants, including 160 in East County and 120 in West County. The FY 2014-15 contract slightly reduced these numbers, with a contract to serve up to 210 participants, including 120 from East County and 90 from West County. This



year, Rubicon is not providing subsidized employment to participants but continues to provide transitional employment.

Strengths

Integrated employment, financial, and income assistance

By successfully implementing the Casey Foundation's Financial Opportunity Center model, Rubicon directly enhances clients' financial sustainability by providing access to a combination of employment, financial, and income services.

Rubicon's model integrates services designed to address clients' multiple intersecting needs. As one staff explained: *"We don't just provide employment and career coaching; for example, one person may work with a career coach, a housing coach, a financial coach, a fatherhood coach."* Clients also shared their experience receiving diverse types of support from Rubicon, with one client sharing:

[Rubicon has] the resources for whatever you wanna do. Financial, criminal, if you need your record expunged....

Staff observed that because clients face multiple barriers and may disengage in services for periods of time, clients who are enrolled in multiple services are more likely to re-engage with Rubicon through one of their touch points. In addition, because the Financial Opportunity Center model lays out a three-year period of service, this providing staff an opportunity to engage with clients over a longer time period than the AB 109-specific services. Of the 161 clients served during the evaluation period, 75 also enrolled in Rubicon's Financial Services.

Rubicon offers access to vocational trainings and certifications across a range of employment sectors that provide participants with hard skills that can help them move more quickly into stable employment.

As part of its AB 109 program, Rubicon partners with organizations that provide vocational training and certifications to program participants. Partners include sectors such as labor and construction, computer certification, forklift training, food industry, truck driving, green jobs (e.g., solar), and occupational safety and health (OSHA). Staff noted that the most sought after trainings were in construction, warehouse, forklift, and OSHA. Staff also observed that participants preferred vocational training providers that have condensed training programs—for example, a one-day forklift training or a three-week condensed Bread Project training—which allows participants to move more quickly into obtaining paid employment. Program staff also created a skills development series where participants can obtain computer certifications in Internet basics and Microsoft Office; staff noted that this has been helpful in engaging participants, as participants sense this is a highly marketable skill.

Staff related that the certifications that participants receive have helped them go on to obtain employment immediately, citing participants who graduated from Future Build and were able to join a local construction union. Clients spoke about the training received in Rubicon's job readiness program:



Contra Costa County AB 109 Program Evaluation

I went all the way to Hayward got my forklift certification, they [Rubicon] reimbursed me about a week later. I have an actual trade underneath my belt if someone wants to open that door and let me in. I turned around and got me a job and am doing landscaping.

I came home and AB 109 paid for my school. I'm a barber. They paid for my schooling. Actually, I didn't know that Rubicon had funds for people on AB 109... East Bay Works paid for a 24 month program. East Bay Works paid \$3,000 and Rubicon AB 109 paid for the remainder and bought my barber kit so I was like, cool. At the second meeting [at Rubicon in Richmond] I was blown away how they immediately approved me to get that money... Now I have a barbershop down the street from here. They do good. They help people.

Rubicon enhances clients' job readiness through workshops that emphasize both hard and soft skills and assist them in removing barriers to employment.

Job readiness workshops emphasize the hard skills that participants need in order to apply for and maintain a job. Rubicon reported that 34 clients created or updated a resume during the time period of the evaluation. Clients agreed that these services have helped them obtain employment.

At Rubicon I was led in the right direction, from them, I was told what to do in interviews, and because of that I have three jobs.

Clients also shared the benefit of the structured environment the workshop provided, which assisted them in developing strong work habits: "First I had a two-week accountability course [which involves] showing you can get somewhere on time." Another client continued, "I made sure I was here every day at 8:00am."

Rubicon also enrolled 75 clients in Financial Services, helping clients to remove barriers to financial sustainability by providing training and linking participants to resources.

I went through financial bootcamp and got a certificate for that. They helped you go through Wells Fargo and empower yourself through financing. They were helping you establish credit all over again; the resources here are good for you. – Participant

Since the beginning of their contract in July 2013, program staff have continually adapted their workshops to fit the needs of the AB 109 population. For example, program staff noted that they adapted the two-week job readiness workshop curriculum to include a greater focus on hard skills development for participants without high school diplomas. Staff also developed a cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) curriculum designed to provide a deeper focus on the reentry mentality and helping participants identify support systems. As part of this effort, four Rubicon staff received training from Probation certified in the Thinking for a Change (T4C) curriculum.

Rubicon also links clients to transitional employment opportunities, which provide short-term access to income and work experience.



In West County Rubicon places participants in West County in transitional employment opportunities in landscaping and commercial property maintenance. In East County, Rubicon staff successfully increased employment opportunities for individuals with a criminal record by creating partnerships with transitional employment providers including Loaves & Fishes, a local community food bank, the City of Pittsburg, and in-house office support at Rubicon.

