



**THE**  
**MERCER**  
**COUNTY**  
**SMART**  
**BOOK**

A Resource Guide for Going Home

Drafted 2012

Revised 2015

By

The New Jersey Department of Corrections  
Office of Transitional Services

## Quick Reference: Useful Numbers and Hotlines

<b>American Friends Service Committee Prisoner's Resource Center</b>	1-973-643-2205
<b>CDC National STD and AIDS Hotlines</b>	
Spanish:	1-800-344-7432
English:	1-800-227-8922
<b>Addictions Hotline of NJ</b>	1-800-238-2333
<b>Alcoholics Anonymous</b>	1-800-245-1377
<b>Division of Disability Services (DDS)</b>	1-888-285-3036
<b>Division of Youth &amp; Family Services</b>	1-800-792-8610
<b>Hyacinth AIDS Foundation</b>	1-800-433-0254
<b>Legal Services of New Jersey</b>	1-888-576-5529
<b>NJ Motor Vehicle Commission</b>	
Driver's License Suspension Hotline	1-609-292-7500
Main Information	1-888-486-3339
<b>Narcotics Anonymous of NJ</b>	1-800-992-0401
<b>National Suicide Crisis Hotline</b>	1-800-784-2433
<b>New Jersey AIDS STD Hotline (Beth Israel)</b>	1-800-624-2377
<b>2-1-1 First Call For Help</b>	2-1-1/
Se habla español or toll free	1-800-331-7272
<b>Mercer County One Stop</b>	609-292-0682
<b>Social Security Office</b>	1-800-772-1213
<b>Statewide Domestic Violence Hotline (Woman's Space, Inc.)</b>	
Bilingual and TTY accessible	1-800-572-7233

# The Mercer County Smart Book

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## The Start of a New Beginning:

### How to use this book

This book is intended to prepare you for your arrival home and reintegration back into society. In order to make the transition smoother for you a list of resources have been compiled along with a list of necessary items you will find that are essential to your success. This book focuses on the first few weeks and months of your arrival home and assisting you on managing the transition. Although not every resource available to you will be found in here, there are many that will help to guide your journey.

Each section of this book is categorized by items that you will need in order to find employment, return to school, and to obtain identification. It will also provide addresses, websites, phone numbers, and general tips on how to acquire that particular service. You can use the table of contents to easily identify what service you require, and follow instructions as to how to contact providers.

**FYI:** *\*\*Please feel free to utilize your social services department for assistance in contacting an agency or inquiring information about a service found in this book. There are some services that may be free to you that you can contact through your social services department before making an out-of-pocket expense.*

There are things that can be completed prior to release from prison. Two things specifically are requesting a duplicate Social Security card for **FREE** and applying for a birth certificate for a **fee**. Please contact your social worker six months prior to release to apply for these items. By doing this while still in custody, you are taking a large step towards making your transition back into the community easier for you. Provided both documents are processed successfully, you will have two necessary forms of identification made available to you the day you are released. This will speed up the process of finding employment.

You will not find every service or organization in **Mercer County** in this book however there will be many to help you begin. Also, the organizations that are listed may be able to offer additional resources to you. [You can also visit your local library to get free internet access, \(see page 43\) or \[www.mercercounty.org\]\(http://www.mercercounty.org\)](#) for more county information.

## Getting Started: Identification (I.D.) and Other Documents

In order to apply for employment, rent an apartment, apply for general assistance, food stamps, or Medicaid, proper identification will be required. The more identification you have in your possession, the easier it will be for you to obtain these services. Certain items can be obtained while you are still incarcerated. Ask your social worker for assistance, and for the remainder, this book will point you in the right direction.

**FYI:** In order to obtain identification, various agencies will require proof of address. It is smart to keep bills in your name or official documents that have your name and address for further verification of your address.



### A. Social Security Card

If at all possible, apply for a duplicate social security card with your social worker six months prior to release. If for some reason this is not possible or your application has been denied, you will need to visit your closest Social Security Office to apply at:

#### Social Security Administration

635 S. Clinton Ave. 2<sup>nd</sup> floor  
Trenton, NJ 08611

**Office hours M, Tu, Th, F 9:00am-4:00pm**

**Wed 9:00am-12:00pm**

Phone numbers:

Toll Free 1-800-772-1213

TTY- 1-800-325-0778

If you choose to visit your local office to apply you will need to fill out the application at the office. You will need to show proof of identification. **Prison release papers count as proof of identification. Also, use your NJDOC Temporary ID card.**

To save time you can download the application online ([www.ssa.gov/replace\\_sscard.html](http://www.ssa.gov/replace_sscard.html)).



### B. Birth Certificate

The office of Vital Statistics in the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services has all the New Jersey birth, marriage, and death records. The fee is **\$25.00**. However,

depending upon where you were born in Mercer County, you may be able to apply for a birth certificate for a lesser fee.

**New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services**

Bureau of Vital Statistics and Registration

P.O. Box 370

Trenton, NJ 08625-0370

**Contact information for the NJ Bureau of Vital Statistics and Registration:** 1-609-292-4087 and 1-866-649-8726 (toll-free nationwide)

**FYI:** You are able to apply for a birth certificate while you are still in custody and have six months left prior to release. Please see your social worker to do so.

If you were born in the following towns, you may go to your registrar's office and apply for a birth certificate. You will need to call for the fee amounts.

**East Windsor Township**

Linda A. Kessler  
East Windsor Health Dept.  
16 Lanning Boulevard  
East Windsor, NJ 08520  
Phone: (609) 443-4000  
Fax: (609) 443-8303

**Ewing Township**

Susan Bate  
Municipal Building  
2 Jake Garzio Drive  
Ewing, NJ 08628  
Phone: 609-883-2900 x7658  
Fax:

**Hamilton Township**

Sarah Papadem  
PO Box 00150  
2100 Greenwood Avenue  
Hamilton Twsp Health Dept.  
Hamilton, NJ 08609  
Phone: 609-890-3820  
Fax:

**Hightstown Borough**

Debra L. Sopronyi  
Municipal Building  
156 Bank Street  
Hightstown, NJ 08520

Phone: (609) 490-5100  
Fax: (609) 371-0267

**Hopewell Borough**

Michele Hovan  
88 East Broad Street  
Hopewell, NJ 08525  
Phone: (609) 466-2636 x13  
Fax: (609) 466-8511

**Hopewell Township**

Evelyn S. Estrada  
Municipal Building  
201 Washington Crossing-  
Pennington Road  
Titusville, NJ 08560-1410  
Phone: 609-737-0120 x636  
Fax:

**Lawrence Township**

Linda Ciosek  
2207 Lawrenceville Road  
P.O. Box 6006  
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648  
Phone: (609) 844-7089  
Fax: (609) 896-0412

**Pennington Borough**

Elizabeth Sterling  
30 North Main Street  
Pennington, NJ 08534  
Phone: (609) 737-0276  
Fax: (609) 737-9780

**Princeton**

Lauralyn Bowen  
1 Monument Drive  
Princeton, NJ 08540-  
Phone: (609) 497-7608  
Fax: (609) 924-7627

**Robbinsville Township**

Michele Seigfried  
1 Washington Blvd, Suite 6  
Robbinsville, NJ 08691  
Phone: (609) 918-0002  
Fax: (609) 259-6032



**Trenton City**

Olga Figueroa  
City Hall  
319 E. State St.  
Trenton, NJ 08608  
Phone: (609) 989-4117  
Fax: (609) 989-4252

**West Windsor Township**

Florence Sakiey  
271 Clarksville Road  
PO Box 38  
West Windsor, NJ 08550  
Phone: (609) 936-8400  
Fax: (609) 799-2044

**C. County Identification**

You can obtain a county identification card by going to the Mercer County Clerk's office (listed below). You will need a valid birth certificate OR naturalization certificate OR resident alien card and a valid NJ Motor Vehicle License OR a voter registration card OR lease agreement. **If you are unable to produce proof of residency, you must be accompanied by a parent, guardian, or blood relative. That person must meet the identification requirements as well as sign on your behalf, with a valid New Jersey ID or driver's license.** There is a \$20.00 fee for the County ID.

