

## **FORGe Mission** ( rev: 10/26/12)

**To foster collaboration among federal agencies and with national organizations to equip Federal defendants/offenders with the necessary skills and resources to succeed upon release.**

**NAME** – Federal Offenders Reentry Group (FORGe) (pronounced forge)

**GOAL** – To improve public safety and opportunities for successful community reintegration for individuals involved with the federal criminal justice system (i.e., defendants, inmates, offenders, probationers, etc.). This would be accommodated by developing access to support services, programs, and resources in each correctional institution, residential reentry center (RRC), and probation office to address core re-entry skill areas focused on: daily living, mental health, wellness, interpersonal, academic, cognitive, vocational/career, leisure time, and character.

### **FORG Objectives and Strategies**

- Increase communication among group partners at the national and field levels
  - Identify points of contact (POCs) for each agency component at the national and field level.
  - Encourage and plan for cross agency participation at regional, state and national conferences, trainings and meetings.
- Increase resources available to federal offenders by identifying evidence-based programs and resources that address the nine core skill areas at the federal, state and community level and connecting those programs and resources to the federal correctional system.
  - Use existing models such as the Ohio Benefit Bank, Earn Benefits, SOAR, where available, to build local partnerships and capacity
  - Develop an educational /training program using Federal Interagency Reentry Council resources, such as Mythbusters, to ensure that federal correctional staff, residential reentry centers and federal probation and parole offices know what resources are available and under what conditions.
- Improve programming available to federal offenders in all nine core reentry skills by identifying and, if needed, developing best practices that can be implemented by correctional institution, residential reentry centers, and federal probation and parole.
  - Use National Reentry Resource Center Best Practices Library to ensure that current reentry best practices are known
  - Develop a training/educational component regarding access to group partners programs and services.
- Improve offender employment outcomes for federal offenders by coordinating the efforts of federal, state, local and nonprofit agencies. The National Institute of Corrections’

Community Services Division assists corrections professionals who provide direct services to offenders and ex-offenders. Through the Offender Workforce Development (OWD) initiative, NIC:

- Collects and disseminates information on offender employment programs.
- Provides training for staff who provide employment services to offenders and ex-offenders.
- Provides assistance to federal, state and local agencies for improving job training, placement, and retention services for offenders.
- Develops partnerships with federal, state and local agencies to provide offender workforce development training in their jurisdictions.

### **Why focus on Federal offenders (including defendants/inmates/community supervision)?**

The system for dealing with federal offenders has unique assets and challenges. It is the largest correctional system in the country with potential for being a role model in the U.S. and worldwide. Once a promising or best practice has been identified, it can be tested in a variety of different settings and with different offender populations. Once validated, best practices can be implemented throughout the entire system. Because the system must be able to interface with 50 state services systems and thousands of local service systems, a practice that has been thoroughly tested in the federal system should be able to work, just about anywhere.

### **How will national organizations be involved with FORG?**

National organizations will be invited to attend meetings in order to inform the FORG members about activities that the national organizations are undertaking and to discuss federal activities that agencies have previously publically announced. As needed, the working group will incorporate a break to excuse the national organizations from discussion of federal activities that are still in the planning stages and not appropriate for public dissemination.

### **What are the initial implementation planning activities that FORG will undertake?**

The FORG work group will undertake the following planning activities:

- Review participating partnerships and invite new partners to join the group to ensure that all skill areas are covered.
- Revise website and other ongoing communication vehicles.
- Map regional, state and local contacts from the partnership agencies into the Federal Bureau of Prisons organizational structure.
- Provide benefits access presentation (Ohio Benefits Bank and other models ) to group partners
- Ensure linkage with National Reentry Council and National Reentry Resource Center
- Develop list of correctional conference and trainings and member agency conference to plan for cross participation.