Of the 100 participants who engaged in career coaching, 41% (n=41) subsequently engaged in transitional work, vocational training, or subsidized employment (note: in its second contract year Rubicon no longer provides subsidized employment, but still provides transitional employment).

Individualized and coordinated services

Rubicon's career coaches work with clients one-on-one to identify and address their barriers to employment.

In addition to employment and financial workshops and training, Rubicon also assists clients by working with them one-on-one to address their barriers to employment as soon as they engage in services. During the evaluation time period, 36 clients removed barriers to employment, including reinstating suspended driver's licenses and obtaining documentation necessary to get a job. Rubicon clients confirmed the importance of Rubicon's barrier removal support, with a number of focus group participants noting that Rubicon helped them address suspended drivers' licenses and other issues. Rubicon reported that they assisted fifteen clients in enrolling in financial benefits. One participant noted that within two weeks of getting set up with a career coach at Rubicon, *"I ended up with a job making \$13 an hour, got my license back, got a bank account."*

Of the 100 clients who engaged in career coaching and/or job search assistance, 32 obtained competitive independent employment. Of these, 81% had retained employment for 30 days and 63% had retained employment for 60 days within the timeframe covered by the evaluation.

In addition to formal workshops and career coaching, the close and trusting relationships participants build with staff provides participants with crucial emotional support and guidance that helps them stay engaged and supports them in keeping their behavior on track.

Several staff emphasized the primary importance of the relationship with staff in support clients' success. They explained that when clients know they can come in and share openly about what is going on in their lives without fear of retribution. One staff person shared:

It sounds a little corny, but if you go to the workshops, you will hear graduates talk over and over again about the relationships with the staff. It's really what keeps them engaged. I don't mean to underplay the extreme talents our staff have – but it's the human relationship.

Clients also spoke about their feeling of comfort at Rubicon, with one client sharing that her career coach here is like a mom to her: *"I call her mom and everything."*



Rubicon also creates an open office atmosphere where clients can spend their free time and engage with their career coach or participating in job search, sharing that some clients come almost every day. Clients shared that the open office space provides an opportunity to use the office computers and to occupy their time—which keeps them from engaging in behavior that could cause them to recidivate. As one client shared:

They sent me to Richmond because I'm from Antioch. So I come out here where I can't get into havoc [in my old neighborhood]. It gave me a chance to get around my career coach all day.

Staff from Rubicon facilitate coordinated service delivery through formal subcontracts and informal communication with staff from other contracted organizations.

Rubicon also created a formal subcontract relationship with Men and Women of Purpose to strengthen the Jail to Community model of service delivery, with the idea that MWP would identify AB 109 clients, develop pre-release plans, coordinate their first visit to Rubicon upon release, and provide ongoing mentoring to participants. Staff noted that in addition to Probation-sponsored case conferences, Rubicon and other contracted organizations also informally communicate about specific participants to discuss their needs and services.

Participants related that Rubicon's assistance makes their service participation feel coordinated and smooth: *"Rubicon has made everything easy and convenient for me."*

Data capacity

Rubicon has a high level of data capacity, including an electronic case management system, enabling them to accurately track referrals, enrollments, services provided, and case outcomes.

Challenges

Client referrals and engagement

Rubicon has struggled to engage clients in job readiness workshops, which staff attribute to challenges with referrals, limited pre-release access, and clients' behavioral health needs.

Rubicon staff emphasized that one of the greatest difficulties they face is initially engaging clients in the job readiness workshop. They pointed to issues related to referrals and to clients' multiple needs. For example, staff noted that referrals from Probation do not always come with correct client contact information, which can delay client engagement and follow-up. In addition, many clients have multiple, intersecting needs, including substance abuse, mental health, and employment, and housing, which can make it difficult to prioritize and triage referrals.



Contra Costa County

AB 109 Program Evaluation

As a result, while Rubicon engaged 100 of its 161 clients in job search assistance, only 78 clients began the job readiness curriculum. Staff noted that if they are able to successfully engage clients initially, then they are usually able to support clients in completing the workshops. Staff explained:

The biggest programmatic hurdle is getting participants to engage initially in completing the workshop.... Overall if we can get them to show up at all we can get them through it—the hardest part is to get them to show up at all.

Data support this observation, as 81% (n=63) of those who started the job readiness curriculum completed it, meeting Rubicon's target of 80%.

For individuals with substance abuse issues—which Rubicon staff note is the vast majority of their clients—the path to stability is not linear. Clients may fall out of services and return, with the support of their probation officer and program staff. Several clients described their experiences with gaining employment and financial stability, and then relapsing. In the words of one client, *"I threw it all away... I started using again. I went on the run."* But he noted, *"I'm coming back. My career coach called me up last week... I fell down and got up."* Similarly, a client who went through forklift training and obtained a job said, *"I did that for 90 days and threw it all away."* But he returned to Rubicon, stating, *"I'm ready. It's time to play ball again."*

Program capacity

As a result of the above factors, Rubicon has the capacity to serve a greater number of clients than the current number of referrals, although some of Rubicon's training partners are at or above capacity.