**County Clerk's Office**

240 West State Street-6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
(Old Capital Plaza Hotel)  
Trenton, NJ 08068  
609-989-6465

**MERCER COUNTY CONNECTION**

Mercer County's innovative, new outreach center provides a wide range of information and services to the citizens of Mercer County, at one convenient location:

Hamilton Square Shopping Center  
Highway 33 at Paxson Avenue  
Hamilton, NJ 08690  
609-890-9800

**Hours:**

Monday, Wednesday & Friday 10 AM - 6:00 PM  
Tuesday & Thursday 10 AM - 8:00 PM  
Saturday 10 AM - 3:00 PM

Services Provided:

Passport Applications/Photos

Notary Services

Voter Registration

Absentee Ballots

Recycling Buckets

County Maps

Government & Community Program Information



**D. Driver's License**

Once you are released from prison, you can go to the Motor Vehicle Commission (MVC) to get a new driver's license, replace a lost one, or renew a card that has expired. If you believe that your license has been suspended, you should confirm this and figure out what you need to do to get it back. If you were convicted of any kind of drug offense, your license has been suspended.

**Prior to your release**, you can get a copy of your driver's license record, which is called an "abstract." Please contact your social worker if you are interested in obtaining an abstract. **The fee for an abstract is \$15.00**

**Upon your release**, you can go to the MVC offices in Mercer County (listed below) or a Regional Service Center to request a driver's abstract. If you have internet access, you can also request an abstract online at <http://www.state.nj.us/mvc>. You will still have to pay **\$15.00**. If your license was suspended for six months or more because of a drug conviction, the period of the suspension will begin from the time of your release. Other kinds of suspension, such as failure to pay parking tickets, insurance surcharges, or child support, will last until you have paid the fine or worked out a payment plan. For questions about suspension, call the suspension hotline: **609-292-7500**.

**Restoration Fees, Tickets, and Surcharges:** If you found out that your license has been suspended, you will have to pay a restoration fee of **\$100.00** in order to have your license reinstated. This does not include any additional fines or surcharges you are required to pay. This fee can be paid at the Regional Service Center (see below).

If you have internet access, this fee can be paid online at <http://www.state.nj.us/mvc>. You can pay your surcharges and parking tickets on this web site as well.

## MVC LOCATIONS IN MERCER COUNTY

**For questions, please call 1 (888) 486-3339**

Location	<b>Bakers Basin</b> 3200 Brunswick Pike Route 1 North Lawrenceville, NJ 08648	<b>Trenton</b> 120 S. Stockton & Front Street Trenton, NJ 08611
Types of Facilities & Hours	<b>Agency, Driver Testing</b> Mon 8 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Tu 8 a.m.-7:30 p.m. W/Th/F 8 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Sat 8 a.m.-1 p.m. <b>Inspection</b> M-F 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Sa 7 a.m.-12 p.m. <b>Road Testing</b> M-F 8 a.m.-4 p.m.	<b>Agency</b> Mon 8 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Tu 8 a.m.-7:30 p.m. W/Th/F 8 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Sat 8 a.m.-1 p.m. <b>Suspension/Restoration</b> Mon-Fri 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Sat- no Susp/Rest service; M-F only
Late closing	<b>Agency, Driver Testing</b> Tu 7:30 p.m.	<b>Agency</b> Tu 7:30 p.m.

### **Regional Office: Trenton Agency**

**120 S. Stockton & Front St.**

**Trenton, NJ 08611**

Services: Driver conferences, driver records, (issuances and inquiries), points and surcharge (inquiries), suspensions and restorations.

Hours: Mon-Fri 8am-4:30pm; Sat 8am-12pm

To replace a lost or stolen license, you will have to bring identification to the MVC and pay an **\$11.00 fee**. The MVC now has very specific kinds of I.D. that are required under the new "Six Point" system:

*Please use this guide to prepare yourself for your trip to MVC. Make sure you have the six points of identification necessary to obtain your drivers license or non drivers I.D.*

### **SIX POINT SYSTEM OF IDENTIFICATION**

#### **Primary Documents:**

(4 Points)

- Birth Certificate or Certified Copy from one of the 50 states.
- U.S. Dept. of State Birth Certificate
- US Passport-Current or Expired less than 3 years
- Current US Passport card
- Current NJ Digital Drivers License

- Valid Active Duty US Military Photo ID Card
- US Adoption papers
- Certificate of Naturalization
- Certificate of Citizenship

**Secondary Documents:**

(3 Points)

- Civil Marriage/Domestic partnership/ Civil Union  
Certificate: Issued by the Municipality or State
- Order of Decree of Divorce
- Court Order for Legal Name Change: Signed by a judge  
or county clerk
- US Military Photo/Retiree Card

(2 Points)

- U.S. Military Discharge Papers (DD214)

(1 Point)

- Current/ Expired (Less than 1 year) Non-Digital NJ  
Photo Drivers License
- Social Security Card
- Bank statement or record
- ATM Card w/ pre-printed name and applicant signature
- NJ Public Assistance Card w/ Photo
- High School Diploma/GED/ College Diploma
- Veterans Affairs-Universal Access Photo ID Card

You can get a brochure on this new “Six Point” system from the MVC offices listed above or from the Motor Vehicle Commission web site, [www.state.nj.us/mvc](http://www.state.nj.us/mvc). If your license has expired, you will have to go with your six points of I.D. to the MVC to fill out a renewal application. You may have to take the written test again. License renewal costs **\$24.00**.

**E. Non-driver’s State I.D.**

New Jersey provides state photo identification for non-drivers. **You can get this official state I.D. even if your driver’s license is currently suspended.** This may be a good option for you if it is going to be some time before you get your license back. You will still need to bring the same type of identification documents described previously, under the new “Six Point” system.

**F. Certificates of Naturalization or Citizenship**

This certificate is necessary for employment upon your release. In general, if you need to replace lost forms, you can contact the US Citizenship & Immigration Service or Application Support Centers to find out about identification and fingerprint verifications. There is a fee to process an application for replacement documents. The National Customer Service Hotline is **1 (800) 375-5283**.

## **Citizenship Locations**

### **US Citizenship & Immigration Service**

#### **Closest field office to Mercer County**

Peter Rodino Jr. Federal Building  
970 Broad Street, Newark NJ 07102

### **Application Support Center**

24 Commerce Ave.  
Newark, NJ 07102

## **G. Alien Registration Card “Green Card”**

To replace a missing Green Card, you must go to the US Citizenship & Immigration Service Office (see above) to fill out an I-90 form. Please make sure that you bring I.D. with you.

You can also visit the website and download the forms at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov). It costs **\$290.00** for processing. **If you have any questions or concerns about your status as a result of your criminal conviction, call Legal Services of New Jersey at 1-888-576-5529 before going to immigration.**

## **H. Military Discharge Papers**

**FYI:** You may have the opportunity to meet with the Veterans Administration (VA) liaison from the Veterans Administration during your incarceration. The VA liaison can assist you in requesting a copy of your DD214 (discharge papers) by completing the SF-180 form. Please notify your institution's **P.R.E.P.A.R.E** social worker for assistance with your requests and to obtain information on your veteran status. You can also obtain the SF-180 by writing the Veteran Benefit Administration in NJ or the NPRC, which is the main record depository.

### **Veterans Benefit Administration in New Jersey**

20 Washington Pl., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Newark, NJ 07102

### **Main records depository**

NPRC, 9700 Page Ave  
St. Louis, MO 63132-5100

### **Mercer County Veterans Affairs**

2280 Hamilton Ave.

Hamilton, NJ 08619

609-989-6120

Mon-Fri 8:30am-4:30pm

Upon your release, you can also visit the following web site to request military records; [www.vetrecs.archives.gov](http://www.vetrecs.archives.gov)

Once on the [www.vetrecs.archives.gov](http://www.vetrecs.archives.gov) website, follow the on screen instructions for requesting personnel records. You will be asked to print out a signature page which can either be mailed or faxed. Upon receiving the form, the records will be mailed directly to you.



### **I. Passport**

Although a passport may not seem like an important item to have at this point, it can serve as a major form of identification because it is widely accepted. There are **fees** involved in obtaining your passport. To obtain your passport, you may visit the Mercer County Clerks Office at:

#### **Mercer County Clerk's Office**

240 West State Street

Trenton, NJ 08608

(Old Capital Plaza Hotel)

609-989-6465

Passport desk: 609-989-6473

#### **Mercer County Connection**

Hamilton Square Shopping Center

Highway 33 at Paxson Ave.

Hamilton, NJ 08690

609-890-9800

(Passport Hours)

M,W, F: 10:00am-5:30pm

Tu & Thu: 10:00am-7:30pm

Sat 10:00am-2:30pm

#### **You will need to bring:**

- An original or certified copy of a birth certificate with a raised seal and file date issued by Vital Statistics
- A naturalization certificate
- Official military I.D.
- A previous US passport; photocopies are not accepted.
- Your Social Security card

- ☒ I.D., such as a valid driver's license, government identification or previous passport issued after your 16th birthday. The expired passport should not be more than 15 years old.
- ☒ 2 identical copies of a 2x2 face front regulation passport photo.

