

LEGAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT SNAPSHOT

TRIANNUAL NEWSLETTER
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LEGAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

The Legal Services Department of New Jersey Reentry Corporation (NJRC) seamlessly removes legal barriers that impede our program participants from successfully reintegrating into society. NJRC Legal Services Coordinators develop coherent lines of communication between program participants and entities such as Superior and Municipal Courts, administrative agencies, and other government institutions that may make successful reintegration a difficult and discouraging journey.

Legal Service Coordinators assist participants with navigating New Jersey Municipal Courts and necessary applications. They also help participants through document collection, corresponding with the courts and other entities, and additional hurdles imposed by the government institutions that make it difficult to restore driving privileges, obtain identification, and connect to government services and benefits for which they may be qualified.

In restoring the New Jersey driving privileges for our participants, the Legal Services Department aids participants in developing and executing a plan of action that allows for reinstatement of driving privileges and allows for successful reintegration. NJRC's legal team routinely sends requests to Municipal Courts to lift driver license suspensions, waive or reduce fines through time served by our participants, and recall warrants that jeopardize not only their driving privileges but their freedom as well.



OVER \$20,000 IN FINES DISMISSED

We were successful at having \$22,381.12 in fines dismissed from November 2020 through February 2021 after advocating for our program participants in the New Jersey Municipal Courts.

OVER 150 BIRTH CERTIFICATES OBTAINED

The Legal Services Department obtained 159 program participant birth certificates from November 2020 through February 2021. Our goal, which we almost always meet and often exceed, is to provide clients with certified copies of their birth certificates within two weeks of their requests. We have obtained birth certificates from Washington D.C., Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York City, New York State, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Washington D.C. We have also obtained birth certificates from Italy, Pakistan, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

ALMOST 200 NJ MVC IDENTIFICATION CARDS RESTORED/ RECEIVED

We assisted 70 of our program participants with resolving all underlying driver license suspensions and paid their License Restoration Fees to completely restore their driving privileges.

We were also able to obtain and finance 107 New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission Identification Cards for program participants.

Through our partnership with NJ MVC and the leadership of NJ MVC Chief Administrator Brenda S. "Sue" Fulton and her team, we were able to secure 76 MVC Identification Cards, 8 Driver Licenses, and 1 learner's permit for our participants in December 2020.

EDUCATION

The New Jersey Reentry Corporation's Legal Services Department has partnered with St. Peter's University and Professor Kevin Callahan J.S.C. (ret.). Judge Callahan has referred several students to intern with us who are criminal justice majors and interested in helping our program participants overcome the barriers that are commonly confronted upon release from incarceration.



PRO BONO EFFORTS

NJRC's Legal Services Department continues to develop its pro bono referral program with New Jersey law firms and pro bono organizations.

Legal Services

We entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Central Jersey Legal Services to create a program wherein our participants will have access to legal services related to removing barriers to employment.

Expungement

NJRC entered into an MOU with Volunteer Lawyers for Justice with the purpose to develop and expand a framework of cooperation wherein NJRC will refer its program participants to VLJ's Reentry Legal Services Program (ReLeSe) for expungement of criminal records.

Pro Bono Attorneys

Following are some of the attorneys who have provided critically needed pro bono legal services for NJRC clients:

Patrick Barnes, Esq.
1957-2020

Mr. Barnes earned a BA in Political Science from Gettysburg College where he ran track and was later inducted into the Gettysburg College Athletic Hall of Fame. He later obtained his J.D. from Touro Law School in New York and began his legal career in Washington, DC as a Legislative Assistant to Congressman Edwin Forsythe. In 2003, he was appointed Chief Prosecutor of Hunterdon County, New Jersey where he worked on several notable cases. Mr. Barnes also served as an Investigator for the Middlesex County District Ethics Committee, and in his retirement, provided pro-bono legal services for the New Jersey Reentry Corporation. He provided invaluable assistance in successfully transitioning formerly incarcerated individuals into their communities. His heartfelt dedication to NJRC clients and collegiality is a great loss and missed at NJRC.

Joanne Monahan, Esq.