As stated in their contract, Rubicon has the capacity to serve up to 210 individuals (120 participants in East County and 90 in West County), including up to 180 for career coaching; educational services for up to 60; and transitional employment for up to 50 individuals.

However, some of Rubicon's training partners face a greater demand than their current capacity; Rubicon staff noted that forklift training and OSHA classes in particular are a "hot commodity" and there are wait lists for those classes every month. Some focus group clients also expressed that they were not aware that Rubicon could pay for them to participate in vocational training and certification programs.

Program fit

While Rubicon's services appear to be aligned with the needs of many individuals on AB 109 supervision, Rubicon services may not be an ideal fit for certain individuals.

It is particularly challenging for Rubicon to engage clients who have unmet substance abuse and/or mental health needs, as their program requires a high degree of commitment and functioning. At the same time, Rubicon may also not be an ideal fit for clients with a higher level of job skills or education; however, Rubicon staff noted that they are able to accelerate these participants into the job search phase by waiving the workshop requirement. Some women on AB 109 supervision also reported that



because most Rubicon clients are male, Rubicon's services may not feel as accessible or tailored to female clients.

In addition, while vocational certifications clearly helped participants move into employment, clients spoke less about the extent to which educational basic skills and cognitive behavioral training had been helpful.

Several clients at other CBOs expressed that the need for immediate employment was a barrier to participating in Rubicon's job readiness workshops.

In contrast to Goodwill's program, in which most participants begin work immediately, Rubicon clients engage in career coaching and/or job readiness workshops prior to beginning transitional employment or vocational training. Some clients at other CBOs reported that this time gap was too long for their immediate income needs. Rubicon reported that the time between clients' enrollment and placement in transitional employment or vocational training was on average 97 days.

I went to Rubicon, [but] couldn't do Rubicon because I have to work. I can't do a two week class and have nothing in my pockets or nothing to eat.

I went to Rubicon and went through that two weeks [class]. In dealing with Rubicon, if you are in a rush or don't have patience, you are in trouble. They said they would pay for me to go to truck driving school, but I'm still waiting three months later. It's taking longer to get into truck driving school than I expected.



Shelter, Inc.

Funding Amount: \$500,000 (FY 2013-14); \$500,000 (FY 2014-15)

Snapshot of Program Accomplishments, July 2013-Sept. 2014

Service Delivery

- 230 clients referred*
- 50% (n=115) were contacted and screened for eligibility, under the 70% target
- 84% (n=98) received housing access assistance, surpassing the 80% target
- 43% (n=50) received housing placement assistance, over the 40% target
- Changes across quarters in numbers referred/served
- Fidelity/evolution of program

Client Outcomes

- 43% (n=50) clients secured housing, meeting the 40% target
 - Average of 22 days from referral to housing
 - 30 clients were placed in master leased housing, under the target of 38
 - 20 clients were placed in alternative housing (e.g., healthy living), under the target of 32
- 84% (n=42) retained housing at six-month follow-up, meeting the 80% target**
- 16% (n=8) had an unsuccessful program exit at six-month follow-up, meeting the target of less than 20%

*Probation records show 238 referrals to Shelter Inc.

**Number is 0 for 12 month retention because people hit 12 months in Oct., Nov., Dec. 2014 – after the reporting. The first batch went in around Oct. 16th-18th. To date, 8 people have made it to the 12 month retention: 6 people made it through transitional housing, and two of them got permanent housing

Overview of Program

Shelter, Inc. operates the County's AB 109 Short and Long-term Housing Access Program. This program assists incarcerated and formerly incarcerated persons who are referred to them under the AB 109 Community Programs to secure and maintain stabilized residential accommodations. Shelter, Inc. provides a two-phased approach to clients seeking housing assistance. Before the program will refer a client to the Housing Services section, the staff conducts social service assessment/intake procedure to ensure the client will have success. The program places the majority of their clients into transitional housing situations (such as room or apartment shares) to allow them time to develop the resources for stable housing.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2014-15, the County contracted Shelter, Inc. to initiate contact with 175 clients referred from Probation and provide eligibility screening for at least 70% (125) of those (down from 144 in FY 2013-14). Shelter, Inc. was contracted to provide case management services for at least 85% of the screened referrals; housing access assistance to at least 80% of the screened referrals; and housing placement assistance to at least 65% of those who received case management.



Strengths

Housing linkage and financial support

Shelter, Inc.—the only service provider that provided housing-related services during the evaluation time period—successfully links people with housing and supports their ability to stay housed through its financial assistance services.

In addition to the ability to place clients in Shelter, Inc. transitional housing programs, one of the critical components of Shelter, Inc.'s program model is the extensive time and effort their staff makes to identify stable housing options with landlords who are willing to accept and work with individuals with criminal records. Because of this legwork, Shelter, Inc. is able to successfully locate housing for individuals who may not otherwise be able to find a place to live. Several participants stressed that were it not for Shelter, Inc., they would likely be homeless or incarcerated. Moreover, participants noted that their ability to stay housed is critical for their ability to avoid additional involvement in criminal activities. As one participant explained:

I don't know what I would be doing without Shelter, Inc. I'd be stealing cars and back in prison.