**\$110.00** Passport Services fee (must be in the form of check or money order)

**\$25.00** Mercer County Clerk processing fee (payable either by cash or check)

## **J. NJDOC Release Papers/Temporary I.D. Card**

Make sure you keep your prison release papers and temporary I.D. card. Your release papers can serve as identification in some circumstances and your I.D. card is valid for 30 days. These items along with several others will all be included in your *Fair Release and Re-entry Act (FRARA)* folder given to you on the day of your release.

## **First Steps after Release: Where Do I Go to Find...**

This section provides resources for food, shelter, clothing, money, and other emergency needs. We have provided some resource options in Mercer County that you can utilize upon release.

**FYI:** Important paperwork will be needed repeatedly throughout your life. Make sure to invest in a folder or safe to keep important documents. **Never** carry your birth certificate or Social Security card with you. You will only need to produce these items upon request. It is smarter to keep them in a safe place.

Also, make sure to keep a notebook and a pen with you to write down the names and phone numbers of the people you come in contact with at various agencies. Remember, nobody is going to care about your success as much as you do.

Provided for you are agencies and services that can assist you in finding your basic needs.

**FYI:** It is a good idea to call first to check that the hours of operation haven't changed. Please try to be patient with those that are attempting to assist you.

See the following pages for list of resources.

## **A. First Steps**

The agencies below provide a range of services and/or, depending on what you need, can refer you to other places.

### **FIRST-STOP AGENCIES**

**2-1-1/First Call for Help** – is a resource for Mercer County residents, which offers comprehensive information and referrals for human services, health care, government and community resource assistance. Dial 211, which can be accessed from the internet, cell phone or landline, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Dial 800-331-7272 for the Homeless Hotline, which addresses emergencies and homeless calls. 211 is multi-lingual and accepts TTY callers



## **B. Shelter**

Here are some shelters in Mercer County. Access to most of these shelters can be obtained through the Mercer County Board of Social Services or through a general walk in. Although each agency has been verified, please call to check for the most current hours or operation. Please call the agencies listed below for further information.

### **Catholic Charities – Diocese of Trenton**

383 W. State Street  
Trenton, NJ 08607-1423  
609-394-5181 (Central Administrative Services)  
800-360-7711 (Access, Help and Information Center)  
Rapid re-housing and housing services

### **Crisis Ministry of Mercer County**

#### **Princeton Location**

61 Nassau Street  
Princeton, NJ 08540

#### **Trenton Location**

123 E. Hanover St.  
Trenton, NJ 08608  
609-396-9355

Rental Assistance, Emergency Financial Assistance, Housing stability services and homelessness resources. No referral required.



**Home Front**

1880 Princeton Ave.  
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648  
609-989-9417

Shelter, Food & Clothing for Homeless Families; Short Term Shelter; Housing Search for families who are taking care of children. No referral required.

**YWCA of Trenton**Main Office:

140 East Hanover St.  
Trenton, NJ 08608  
609-396-8291

Dunham Hall Residence (housing):

127 Academy St.  
Trenton, NJ 08608  
609-396-2413

Housing/Rooms, Rental Assistance for **women**

**ADULTS ONLY****Rescue Mission of Trenton**

98 Carroll Street  
Trenton, NJ 08609  
609.695.1436 (main office)  
609.695.6479 (emergency shelter)

Shelter Location

89 Ewing Street  
Trenton, NJ 08609

Shelter Hours: 4 pm – 8 am daily  
Shelter, Food, Clothing, Addiction Services for adult men and women, transitional housing is available on a limited basis.

**C. Food/Clothing**

Here are the food pantries, soup kitchens and in Mercer County. Although each agency has been verified, please call to check for most current hours of operation.

**Food Pantries/Soup Kitchens**

***FYI:** Please note that any food pantry that also sells or provides clothing will be indicated next to the address by the designated symbol:*



### **FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH FOOD PANTRY**



**Site:** 211 Kuser Rd.

Hamilton, NJ 08690

**Phone:** 609-585-9186

**Hours:** Pantry distributes food on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month from 9:00am-1:00pm. Call for an appointment.

### **RISE (FORMERLY COMMUNITY ACTION SERVICE**

**CENTER, INC.)**



**Site:** 116 N. Main St.

Hightstown, NJ 08520

**Phone:** (609) 443-4464

**Website:** [info@rise-community-services.org](mailto:info@rise-community-services.org)

**Hours:** Monday-Wed 9:00am-12:00pm and the first and third Wednesday of every month from 5:00pm-7:00pm.

*This site provides families and individuals with a food pantry, emergency shelter assistance, help finding a job, finding affordable childcare, summer program for children and domestic violence prevention for adults and youths.*

### **LAWRENCE COMMUNITY CENTER**



**Site:** 295 Eggerts Crossing Road, Lawrenceville, NJ 08648

**Phone:** 609-883-3379

**Email:** [lawrencecomctr@homefrontnj.org](mailto:lawrencecomctr@homefrontnj.org)

**Website:** [www.homefrontnj.org](http://www.homefrontnj.org)

**Hours:** 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday from 12:00pm-4:00pm

*This site provides a pantry, social services, and a summer camp.*

### **CATHOLIC CHARITIES-DIOCESE OF TRENTON**



**Site:** 132 N. Warren Street, Trenton, NJ 08608

**Phone:** 609-394-8847

**Hours:** Call for hours

**Website:** [www.catholiccharitiestrenton.org](http://www.catholiccharitiestrenton.org)

*This site provides pre-packaged food bags that provide 3 meals per day for 3 days of each household member. Residents in need can also “shop” for gently-used clothing and household items at the free store.*

## CRISIS MINISTRY OF MERCER COUNTY

**Site 1:** 123 E. Hanover Street, Trenton, NJ 08608

**Hours:** M-F 9:30am-12:00pm

**Site 2:** 61 Nassau Street, Princeton, NJ 08542

M, W, & Th 1:30pm-4:00pm; Tu 1:30pm-7:00pm

**Mail:** 123 E. Hanover Street, Trenton, NJ 08608

**Phone:** 609-396-9355

**Website:** [www.thecrisisministry.org](http://www.thecrisisministry.org).

**Contact:** Director of Food Service, Mark Smith

*This site provides groceries to low income people*

## TURNING POINT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**Site:** 15 South Broad Street

Trenton, NJ 08608

**Phone:** 609-393-9574

**Website:** [www.turningpointumc.net](http://www.turningpointumc.net)

**Hours:** Food pantry distribution- 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays from 1:30pm-3:00pm

*This site provides a monthly food pantry.*

## HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

**Site:** 601 North Clinton Avenue, Trenton, NJ 08638

**Phone:** 609-393-8009

**Email:** [leonard.hthta@gmail.com](mailto:leonard.hthta@gmail.com)

**Contact:** Liz Leonard

**Hours:** Pantry-Mon, Tues, Wed 10:00a,-1:00pm

*This site provides a food pantry and an after school learning lab.*

## JERUSALEM BAPTIST CHURCH

**Site:** 150 North Clinton Avenue, Trenton, NJ 08609

**Phone:** 609-394-9816

**Hours:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of a five-Saturday month and 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of a four Saturday month. Lunch is served 11:30-1:00pm.