Ms. Monahan graduated from Seton Hall Law School in 1978. Upon graduating, Ms. Monahan began working with municipal councils. She began working in the office of the Jersey City Corporation Counsel while in law school. By the time of her retirement 40 years later, she had held every title in the office, including corporation counsel. She has worked on all legal aspects of municipal government. Ms. Monahan has been providing pro bono services to



NJRC clients since 2020. She has effectively assisted clients in resolving legal issues that are impediments to employment, housing, and government benefits. Ms. Monahan provides NJRC participants with the necessary resources, direction, support, and advice with an emphasis on self-help. She has successfully solved legal issues relating to child support, open warrants, fines, birth certificates, and other identification documents.

Lycette Nelson, Esq.

Ms. Nelson is an attorney and international consultant specializing in the rights of people with disabilities. She is admitted to practice in New York, New Jersey, the U.S. District Courts for the Southern and Eastern Districts of New York and the District of New Jersey. She received her BA from St. John's College and a Doctorate in Comparative Literature from the State University of New York. She obtained her J.D. from the University of Cincinnati College of Law focusing on International Human Rights. She is an experienced litigator specializing in international human rights and disability law. Ms. Nelson also has experience in nonprofit management, teaching, and publishing. Ms. Nelson assists NJRC clients to remove legal barriers to obtaining and maintaining employment.

NJRC PARTNERSHIPS

The Legal Department has solidified partnerships and entered into Memoranda of Understanding with the following entities to continuously provide a robust array of needed services for NJRC participants:

Training and Employment Services

- 1Huddle, Inc.
- Bergen County One-Stop Career Center
- Bergen Probation Division Community Service Program
- City of Newark's Office of Reentry
- Community Food Bank of New Jersey
- County of Essex Correctional Facility
- County of Essex Correction Facility and New Jersey State Parole Board
- County of Union/Union County Department of Corrections
- Essex County Division of Training and Employment and Essex County One-Stop Career Center
- Foodbank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties, Inc. dba Fulfill
- Hudson Probation Division Community Service Program
- Mercer County One-Stop Career Center
- Middlesex County Office of Career Opportunity
- Middlesex Probation Division Community Service Program
- Monmouth County Workforce Development
- Monmouth Probation Division Community Service Program
- Montclair State University



- Newark Workforce Development Board
- New Jersey Coalition of Automotive Retailers
- Ocean County PIC, Inc.
- Operation HOPE
- Passaic County One-Stop Career Center
- Prevention Links
- Township of Woodbridge, as Administrator of the Recovery Employment Solutions - Education and Training
- Union County One-Stop Career Center
- United Counties Economic Development Corporation

Federally Qualified Healthcare Centers

- Alliance Community Healthcare, Inc.
- Eric B. Chandler Health Center
- Metropolitan Family Health Network, Inc.
- Newark Community Health Center
- Neighborhood Health Services Corporation
- North Hudson Community Action Corporation
- Ocean Health Initiatives, Inc.
- Paterson Community Health Center

Medically Assisted Treatment Services

- CPC Behavioral Healthcare
- Bergen New Bridge Medical Center
- CarePlus New Jersey
- Discovery Institute
- Integrity House
- Intervention Specialist
- Ocean Mental Health Services
- Real House, Inc.
- RWJ Barnabas Health Institute for Prevention and Recovery Support Team for Addiction Recovery
- Seashore Family Services of New Jersey
- Sunrise Clinical Services
- Straight & Narrow, Inc.
- Trinitas Regional Medical Center
- Turning Point
- University Behavioral Health Care



Additional Healthcare Services (including mental and behavioral healthcare services)

- Advanced Behavioral Care Services
- Buddies of New Jersey, Inc.
- Jersey City Medical Center, Center for Comprehensive Care
- Mental Health Association in New Jersey
- Newark Beth Israel Medical Center
- New Hope Integrated Behavioral Health Care
- Parker Family Health Center
- Prevention Links Support Team for Addiction Program
- Prevention Is Key, Inc.
- Recovery Advocates For The Shore
- University Hospital

Advocacy Services

- League of Women Voters of New Jersey
- National Action Network
- The Newark Museum of Art
- The New Jersey Coalition of Latino Pastors and Ministers & Ministerio El Sol Sale Para Todos Internacional
- Women Who Never Give Up, Inc.

Legal Services

- Central Jersey Legal Services, Inc.
- Volunteer Lawyers for Justice

Miscellaneous (Outreach, Research, Therapeutic, and Other Social Services)

- Helen Keller Institute
- New Jersey Department of Corrections
- Sean K. Wilson Ph.D. and Jason M. Williams, Ph.D.
- Suzanne Herrmann, LCSW, LLC
- YWCA Union County