Shelter, Inc.'s client housing outcomes bear out these findings. Between July 2013 and Sept. 2014, Shelter, Inc. provided housing access assistance to 98 of the 115 clients they assessed for intake. In addition, 50 of the 115 people they served were successfully placed in housing, with 30 clients placed in master leased housing and 20 clients placed in alternative housing environments, such as a sober living environment. In addition, on average, clients were placed in housing approximately three weeks (22 days) after they were initially referred to Shelter, Inc., speaking to the program's ability to leverage their efforts locating housing into relatively fast housing placements for clients.

In addition to helping AB 109 clients find and obtain housing, Shelter, Inc.'s financial assistance helps participants retain their housing while they get on their feet after being released from prison or jail. In particular, by providing financial support for housing deposits and rent, the program helps clients maintain stability while they address a variety of other reentry-related needs. Between July 2013 and Sept. 2014, Shelter, Inc. helped 50 clients find or maintain housing through stabilized housing placement assistance such as 1) initial rent, security and utility deposits; 2) rent-in-arrears; and 3) landlord outreach, unit inspections, lease negotiations.

Shelter, Inc. has continually made efforts to adapt their program and service delivery to better meet clients' needs. As Shelter, Inc. staff noted, when the program initially rolled out, they required clients to obtain employment and/or documented income prior to placing them in housing. However, they soon realized that with the multiplicity of needs reentry clients face, providing one element of stability can be a critical precursor for others. Shelter, Inc. thus decided to bring its AB 109 program into greater alignment with the Housing First model advocated by the National Alliance to End Homelessness supported by the broader Shelter, Inc. organization.



[Before] we'd been taking the approach to wait until they can at least get into a program that's gonna help them get a job, where we can substantiate they're working on something. Now we're doing, let's just house them and then we'll see – maybe that will motivate them to find something.

Clients' feedback appears to validate this approach.

Shelter Inc. is paying for me. I got a deposit down for \$1000 and they paid 3 months of my rent at my apartment right now. I had to go through a family shelter just to get to my own apartment. But Shelter Inc. paid for that whole transaction.

Case management support

In addition to helping people secure housing, Shelter, Inc.'s case management model ensures participants are removing barriers and following through on their goals—assistance that goes beyond the realm of housing to address clients' other reentry-related needs.

In addition to helping clients locate housing, Shelter, Inc. also takes a holistic approach to working with their AB 109 clients, linking them to other services, helping them obtain employment, and making sure they can meet their basic needs. In addition to supporting clients' housing stability, this approach is critical for supporting other aspects of clients' reentry. Shelter, Inc. staff note that they are leveraging other programs within their agency to be able to provide the extensive support that many clients need.

In the beginning we didn't necessarily look toward other programs within our agency, and now we're doing that – we're being creative. We've used other [non-AB 109] Shelter Inc. resources as well. Families have been sent to our Mountain View shelter and placed. We've placed people our other programs, their transitional housing.

Clients' also underscored the importance of Shelter, Inc.'s holistic approach.

Knowing that Shelter, Inc. is there has been wonderful. If I ran out of food, they help with food. If I need a ride, they will help. Just need to let them know.

Coordination with Probation and CBOs

Shelter, Inc. works closely with the Probation Department and with other CBOs to coordinate additional services for their clients.

Shelter, Inc. staff noted that they receive a high-volume of referrals from the Probation Department and that the majority of clients who are referred not only need housing but are also appropriate for Shelter, Inc. services in terms of their risk-levels and other compounding factors, such as mental health. Moreover, when Shelter, Inc. staff does identify other services clients may need, Probation coordinates referrals to those services, including County services such as mental health services, substance abuse treatment, benefits, counseling; and contracted services, such as employment. Shelter, Inc. also



coordinates directly with other providers, including Goodwill and Rubicon, to help connect clients to these services. Of the 276²⁷ referrals that Shelter, Inc. received between July 2013 and Sept. 2014, the vast majority were coupled with a variety of other referrals, including both County agencies such as various Behavioral Health Services and CBOs, especially Goodwill Industries and Rubicon. In addition, the majority of clients who engaged in Shelter, Inc. Services also engaged in services with Goodwill, Rubicon, and/or Bay Area Legal Aid, indicating that Shelter, Inc. is well-situated within a network of services. Shelter, Inc. clients note this, pointing out, *"Shelter, Inc. actually looks out for us. They work with the probation officer."*

Shelter also noted that they are seeing more and more referrals sent to us while the person is still incarcerated, a month or two months out from release.

Challenges

Difficulty housing clients with criminal histories and no income

Despite Shelter, Inc.'s adoption of a "Housing First" model, it can be challenging to find appropriate housing for clients who cannot immediately connect with employment or income.