*This site provides a monthly meal program for the community, free clothing and Thanksgiving baskets.*

## MOUNT CARMEL GUILD EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

**Site:** 73 North Clinton Avenue, Trenton, NJ 08609

**Phone:** 609-392-3402

**Email:** [information@mtcarmelguild.org](mailto:information@mtcarmelguild.org)

**Website:** [www.mtcarmelguild.org](http://www.mtcarmelguild.org)

**Hours:** Contact for hours

*This site provides a three to five day supply of groceries, utility assistance (funds permitted), limited financial assistance to those who have no prescription coverage, basic supplies for babies, personal hygiene items and clothing (as available) and referrals to additional services within the community.*

### **RESCUE MISSION OF TRENTON**



**Site:** 98 Carroll Street, Trenton, NJ 08609

**Mailing address:** P.O. Box 790, Trenton, NJ 08605

**Phone:** 609-695-1436 ext. 139

**Email:** See website.

**Website:** [www.rescuemissionoftrenton.org](http://www.rescuemissionoftrenton.org)

**Hours:** *Soup Kitchen* – Every Sun: 11am-12pm; 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of a five-Saturday month 11:00-12:00pm

*This site provides an emergency shelter, food and clothing to homeless individuals.*

### **TRENTON AREA SOUP KITCHEN (TASK)**



**Escher Street Site:** 72 1/2 Escher Street, Trenton, NJ 08605

**Mail:** P.O. Box 872, Trenton, NJ 08605

**Phone:** 609-695-5456 ext. 114

**Contact:** Charlie Orth

**Hours:** Mid-day meal is served Mon-Fri 11:00-1:00pm (doors open at 10:30am); late trays are available at the side door from 1:00pm-2:00pm; evening meal is served Mon-Thu 3:30pm-4:50pm; late trays are available at the side door from 5:00-5:30pm. **\*\*Children receive breakfast bags in addition to a hot meal\*\***

**South Trenton Sites:** First Baptist Church, 128 Centre Street

**Phone:** 609-393-8810

**Contact:** Rev. Liz Congdon

**Hours:** Dinner is served Mon-Wed from 4:00-5:30pm

**Site 2:** St. Stanislaus Church, 60 Randall Avenue

**Phone:** 609-393-4826 or 609-216-2314

**Contact:** Frank Zelinski

**Hours:** Dinner is served Thursdays from 4:30pm-6:00pm

**West Trenton Site:** Trinity Cathedral Church, 801 West State Street

**Phone:** 609-902-0427

**Contact:** Rev. Christopher Cox

**Hours:** Dinner is served Thursdays from 5:00pm-6:30pm

**Hamilton Site:** Medallion Care, 1 Electronics Drive

**Phone:** 609-586-0766

**Contact:** Amy Posner

**Hours:** Mid-day meal is served Monday through Friday from 12:00pm-1:00pm

**Hightstown Sites:** First Presbyterian Church of Hightstown, 320 North Main Street

**Phone:** 609-558-0055

**Contact:** Mark Dahlinger

**Hours:** Dinner is served Mondays from 4:00pm-5:30pm

**Site 2:** First United Methodist Church of Hightstown, 187 Stockton Street

**Phone:** 609-448-0041

**Contact:** Pastor Hedi Bak

**Hours:** Dinner is served Thursdays from 4:30pm-6:00pm

**Princeton Sites:** Princeton United Methodist Church, 7 Vandeventer Ave. & Nassau St.

**Phone:** 609-924-2613

**Contact:** Larry Apperson

**Hours:** Dinner is served Wednesdays from 5:00pm-6:30pm

**Site 2:** First Baptist Church of Princeton, John Street and Paul Robeson Place

**Phone:** 609-924-0877

**Contact:** Carlton Branscomb

**Hours:** Dinner is served Tuesdays from 5:00pm-7:00pm

### TRINITY CATHEDRAL FOOD PANTRY

**Site:** 801 West State Street, Trenton, NJ 08618

**Phone:** 609-392-3805

**Website:** [www.TrinityCathedralNJ.org](http://www.TrinityCathedralNJ.org)

**Hours:** Friday Community Luncheon (every Friday) from 12:00pm-1:00pm and a food pantry is also on site.

### D: Transportation

There is no general program that will provide assistance paying for transportation. NJ Transit will no longer accept release papers in substitution for bus tickets. However, you may purchase transit tickets from NJDOC for \$2.00 prior to release, which will assist you with reaching your destination.

Some of the programs listed in this book will provide bus passes to help you participate in a particular program. If you are assigned to a community/social service or reporting program, you may want to ask if the program offers transportation assistance.

For specific bus, rail or train schedules and fares, you may call NJ Transit: (973) 275-5555, NJ Text Telephone: 800-772-2287 or visit the NJ Transit Website: <http://www.njtransit.com> For specific route information on the web site, click on the “trip planner”. For your Mercer County travel convenience, may want to purchase weekly, monthly or discounted transit passes (when applicable).

If you are going to drive places, remember that you **must** have a valid driver’s license and you **must** have insurance for any vehicle that you are driving.

### **TRANSPORTATION FOR THE DISABLED AND SENIOR CITIZENS**

Transportation is generally geared toward seniors, disabled, individuals with AIDS or HIV and others with significant needs. Some agencies provide transportation for their program participants only. Contact the agencies below to determine eligibility requirements.

#### **Interfaith Caregivers-Greater Mercer County**

3635 Quakerbridge Road, Suite 16  
Hamilton, NJ 08619  
609-393-9922  
Email: [info@icgmc.org](mailto:info@icgmc.org)

#### **Mercer County Board of Social Services**

200 Woolverton St.  
P.O. Box 1450  
Trenton, NJ 08650  
609-989-4320 or 609-989-4491  
Hours: M,W, Th, F 8:30am-4:30pm  
Tues 8:30am-8:30pm

#### **Trade Transportation**

300 Scotch Road  
Trenton, NJ 08638  
609-530-1971

#### **Office of Amtrak Access**

800-872-7245

#### **Greyhound Customers with Disabilities Travel Assistance Line**

800-752-4841



## **E. Money**

Once you are released from custody, you will need a source of income until you can find a job. (see section on “Finding a Job” for job seeking information).

**The DOC does not provide any “gate money,” except for the money you may have in your inmate account. If it is possible to save any money before you are released, you should try to do so.** Parole may give emergency funds, based on needs, but its at their discretion—as your parole officer about this.

You may be eligible to get some sort of public assistance (welfare), not everyone qualifies for this. Listed below are some basics on seeking and applying for benefits.

### **Work First New Jersey Program (WFNJ)**

**WFNJ** provides cash benefits (General Assistance) for single people and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families for people who have custody of their children. Both programs will require you to work or actively look for work and both have a five-year lifetime limit. Work First New Jersey also has an Emergency Assistance program that you may qualify for if you are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless: it can pay for things like food, clothing and transportation costs to look for housing, but also utility payments and temporary rental or mortgage payment assistance. You can contact your social worker for more information.

**FYI:** Please call your local office to verify what the eligibility requirements are for obtaining General Assistance.

### **NJ SNAP (formerly Food Stamps)**

You may apply for NJ SNAP while applying for GA/TANF. If you were convicted after August 22, 1996 of a drug distribution or sales offense, you may still be able to get NJ SNAP if you have completed or are enrolled in a licensed drug treatment program, or completed a program in prison and are drug free (you will be tested). Same goes for possession offenses. Please contact the Division of Welfare in Hudson County to inquire.

### **Mercer County Board of Social Services**

200 Woolverton St.  
P.O. Box 1450  
Trenton, NJ 08650  
800-564-1595 (toll free information)  
609-989-6248 (Work First NJ Case Management Unit)  
Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm  
Tuesday, 8:30 am – 8:30 pm



## **F: Veterans Benefits**

If you were receiving veteran's benefits, either for disability or a pension, and you were incarcerated for more than 60 days, you will have to get reinstated after you are released. If you were not receiving benefits and you are a veteran, you may be eligible for benefits or for other programs and services, including health care. You can contact the Veterans Administration for questions about benefits at 800-827-1000; the health benefit number is 877-222-VETS. The 24-hour veterans mental health hotline is **1-866-VETS-NJ4U**.

### **The closest VA Benefit Administration is located at:**

110A Meadowlands Parkway, Suite 102  
Secaucus NJ 07094  
201-223-7787

#### **Regional Office**

20 Washington Pl., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Newark, NJ 07102  
973-645-1441

### **The nearest Veterans Services Office is located at:**

2280 Hamilton Avenue, Hamilton, NJ 08619  
Phone: (609) 989-6120  
Edward Mazzeo, Veteran Service Officer  
Monday thru Friday from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm

### **Each office can assist you with your Veterans service needs.**

- Transportation to and from VA medical facilities
- Employment
- Vocational Rehab
- Mercer County One Stop Career Center
- Social Services
- War Veterans Re-Adjustment Counseling
- Affordable Housing Emergency and Transitional Housing
- Vet Center Clinic

Visit this local VA office to reinstate benefits or apply for new programs and services.



The following are some websites that can assist you in looking for information about veteran services:

Federal Veterans Information:  
[www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)

Info for NJ Veterans:  
[www.vetsinfo.com](http://www.vetsinfo.com)

New Jersey Dept of Veterans Affairs: [www.state.nj.us/military](http://www.state.nj.us/military)

New Jersey Veterans Guide:  
[www.state.nj.us/military/veterans/njguide](http://www.state.nj.us/military/veterans/njguide)

VA Home Loans:  
[www.homeloans.va.gov](http://www.homeloans.va.gov)

Veterans Counseling Service Center:  
[www.va.gov/rcs/newjersey/html](http://www.va.gov/rcs/newjersey/html)

**Be aware that the VA takes considerable time to make decisions. On average, it can take 273 days to process a new application for benefits.**

**OTHER BENEFIT PROGRAMS:** You may be eligible for other cash benefits, including Supplemental Security Income (SSI) disability benefits (if you are seriously disabled and cannot work) call 1-800-772-1213 and the Women's, Infants, Children (WIC) program, which gives food vouchers to low-income parents. You can inquire about WIC at the city and county welfare offices.

### **Taking Care of Yourself: Getting Support**

The transition from prison back to society may take some time to get adjusted and we want to provide you with options to lessen the burden. Taking care of your mind and body will be important for your success. Below are a few places to that may be of assistance.



### **Taking Care of Yourself: Health Care Resources**

It is very important that you pay close attention to your aftercare once you are released from custody. Change in your daily routine cause a certain level of stress. Stress along with any medical condition may worsen if routine monitoring and treatment are not available. Therefore the resources listed below provide information on paying for health care, clinic visits and other resources in Mercer County.

Prior to your release, you will be given the opportunity to apply for Medicaid through the Affordable Health Care Act (ACA). ACA allows those with little or no income to be eligible for Medicaid under the new law. New Jersey residents complete an application for New Jersey Family Care and out of state residents complete an application for the Healthcare Marketplace. Applying for healthcare while at NJDOC allows enough time for processing to be completed and a health insurance card to be mailed to your residence with coverage beginning the day of your release. For more information regarding the Affordable Care Act and Medicaid, please contact your social worker or visit [www.njfamilycare.org](http://www.njfamilycare.org) or [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov). Below is some information regarding traditional Medicaid.

### **A. Health Care Benefits: Am I eligible?**

In New Jersey, the **Medicaid** program provides health care benefits for some low-income people. If you gain custody of children under 18 when you are released, you may qualify if you are; *single, head of house and unemployed, or existing earnings are not enough to support the household* Other eligibility requirements include low-income status, over age 65, blindness, or inability to work due to a disability.

If you are disabled and are applying for SSI, you will also be screened for Medicaid at that time. If you qualify for General Assistance benefits, you will get some very basic health care benefits through Medicaid (Plan G). **Medicaid is a separate program from GA or TANF, so you don't have to be eligible for those benefits to qualify for Medicaid.**

For questions about Medicaid eligibility, or to apply for Medicaid in Mercer County go to:

**Mercer County Board of Social Services**

200 Woolverton St.

P.O. Box 1450

Trenton, NJ 08650

609.989.4320 or 1-800-564-1595

Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

Tuesday, 8:30 am – 8:30 pm

If you are a veteran, you may be eligible for health care benefits through the **Veterans Administration**, which provides a “Medical Benefits Package” for enrolled veterans. You may call 877-222-VETS for more information about eligibility and applying for benefits.

If you are HIV+ or have AIDS, you may also be eligible for the **AIDS Drug Distribution Program** (ADDP), which provides

help paying for HIV/AIDS medication for people who do not have other ways of paying. **You can apply for this program before you are released.** Contact the **Aids Drug Distribution Program** at 609-588-7038 or toll free 877-613-4533, Mon-Fri 8am-5pm to apply.

**Easter Seals New Jersey** provides information, referrals and loans of medical equipment (including wheelchairs) to people in need. For information call 732-257-6662.



## **B. General HealthCare Providers**

Even if you do not have Medicaid or other health insurance and benefits, here are some facilities that provide primary health care at low cost, sliding scale or free service. They are listed below. Most hospitals have charity care, for which you can inquire about during a hospital emergency room visit.

### **MERCER COUNTY HEALTHCARE LOCATIONS**

#### **Capital Health Regional Medical Center**

750 Brunswick Avenue  
Trenton, NJ 08638  
609-394-6000  
Clinics, Medicaid, Medical Care, General Acute Medical Care

#### **Capital Health Medical Center-Hopewell**

1 Capital Way  
Pennington, NJ 08534  
609-303-4000  
Clinics, Medicaid, Medical Care, General Acute Medical Care

#### **Capital Health- Hamilton**

1445 Whitehorse-Mercerville Rd.  
Hamilton, NJ 08619  
609-588-5050  
Clinic, outpatient services, primary care

#### **Henry J. Austin Health Center**

**Site 1:** 321 N Warren Street  
Trenton, NJ 08608  
**Site 2:** 317 Chambers Street (Chambers Manor Family Practice)  
Trenton, NJ 08609  
**Site 3:** 112 Ewing Street  
Trenton, NJ 08609  
**Hours:** Mon-Fri 8:00am-5:00pm and Sat 9:00am-1:00pm  
(weekend hours only at Warren Street site)  
**Main Phone Number:** 609-278-5900

Clinics, Dental Care, Medicaid, Medical Care, Women's health care

**Mercer County HIV Consortium/Resource Center**

1080 Hamilton Ave.  
Trenton, NJ 08629  
Contact: Joe Sirak, Coordinator  
Telephone: 609-278-9555  
Fax: 609-278-0553

**Robert Wood Johnson Hospital at Hamilton**

1 Hamilton Health Place  
Hamilton , NJ 08690  
609-586-7900  
Clinics, Medicaid, Medical Care, General Acute Medical Care

**St. Francis Medical Center**

601 Hamilton Avenue  
Trenton, NJ 08629  
609-599-5000  
Clinics, Medicaid, Medical Care, General Acute Medical Care

**University Medical Center at Princeton**

1 Plainsboro Road  
Plainsboro, NJ 08536  
609-853-7000  
Clinics, Medicaid, Medical Care, General Acute Medical Care

**Hospitals in Mercer County**

**Capital Health Medical Center Hopewell**

1 Capital Way  
Pennington, NJ 08534  
609-303-4000

**Capital Health Regional Medical Center**

750 Brunswick Ave.  
Trenton, NJ 08638  
609-394-6000

**Robert Wood Johnson Hospital at Hamilton**

1 Hamilton Health Place  
Hamilton, NJ 08690  
609-586-7900  
St. Francis Medical Center

**St. Francis Medical Center**

601 Hamilton Avenue  
Trenton, NJ 08629  
609-599-5000

**University Medical Center at Princeton**

1 Plainsboro Road  
Plainsboro, NJ 08536  
609-853-7000

**FYI:** All of these centers accept Medicaid and some insurance plans, but also provide services on a sliding scale basis, additional fees for x-rays and lab work. Primary and preventative care. Staff there may help you apply for Medicaid, charity care or other benefits if you are eligible.

**MERCER COUNTY DEPT OF HEALTH and HUMAN SERVICES**

640 S Broad Street  
P.O. Box 8068  
Trenton, NJ 08650  
609.989.6526

**Dept. of Public Health**

609/278-7165

**Family Planning Centers in Mercer County Area:**

**Planned Parenthood**

**Administrative Offices**

69 E Newman Springs Road  
Shrewsbury, NJ 07702  
732-842-9300 or 1-800-230-PLAN

**Trenton Health Center**

437 East State Street  
Trenton, NJ 08608  
609-599-4881

Services offered: abortion services, birth control, HIV testing, Morning-After Pill (emergency contraception), pregnancy testing & services, STD testing, treatment & vaccines and women's health care.

**Hamilton Square**

**Golden Crest Corporate Center**

2279 Route 33  
Golden Crest Corporate Center, Suite 510  
Hamilton Square, NJ 08690  
609-599-4881

Services offered: abortion services, birth control, HIV testing, men's health care, Morning-After Pill (emergency contraception), pregnancy testing & services, STD testing, treatment & vaccines and women's health care.

*\*Sliding scale fees based on income and family size, Medicaid and most insurance accepted.*

### **C. Services for People with HIV/AIDS**

In addition to the clinics listed above, a number of places in Mercer County offer care and support services specifically for those living with HIV and AIDS.