Shelter Inc.'s program model assumes that if the program can help people locate housing and help finance it in the short-term, those individuals will be able to take over their own rent payments and maintain the housing longer-term. Unfortunately, many individuals come out of prison or jail with few options for immediate income or employment. Staff explained,

It's hard to work with those coming over with zero or very little income. We can't subsidize for long periods of time. If we subsidize them for 3-4 months and then have to cut them off... [That's not going to ultimately help the client]

The idea of giving people one or two months' rent and they're on their own after that, it's not reality in the Bay Area. You have to have a much clearer correlation between housing placement and job placement and subsidy levels.

For many clients with children or with a history of substance use, living in group housing or transitional housing can present very real challenges:

I didn't want to live with five other people, but I felt it was a wonderful opportunity and I had first choice of the bedrooms and it was a brand new house, but I wanted to work with the case manager to get my own apartment. I have two kids and I wanted my own place.

²⁷ Because some clients are referred multiple times, the number of referrals made does not align with the number of individuals referred. It is not clear why individuals are referred to the same services multiple times.



I didn't want to do transitional because I have an 8 year old daughter. I know what works for me and those shelters, the wet shelters are bad for me. I have come too far and it wasn't an easy road to get where I am right now.

Many landlords do not want to rent to people with criminal histories.

Despite all the legwork that Shelter, Inc. does to locate housing for clients and to subsidize their rent, both clients and program staff note that it can be very challenging to find landlords who are willing to rent to individuals who are coming out of prison or jail. This is further complicated by the fact that most clients have poor credit histories and little or no income.

Even when housing units are available, even when landlords understand we're providing some financial assistance for the clients, landlords run background checks...[then] they say they promised the unit to someone else. There's a fine line between discriminating, but you can't prove it....

I have a conviction so people don't want to rent to me. Shelter, Inc. has stigma and landlords think that they are helping troublemakers and will bring all the hoopla with them. I've had four or five different apartments and the landlord will pull out at the last minute.

Meeting client expectations with reality

There is often a mismatch between clients' desire and the reality of what is available to them.

Despite having little or no income, many clients have high aspirations for the type of housing they hope to obtain. Staff shared,

Most people are looking for permanent, everyone wants their own place. Even if they can't right now, they still want it. I don't know what it would take... A lot of them think we can provide this great subsidy, something like Section 8 or something, or put them up somewhere. When they come here and find out they have to do a little work, it's discouraging for most of them.

Referrals greater than program capacity

Despite limits on the type of support that Shelter, Inc. can provide, the program is well over capacity.

Shelter, Inc. has received far more referrals for service than they were contracted to provide and the program is struggling to meet the needs of all of these clients. Of the 230 clients who were referred to Shelter, Inc. between July 2013 and Sept. 2014, the agency was only able to screen and enroll 115 and house 50. Program staff noted that there is limited staff capacity to process the volume of referrals they are receiving even before they address the challenge of trying to locate reasonable housing for a difficult-to-house population. Delays in being able to process all of the referrals that Shelter, Inc. receives can create critical delays in connecting with clients and the longer it takes the program to reach a potential client, the less likely that client is to engage.



The longer they wait while they're working through their housing barriers, the more reality sets in. [Staff] chase them down saying you have to continue to work or be in the process of getting employment to get to the goal that we set. When that doesn't happen, we're chasing people, calling them, but they get discouraged, that's what happens. People start running...you can't catch them....

Clients' feedback also pointed to inconsistency in Shelter, Inc.'s response time. While some participants described near contact with Shelter, Inc. within one or two days of release, others experienced a long wait time to receive a call from a housing provider.

I been waiting on a call from Shelter, Inc. since 2 days after I got out. It's a good thing that I live with my mother [because] I been waiting on a call for 4 months.

I got a call the day after [I was released]. I don't know if it is different because my PO is in Antioch.

One client described that a prior housing issue prevented her from accessing Shelter, Inc.'s services right away, but she was eventually able to get services.

I'm waiting on a phone call right now from them. I got housing a few years back and didn't fulfill my commitment with them...my PO referred me [to Shelter, Inc.] and I was denied services because I lived in one of their houses. They said I owed them \$8,000. So my PO keep submitting my referrals.

Limited pre-release access

Limited pre-release access limits ability to start the process earlier and limits Shelter, Inc.'s ability to educate potential clients about the services they can and cannot provide.
--

Thus far, Shelter, Inc. has been unable to obtain the necessary clearance to access participants in jail. In addition to creating delays in the program's ability to begin the housing location process, limited pre-release access also means that clients do not necessarily have an accurate understanding of what the provider does and many AB 109 clients show up at Shelter, Inc. thinking that the program is a housing provider rather than connector.