#### **Hamilton Township Division of Health**

2100 Greenwood Avenue  
Telephone #: (609) 890-3647  
Fax #: (609) 890-3647 or 609-890-3884  
Clinic Session: Tuesdays 9:00am-12:00pm  
Walk-in Clinic (Free and Confidential)  
STD – Counseling Testing and Treatment available  
HIV – Counseling & Testing available

#### **Chambers Manor Family Practice**

317 Chambers Street  
Trenton, NJ 08611  
609.392.2635

#### **Henry J. Austin Health Center**

112 Ewing Street  
Trenton, NJ 08609  
609.396.9600

#### **Henry J. Austin Health Center**

321 N Warren St  
Trenton, NJ 08608  
609.989.3599

#### **Hyacinth AIDS Foundation**

4 North Broad Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Trenton, NJ 08608  
609.396.8322  
Hotline: 800-433-0254  
Email: [info@hyacinth.org](mailto:info@hyacinth.org)  
Case management, support groups, buddy services and treatment advocacy

#### **Mercer County HIV Consortium/Resource Center**

1080 Hamilton Ave.  
Trenton, NJ 08629  
Contact: Joe Sirak, Coordinator  
Telephone: 609-278-9555  
Fax: 609-278-0553

**NJ AIDS/STD Hotline**

1-800-624-2377 – 24 hours/day

1.800.433.0254

Live Text: Send a test message to [8006242377@njpies.org](mailto:8006242377@njpies.org)

Live Chat: visit the webpage [www.njhivstdline.org](http://www.njhivstdline.org)

The hotlines provide referrals, general information, counseling, testing locations and treatment information.

**Rapid Testing Centers**

Capital Health-Regional Campus, Emergency Department  
(for Emergency Department patients only)

705 Brunswick Ave.

Trenton, NJ 08618

609-278-5946

City of Trenton STD Clinic

218 North Broad St.

Trenton, NJ 08608

609-989-3242 ext. 4

Henry J. Austin Health Center

321 North Warren Street

Trenton, NJ 08618

609-278-5946

New Horizon Treatment Center

4 132 Perry Street

Trenton, NJ 08618

609-394-8988

Planned Parenthood of Mercer-Trenton

437 East State Street

Trenton, NJ 08608

609-964-7952

St. Francis Medical Center-Emergency Department

(for Emergency Department patients only)

601 Hamilton Ave.

Trenton, NJ 08629

609-599-5263

St. Francis Medical Center-Infectious Disease Center (EIP Site)

601 Hamilton, Ave.

Trenton, NJ 08629

609-599-5560

## **D. Services for People With Tuberculosis and Hepatitis C**

In addition to the general medical care facilities listed above, there are a few services especially for people with tuberculosis and hepatitis C.

Rutgers Global TB Institute  
NJ Medical School  
Clinical Services  
225 Warren St.  
Newark, NJ 07103  
973-672-6232

Tuberculosis Program  
50 East Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
P.O. Box 363  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0363  
609-826-4878

Princeton Regional Health Department  
1 Monument Drive  
P.O. Box 390  
Princeton, NJ 08542  
(609)-497-7608

## **E. Dental Care**



The locations listed below don't provide free care, but do have a sliding scale for those without insurance. Waiting lists can be long.

**NJ Family Care** is available to certain low income parents. In addition to health benefits dental and eyeglasses are offered. For children this service is free. In order to check for eligibility, please call 1-800-701-0710

### **Henry J. Austin Health Center**

321 North Warren Street and 112 Ewing Street  
Trenton, NJ 08608  
609-278-5943 and 609-396-9600  
Hours: Mon-Fri 7:30am-4:30pm  
Clinics, Dental Care, Medicaid, Medical Care, Women's  
healthcare

## **F. Mental Health and Substance Abuse Resources**

**FYI:** Drug addiction can be fatal to your health, not to mention illegal and can result in jail time. In order to be successful in society seeking services for a drug or alcohol addiction will be



necessary. Many of the health clinics, support centers and other resources listed in this guide can help refer you to treatment that most fit your needs. Listed below are some of Mercer County's treatment resources and each of these will also help with referrals if they can not help you. If you want treatment, you should also ask your parole officer for help — beds in treatment facilities are hard to come by, and they can help get you in. There are Narcotics Anonymous (NA) and Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) support group meetings all over Mercer County. To find a meeting near you, call 866-920-1212 (for AA) or 800-992-0401 (for NA). For other self-help group resources, call the New Jersey Self Help Clearinghouse at 800-367-6274. Also, you can call the Addictions Hotline of NJ at 800-238-2333.

**FYI:** Each county has a mental health administrator. When you call this person they will provide you with the names and phone numbers closest to your area to provide services that fit your needs.

**The Mental Health Administrator for Mercer County is:**

Michele Madiou, Administrator  
Mercer County Division of Mental Health  
640 South Broad Street - PO Box 8068  
Trenton, NJ 08650  
(609) 989-6529  
Email: mmadiou@verizon.net

Ann Dorocki, Chief  
Addictions Services  
Dept. of Human Services  
640 South Broad St.  
PO Box 8068  
Trenton, NJ 08650-0068  
609-989-6826  
Email: adorocki@mercercounty.org

**Detoxification Centers in NJ**

**Aldie Counseling Center**  
2291 Cabot Boulevard West  
Langhorne, PA 19047  
215-642-3230

**Behavioral Crossroads Recovery, LLC**  
509 South Blackhorse Pike (Rt 168)  
Turnersville, NJ 08012  
609-964-4061 ext. 2

**Burlington Comp Counseling Inc.**

75 Washington Street  
Mount Holly, NJ 08060  
609-267-3610

**Carrier Clinic**  
252 County Route 601  
Belle Mead, NJ 08502  
908-281-1000

**Hunterdon Med Center/Addictions Treatment Services**  
2100 Wescott Drive  
Flemington, NJ 08822  
908-788-6401

**Jersey City Medical Center**  
355 Grand Street  
Jersey City, NJ 07302  
201-915-2281

**Kaleidoscope Health Care, INC**  
75 Harrison Avenue  
Jersey City, NJ 07304  
201-451-5425

**Livengrin Foundation Inc.**  
4833 Hulmeville Road  
Bensalem, PA 19020  
215-638-5200

**New Horizon Treatment Services Inc.**  
132 Perry Street  
Trenton, NJ 08618  
609-394-8988

**New Pathway Counseling Services**  
995 Broadway  
Bayone, NJ 07002  
201-436-1022

**Princeton House Behavioral Health**  
905 Herrontown Road  
Princeton, NJ 08540  
609-497-3300

**Somerset Treatment Services**  
118 West End Avenue  
Somerville, NJ 08876  
908-722-1232

**Spectrum Health Care, INC**  
74-80 Pacific Avenue  
Jersey City, NJ 07304  
201-860-6100

**Summit Behavior Health**  
4065 Quakerbridge Road  
Princeton Junction, NJ 08550  
609-651-4001

**Today Inc.**  
1990 North Woodbourne Road  
Newtown, PA 18940  
215-968-4713

**Turning Point, INC.**  
595 County Avenue  
Secaucus, NJ 07096  
973-239-9400

**Outpatient and Residential Treatment**

**Association for Advancement of Mental Health**  
819 Alexander Road  
Princeton, NJ 08540  
www.AAMH.org  
Phone: (609) 452-2088  
Offers mental health outpatient services, case management, and supportive housing.

**Catholic Charities-Diocese of Trenton**  
39 North Clinton Avenue  
Trenton, NJ 08609  
Phone: (609)396-4557  
Provides outpatient services for adults experiencing mental illness, including substance abuse issues.

**Catholic Charities-Diocese of Trenton**  
10 Southard St.  
Trenton, NJ 08609  
Phone: (609)396-4557  
Provides partial care for individuals living with mental illness and/or substance abuse issues.

**Corner House**  
Monument Hall  
1 Monument Drive  
Princeton, NJ 08542  
609-924-8018

Hours: Mon-Thur 9:00am-9:00pm; and Fri 9:00am-5:00pm

Provides outpatient services to adolescents, young adults and their families dealing with mental illness and addiction.

**Family Guidance Center Corporation**

1931 Nottingham Way (Administrative Office)

Hamilton, NJ 08619

[www.fgccorp.org](http://www.fgccorp.org)

Phone: (609) 586-0668

Access Center: 609-587-6641

Offers behavioral health and substance abuse outpatient services, referrals, and community education.

**New Horizon Treatment Services**

132 Perry Street

Trenton, NJ 08618

Phone: (609)394-8988

Website: [www.nhts.net](http://www.nhts.net)

Offers outpatient services to individuals living with mental illness and/or substance abuse issues.

**On My Own Supportive Housing**

41 Steinert Ave.

Hamilton, NJ 08610

609-396-4557

Assists Mercer County adults who have serious mental illness to achieve and maintain independent living settings of their choice.

**Princeton House Behavioral Health-Inpatient**

905 Herrontown Rd

Princeton, NJ 08540

Phone: (609)497-3300

Website: [www.princetonhcs.org](http://www.princetonhcs.org)

Offers inpatient mental health and addictions services

**Princeton House Behavioral Health-Adult  
Outpatient Services**

741 Mount Lucas Rd

Princeton, NJ 08540

Phone: (609) 613-4820 or (888) 437-1610

Website: [www.princetonhcs.org](http://www.princetonhcs.org)

Offers partial hospitalization and intensive outpatient programs for adults with mental illnesses and/or addictions issues.

**Princeton House Behavioral Health-Women's  
Outpatient Services**

1000 Herrontown Road  
Princeton, NJ 08540  
Phone: (609) 613-4321 or (888) 437-1610  
Website: [www.princetonhcs.org](http://www.princetonhcs.org)

Offers partial hospitalization and intensive outpatient programs to women with mental illness and/or addiction issues.

**Princeton House Behavioral Health-Hamilton**

300 Clocktower Drive, Suite 101  
Hamilton, NJ 08690  
Phone: (609) 688-2788 or (888) 437-1610  
Website: [www.princetonhcs.org](http://www.princetonhcs.org)

Offers partial hospitalization and intensive outpatient programs for individuals living with a mental illness and/or addiction issues.

**Program of Assertive Community Treatment  
(PACT)**

47 N. Clinton Ave.  
Trenton, NJ 08609  
609-396-4557

Community-based intensive mental health and recovery service for seriously and chronically disabled adults experiencing a mental illness.

**Rescue Mission Of Trenton**

98 Carroll Street  
P.O. Box 790  
Trenton, NJ 08605-0790  
Phone: (609) 695-1436  
Website: [www.rescuemissionoftrenton.org](http://www.rescuemissionoftrenton.org)

Offers residential, intensive outpatient and outpatient addictions services

**Signs Of Sobriety (SOS)**

100 Scotch Road 2nd Fl.  
Ewing, NJ 08628  
Phone: (609)882-7677  
(609) 882-7117 (TTY)  
Website: [www.sosnj.org](http://www.sosnj.org)

Provides communication access and information/referral for recovery services and self-help groups.

**Summit Behavioral Health-Princeton Junction**

4065 Quakerbridge Road

Princeton, NJ 08550

1-888-465-4187

Website: [www.summitbehavioralhealth.com](http://www.summitbehavioralhealth.com)

Offers intensive outpatient and outpatient addictions services.

**FYI:** While the medical care and drug treatment and/or detoxification facilities listed above may be able to assist you with medication for mental health issues, and some counseling as well, there are also places to go to get counseling and therapy and other mental health services. Some of these services require Medicaid or other insurance, but some will also have sliding scale payments.

**Although the services below provide mental health services, some may also offer substance abuse services as well.**

**G. Emergency Mental Health Services**

**FYI: If at any time you may want to hurt yourself or someone else, please call 911. If you feel like you may be a danger to your self or others. It is very important that you call someone for help. Here are a few numbers of places that would be more than willing to come to your aid.**

In the event of a mental health emergency, call **609-396-HELP (4357)**

**\*If you are in immediate danger, call 911**

**Primary Screening Center for Mercer County:**

**Capital Health Regional Medical Center**

750 Brunswick Avenue

Trenton, NJ 08638

**Phone:** (609) 989-7297 or (609) 396-4357

**H. Free/Low Cost Eyeglasses and Eye care** 

**Campus Eye Group –**

**Henry J Austin Health Center**

321 N Warren Street

Trenton, NJ 08608

609-989-3599

Monday – Friday, 8:00am-4:00pm

**National Federation of the Blind of New Jersey**  
69 Prospect Place  
Belleville, NJ 07109  
973-450-3030

**New Eyes for the Needy**

549 Millburn Avenue  
PO Box 332  
Short Hills, NJ 07078  
973-376-4903

Hours: Mon-Thurs 9:00am-12:30pm; 1:30pm-4:00pm

Friday (closed during July/August) 9:00am-12:00pm

Eligibility: Must be in financial need; have had a recent eye exam. (New Eyes does not pay for eye exams but does provide referrals); have no other resources available to pay for glasses, including federal or state programs or assistance from local charitable organizations; income at or below the U.S. poverty guidelines

A New Eyes voucher typically covers only the cost of a basic pair of single or bifocal eyeglasses.

**Finding a Job:**



**Employment Assistance and Training Programs**

Getting a job is usually one of the most important necessities when released from prison. Not everyone can obtain employment immediately, sometimes things like getting drug treatment, dealing with your housing, health or family situation may come first. For most people, though, finding work is the first step to getting back on your feet. It will be very challenging to get a job once you have been in prison, but it is not impossible, and you need to be persistent and patient. Below are some pointers on job searching, and information about resources that can help you find a job or get training for the job you want.

**A. Things to Know Before You Start Your Job Search**

**Be Prepared:** It is essential that you are organized, and have all records of previous employment available when beginning a job search. A resume is the smartest thing you can create. If you are unsure of how to do so, you may go to your local one-stop career center and seek assistance. Not only will employers want to know your work history, they will inquire of accurate dates that you were employed with the company. Knowing this information is vital to ensuring employment. Employers will not

be interested in hearing that you do not remember dates or addresses for your work history. If an employer decides to hire you, he will also need your identification, so make sure that is readily available.

**Presentation:** Look as neat, clean and organized as possible, no matter what the job is. Be polite and respectful, even when people are not polite and respectful to you, and many won't be. Making the person you want to help you or hire you mad won't get you the job you want.

**Talking About Your Criminal Record:**

Never omit or falsify a document that asks you specifically if you have a criminal record. The application may ask you to give details to the nature of your crime or it may not. Chances are a criminal background check will be administered prior to employment, and lying will cost you the job.

**IT'S A JOB FOR RIGHT NOW,  
IT'S NOT THE REST OF YOUR LIFE**

When you are first starting out, especially if you've been out of the job market for a while, or have never had a job, you need to build a work history, and, of course, you need to make some money. Take whatever job you can get for now — it doesn't have to be the exact job you want, or what you eventually want to be doing. Do this job well—even if it's not a great job—and it can help you get a better one in the future. A year of good job performance will make your criminal record matter less.

**B. Help with Job Search and Job Training:  
Resources**

**The following are good places to start in looking for a job.**

**Mercer County One Stop Career Center**

26 Yard Avenue  
Trenton, NJ 08650  
Phone: 609-989-6523  
Toll Free : 877-989-AJOB  
Hours : M, W, Th, F 8 :30am-5 :00pm  
Tuesdays 8 :30am-8 :30pm

**For Vocational Rehabilitation Services:**

ARC of Mercer County  
180 Ewingville Rd.  
Ewing, NJ 08638  
609-393-3599



Supported employment, extended employment, pre-vocational evaluation and work adjustment training

Christopher House  
10 Southard Street  
Trenton, NJ 08609  
609-396-4557  
Supported employment

Allies, Inc.  
2277 State Highway 33, Suite 415  
Hamilton, NJ 08690  
609-584-5522  
[www.alliesnj.org](http://www.alliesnj.org)  
Supported employment

Opportunities for All  
P.O. Box 8617  
Princeton, NJ 08542  
609-452-9753  
Supported employment

CPNJ  
354 South Broad St.  
Trenton, NJ 08608  
609-392-4004  
Supported employment

Community Enterprises, Inc.  
707 Alexander Road. Building 2, Suite 208  
Princeton, NJ 08540  
609-951-9900  
Supported employment

### **C. Legal Restrictions on Employment and Protections Against Discrimination**

If you are interested in getting a job and building a career in a particular area, you should make sure that it isn't one that is forbidden to someone with the kind of criminal conviction that you have on your record. There are about 22 categories of jobs in New Jersey that exclude people with convictions (which conviction it varies by job). These include: aircraft/airport employees; paid public school employees, school bus drivers and school crossing guards; bank employees; bartenders and waiters in establishments where liquor is served; housing authority and municipal police and parking enforcement officers; New Jersey Turnpike Authority employees; liquor retail,

wholesale, manufacturing or distributing employees; paid firefighters; child care center employees; community residences for individuals with developmental disabilities. A much larger number of jobs require that you disclose your criminal record, and those employers perform background checks; some of these, however, also require that employers consider evidence of rehabilitation. These include most jobs in the health care and counseling fields (including drug and alcohol counseling) and social workers.

**FYI:** If you are going to begin training in a particular field, make sure you find out from the training course whether there are any restrictions that will keep you from getting a job.

**Protections for Licensed Occupations:**

If you are not absolutely barred from a position because of your conviction, New Jersey law says that you cannot be denied a professional license simply because of your conviction unless the crime for which you were convicted relates to the occupation you want to enter. If the licensing board or agency wants to deny you a license because the crime is related to the occupation, they have to explain, in writing, that they have considered certain factors like the seriousness of the crime, the circumstances of the crime, the date and your age when convicted, whether the crime was an isolated or repeated event, social conditions, and evidence of rehabilitation. You can ask your parole officer about applying for a “certificate of rehabilitation,” which can be used in your license application.