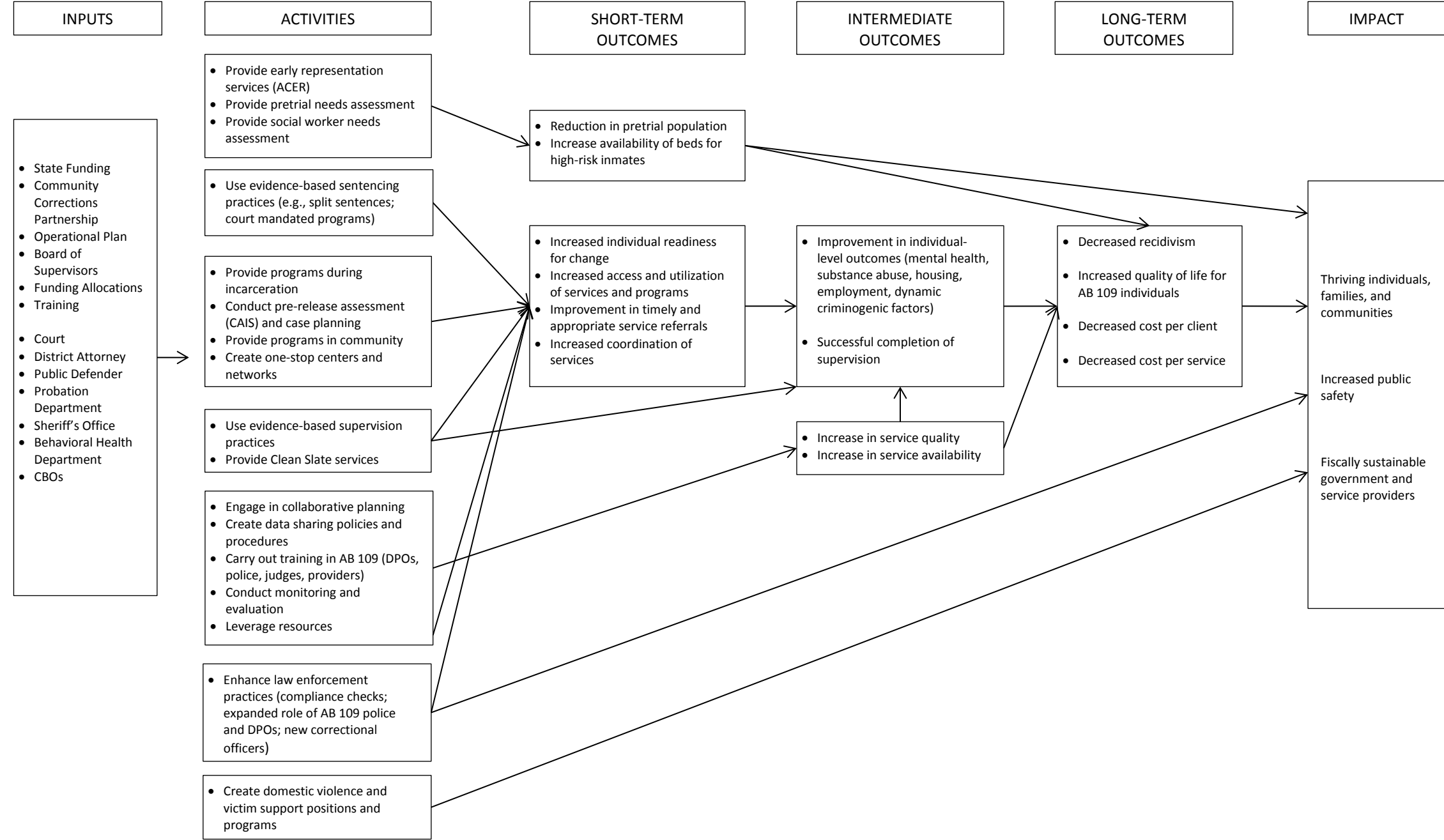
What people hear [about Shelter Inc] is 'we're gonna get you housing' – but what the message is we can help you find housing. It's not necessarily what they're told, it's what they hear. If we could go inside, and do outreach, showing them what they're going to face... [it would help us manage expectations]

If we could assess them and find out their needs before, would be an additional tool... If they have an ally before they get out and if there's tangible benefits.



Appendix C: Logic Model

Appendix C: Contra Costa County AB 109 Program Logic Model





Appendix D: GAINS Reentry Checklist

Instructions for Completing GAINS Jail Re-Entry Checklist

General Information

It is recommended that the form be completed in quadruplicate for all detainees identified with mental health service needs within 48 hours of arriving at the facility. The quadruplicate forms should be distributed as follows: top copy in detainee's file to give upon discharge, second copy to medical personnel, third copy to mental health personnel, and the fourth copy for use according to facility's procedures.

Detainee's Name:	Enter detainee's last name, first name, and middle initial
Gender:	Check Male (M) or Female (F)
Date of Birth:	Enter month, day, and year
Today's Date:	Enter month, day, and year
Jail ID#:	Enter Jail ID# associated with detainee
SSN#:	Enter detainee's Social Security Number
Name of Facility:	Enter name of jail
Name of Person Completing Form and Phone Number:	Print name of person completing form and unit phone number. If multiple people use this form, each person must print his/her identifying information on this form.
Current Status:	Check Sentenced Inmate or Pre-Trial Detainee
Projected Release Date:	Enter projected date of release (if known)

Instructions:

Potential Needs in Community after Release

Discuss each service *with detainee* to determine if there is a need to plan for this service prior to discharge. Check the appropriate boxes that correspond to the services identified as a need by the detainee. If the person completing the form identifies a need for which the detainee does not agree to receive planning, indicate this in the Steps Taken and Date(s) section (Ex: Detainee is homeless but does not agree to receive assistance with housing upon discharge).

Steps Taken by Jail Staff and Date(s)

Indicate the steps taken to set-up the identified services and the dates this was done. Notes in this section should reflect a continuous effort to plan for re-entry services throughout the detainee's stay in the facility. If multiple people complete this form, each person must identify the steps that she/he completes in this section with initials, as well as entering his/her name at the top of the form.

Example:

Detainee identifies Mental Health Services as a need:

9/1/03 *L.T. Contacted Community Mental Health Services (MHS) to set-up appointment with intake coordinator upon release. Will contact closer to projected date of release.*

9/25/03 *S.P. Release date is firm for 10/3/03. Contacted MHS and made appointment for 10/3/03 at 1:00 p.m. MHS agreed to provide 1 bus token and jail will provide 1 token to assist with transportation.*

10/2/03 *L.T. Appointment confirmed at MHS for 10/3/03 at 1:00 p.m.*

Detainee's Final Plan & Contact Information for Referrals

Identify final plan in terms of appointment times, next steps, and person to contact for each identified need.

Example:

1:00 p.m. appointment on 10/3/03 at MHS with intake coordinator: Julie Young. Phone: 333-1212; Address: 1234 Street, City, USA 11120.

Final Section

Full plan completed and discussed with detainee?	Check Yes or No
If no, why?	In this section, specify why the full plan was not completed or discussed with detainee by checking: ✓Detainee refused; ✓Court released before plan completed; ✓Incomplete for other reasons—specify (e.g., provider was unable to be contacted)
Attachments?	Check Yes if attaching corresponding materials; Check No if not.

GAINS Re-Entry Checklist For Inmates Identified with Mental Health Service Needs

Detainee's Name		Gender	Date of Birth	Today's Date	Jail ID #
_____		<input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F	____/____/____	____/____/____	_____
Last, First M			mm dd yy	mm dd yy	SSN#
Name of Facility	Name of Person Completing Form and Phone Number	Current Status	Date of Admission	Projected Release Date	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Trial Detainee <input type="checkbox"/> Sentenced Inmate	____/____/____	____/____/____	
			mm dd yy	mm dd yy	
<u>Potential Needs in Community After Release</u>		<u>Steps Taken by Jail Staff and Date(s)</u>		<u>Detainee's Final Plan & Contact Information for Referrals</u>	
Mental Health Services <input type="checkbox"/>					
Psychotropic Medications <input type="checkbox"/>					
Housing <input type="checkbox"/>					
Substance Abuse Services <input type="checkbox"/>					
Health Care <input type="checkbox"/>					
Health Care Benefits <input type="checkbox"/>					
Income Support/Benefits <input type="checkbox"/>					
Food/Clothing <input type="checkbox"/>					
Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>					
Other <input type="checkbox"/>					
Full plan completed and discussed with detainee? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Attachments? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					
If no, why? Detainee refused <input type="checkbox"/> Court released before plan completed <input type="checkbox"/> Incomplete for other reasons <input type="checkbox"/> Specify: _____					

Detainee's Copy

GAINS Re-Entry Checklist For Inmates Identified with Mental Health Service Needs						
Detainee's Name <div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> </div> <div> <div>Last</div> <div>,</div> <div>First</div> <div>M</div> </div>		Gender <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F	Date of Birth <div> <div></div> <div>/</div> <div></div> <div>/</div> <div></div> </div> <div> <div>mm</div> <div>dd</div> <div>yy</div> </div>	Today's Date <div> <div></div> <div>/</div> <div></div> <div>/</div> <div></div> </div> <div> <div>mm</div> <div>dd</div> <div>yy</div> </div>	Jail ID # <div></div>	
Name of Facility <div></div>		Name of Person Completing Form and Phone Number <div></div>		Current Status <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Trial Detainee <input type="checkbox"/> Sentenced Inmate	Date of Admission <div> <div></div> <div>/</div> <div></div> <div>/</div> <div></div> </div> <div> <div>mm</div> <div>dd</div> <div>yy</div> </div>	Projected Release Date <div> <div></div> <div>/</div> <div></div> <div>/</div> <div></div> </div> <div> <div>mm</div> <div>dd</div> <div>yy</div> </div>
<u>Potential Needs in Community After Release</u>		<u>Steps Taken by Jail Staff and Date(s)</u>		<u>Detainee's Final Plan & Contact Information for Referrals</u>		
Mental Health Services <input type="checkbox"/>		<div></div> <div></div> <div></div>		<div></div> <div></div> <div></div>		
Psychotropic Medications <input type="checkbox"/>		<div></div> <div></div> <div></div>		<div></div> <div></div> <div></div>		
Housing <input type="checkbox"/>		<div></div> <div></div> <div></div>		<div></div> <div></div> <div></div>		
Substance Abuse Services <input type="checkbox"/>		<div></div> <div></div> <div></div>		<div></div> <div></div> <div></div>		
Health Care <input type="checkbox"/>		<div></div> <div></div> <div></div>		<div></div> <div></div> <div></div>		
Health Care Benefits <input type="checkbox"/>		<div></div> <div></div> <div></div>		<div></div> <div></div> <div></div>		
Income Support/Benefits <input type="checkbox"/>		<div></div> <div></div> <div></div>		<div></div> <div></div> <div></div>		
Food/Clothing <input type="checkbox"/>		<div></div> <div></div> <div></div>		<div></div> <div></div> <div></div>		
Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>		<div></div> <div></div> <div></div>		<div></div> <div></div> <div></div>		
Other <input type="checkbox"/>		<div></div> <div></div> <div></div>		<div></div> <div></div> <div></div>		
Full plan completed and discussed with detainee? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Attachments? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No						
If no, why? Detainee refused <input type="checkbox"/> Court released before plan completed <input type="checkbox"/> Incomplete for other reasons <input type="checkbox"/> Specify: _____						

GAINS Re-Entry Checklist For Inmates Identified with Mental Health Service Needs						
Detainee's Name _____ Last, _____ First M		Gender <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F	Date of Birth ____/____/____ mm dd yy	Today's Date ____/____/____ mm dd yy	Jail ID # _____ SSN#	
Name of Facility	Name of Person Completing Form and Phone Number		Current Status <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Trial Detainee <input type="checkbox"/> Sentenced Inmate	Date of Admission ____/____/____ mm dd yy	Projected Release Date ____/____/____ mm dd yy	
<u>Potential Needs in Community After Release</u>		<u>Steps Taken by Jail Staff and Date(s)</u>		<u>Detainee's Final Plan & Contact Information for Referrals</u>		
Mental Health Services <input type="checkbox"/>		_____ _____ _____		_____ _____ _____		
Psychotropic Medications <input type="checkbox"/>		_____ _____ _____		_____ _____ _____		
Housing <input type="checkbox"/>		_____ _____ _____		_____ _____ _____		
Substance Abuse Services <input type="checkbox"/>		_____ _____ _____		_____ _____ _____		
Health Care <input type="checkbox"/>		_____ _____ _____		_____ _____ _____		
Health Care Benefits <input type="checkbox"/>		_____ _____ _____		_____ _____ _____		
Income Support/Benefits <input type="checkbox"/>		_____ _____ _____		_____ _____ _____		
Food/Clothing <input type="checkbox"/>		_____ _____ _____		_____ _____ _____		
Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>		_____ _____ _____		_____ _____ _____		
Other <input type="checkbox"/>		_____ _____ _____		_____ _____ _____		
Full plan completed and discussed with detainee? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Attachments? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No						
If no, why? Detainee refused <input type="checkbox"/> Court released before plan completed <input type="checkbox"/> Incomplete for other reasons <input type="checkbox"/> Specify: _____						

GAINS Re-Entry Checklist For Inmates Identified with Mental Health Service Needs

Detainee's Name <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> Last First M </div>		Gender <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F	Date of Birth <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; font-size: small;"> __/__/__ mm dd yy </div>	Today's Date <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; font-size: small;"> __/__/__ mm dd yy </div>	Jail ID # <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> SSN# <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div>
Name of Facility <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div>	Name of Person Completing Form and Phone Number <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div>	Current Status <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Trial Detainee <input type="checkbox"/> Sentenced Inmate	Date of Admission <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; font-size: small;"> __/__/__ mm dd yy </div>	Projected Release Date <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; font-size: small;"> __/__/__ mm dd yy </div>	
<u>Potential Needs in Community After Release</u>	<u>Steps Taken by Jail Staff and Date(s)</u>	<u>Detainee's Final Plan & Contact Information for Referrals</u>			
Mental Health Services <input type="checkbox"/>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>			
Psychotropic Medications <input type="checkbox"/>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>			
Housing <input type="checkbox"/>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>			
Substance Abuse Services <input type="checkbox"/>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>			
Health Care <input type="checkbox"/>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>			
Health Care Benefits <input type="checkbox"/>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>			
Income Support/Benefits <input type="checkbox"/>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>			
Food/Clothing <input type="checkbox"/>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>			
Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>			
Other <input type="checkbox"/>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>			
Full plan completed and discussed with detainee? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Attachments? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					
If no, why? Detainee refused <input type="checkbox"/> Court released before plan completed <input type="checkbox"/> Incomplete for other reasons <input type="checkbox"/> Specify: _____					