**D. Benefits for Employers Who Hire People With Criminal Records**

As you look for a job you can tell employers that the federal government has programs to support employers who hire people coming out of prison.

**FYI:** Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC): With the Work Opportunity Tax Credit, your employer may be able to save up to \$4800 the first year you are hired. Make sure to inform your potential employer of this benefit.

**For questions regarding WOTC, please call 609-292-5525 or 1-800-792-8881**

**Federal Bonding Program:** Provides bonding “or insurance coverage” for employers who hire individuals with criminal histories who are otherwise qualified but cannot gain employment due to their criminal backgrounds. Please contact your local one stop for more information:

## **Mercer County One Stop Career Center**

26 Yard Avenue

Trenton, NJ 08650

Phone: 609-989-6523

Toll Free : 877-989-AJOB

Hours : M, W, Th, F 8 :30am-5 :00pm

Tuesdays 8 :30am-8 :30pm

### **E. Opening a Checking or Savings Account**



After you've gotten a source of income, you may want to open a checking or savings account. A checking account is a great idea because many jobs provide direct deposit, and your check is automatically deposited into your account on payday. Using checks to pay for your bills is also cheaper than using money orders. To open a checking account you usually need a picture I.D. (driver's license or non-driver state I.D.), proof of address, birth certificate, and a Social Security card. You can also request a debit card with your account, which you can use just like a credit card (as long as you have the money in your account already). You can get a debit card for either a checking account or a savings account, but with a savings account you can earn interest on the money you've saved. Fees for these accounts will vary depending on the type of account and bank. Many banks now offer free checking.



### **F. Public Libraries**

Your local public library can be a good resource for your job search. Public computers provide internet access (and help using the computer), job and course listings, and other local directories. Libraries also often carry the government forms mentioned in this guide, and librarians can help you find other information that you need.

Hickory Corner Branch Library

138 Hickory Corner Road

East Windsor, NJ 08520

Phone: (609) 448-1330

Hightstown Memorial Branch

114 Franklin Street

Hightstown, NJ 08520

Phone: (609) 448-1474

Mercer County Library-Twin Rivers Branch  
276a Abbington Dr.  
Hightstown, NJ 08520  
609-443-1880

Hopewell Public Library  
13 East Broad St.  
Hopewell, NJ 08525  
609-466-1625

Pennington Free Public Library  
30 North Main Street  
Pennington, NJ 08534  
609-737-2610

Princeton Library  
65 Witherspoon St.  
Princeton, NJ 08542  
609-924-8822

Woodrow Wilson School Public Library  
Prospect Ave  
Princeton, NJ 08544  
609-452-3000

Social of Art Libraries  
28 Berrien Ave.  
Princeton Junction, NJ 08550  
609-799-8793

Library Development Solution  
64 Princeton Hightstown Rd.  
Princeton Junction, NJ 08550  
609-275-4821

West Windsor Branch Library  
333 N. Post Rd.  
Princeton, Junction, NJ 08550  
609-799-0462

Trenton Public Library-Briggs Branch  
1115 Greenwood Ave.  
Trenton, NJ 08609  
609-392-7856

Trenton Public Library-Cadwalder Branch  
200 N. Hermitage Ave.  
Trenton, NJ 08618  
609-392-1828

City of Trenton Free Public Library  
120 Academy St.  
Trenton, NJ 08068  
609-392-7188

East Trenton Public Library  
701 N. Clinton Ave.  
Trenton, NJ 08638  
609-392-7866

Mercer County Library System-Ewing Branch  
61 Scotch Rd.  
Trenton, NJ 08628  
609-882-3130

Hamilton Twp. Public Library  
1 Municipal Dr.  
Hamilton, NJ 08619  
609-581-4060

Hollowbrook Branch Library  
320 Hollowbrook Rd.  
Trenton, NJ 08638  
609-883-5914

Mercer County Library System-Lawrence Branch  
2751 Brunswick Ave.  
Trenton, NJ 08648  
609-882-9246

Trenton Public Library-Skelton Branch  
943 S. Broad St.  
Trenton, NJ 08611  
609-392-7876

Washington Twp. Branch Library  
42 Allentown Robbinsville  
Trenton, NJ 08691  
609-259-2150



## **Reconnecting with Family**

As you prepare to come home, you may be thinking about reuniting with family members, including those you may not have seen for a long time. You may be excited to see your kids, your spouse, your parents, and others who are part of your family, and while most will be glad to see you home, others may be reluctant. All kinds of issues can come up, and you may need some help solving some of the problems that arise. This section

provides some information and resources to help solve these issues.

**Hotlines For Family Services Resources**

**NJ Child Abuse/ Neglect Hotline:**  
1(877)NJABUSE (652-2873)

**Child Care Hotline:**  
1(800) 332-9227

**NJ Child Support Hotline:**  
1 (877) NJKIDS- 1 (655-4371)

**Division of Family Development:**  
1(800) 792-9773

**NJ Division of Youth and Family Services:**  
1 (800) 331-DYFS (3937)

**Family Health Line:**  
1 (800) 328-3838

**Family Help Line (for stressed parents):**  
1 (800) THE KIDS (843-2537)

**National Domestic Violence Hotline:**  
1(800) 799-7233

**NJ Domestic Violence Hotline:**  
1(800) 572-7223

**Parents Anonymous:**  
1(800) 843-5437

**A. Family Counseling Resources**

The following places can provide support, marital and family counseling and parenting classes to help you reunite with your family.

**Family Guidance Center**  
946 Edgewood Avenue  
Trenton, NJ 08609  
609-393-1626  
Family preservation services

**Mercer Street Friends Center**  
151 Mercer Street (Administrative Office)  
Trenton , NJ 08611  
609-396-1506 (general inquiries)  
Parenting Programs: 609-278-6900

222 North Hermitage Ave.  
Trenton, NJ 08618  
Parenting programs, family reunification, family support, etc.

**Trenton North Ward Family Success Center**

1554 Princeton Ave.  
Trenton, NJ 08638  
609-393-2980  
Offers family support, information and services. All services are free and confidential.

**Trenton South Ward Family Success Center**

635 South Clinton Ave.  
Trenton, NJ 08611  
609-695-6274  
Offers family support, information and services. All services are free and confidential.

**Trinity Counseling Service**

22 Stockton Street  
Princeton , NJ 08540  
609-924-0060  
Individual counseling, family counseling, family preservation, couples counseling, etc.

**Parents Anonymous of New Jersey, Inc.**

1-800-843-5437 (24 hour hotline) Hours: Call to confirm group times at different locations Self-help for parents who are under stress and who want to improve their relationship with their children. Groups meet weekly and are facilitated by a volunteer professional; many groups provide child care. Groups meet in most counties throughout the state with some bilingual groups available. Parents Anonymous also offers an on-line support group as well.



**B. Child Custody and Visitation**

Establishing visitation and gaining custody of your children once you are released is not an overnight procedure. If you had custody of your kids at the time you were incarcerated, and no family was able to take care of them, they may have been placed in foster care. If this is the case, and you do not know your child's case manager's name or number, contact the Division of Child Protection and Permanency (formerly DYFS) at 800-531-1091. You will have to make an appointment with the case manager for an interview. They may not be willing to give you information over the phone. You'll be asked a series of questions in order to assess when and if you will be given visitation rights, so that you may reestablish your relationship with the child and

hopefully gain custody again. This is just a quick overview of what to do and what you can expect.

***FYI: If you were convicted of any violent or sexual offenses against children, you may be unable to live with or regain custody of your children.***

**Listed below are the different offices for DCPD in your area. Please contact the office that applies to your location.**

**Mercer North LO- #673**

3131 Princeton Pike  
Building 6, Suite 202  
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648

**609-530-7200**

**800-392-2735**

Fax: 609-530-0203

**Mercer South LO - #669**

120 S. Stockton St., 2nd Fl  
P.O. Box 717  
Trenton, NJ 08625

**609-292-5100**

**800-392-2721**

Fax: 609-633-9602

### **C. Getting and Paying Child Support**

Whether you have custody of your children on your own when you get out, and need help from an absent “non-custodial” parent, or you do not have custody of kids who need your support, child support payments will be an important part of your life after you are released. Some basic information is included below, as far as enforcing a child support order.

Child support, custody and visitation issues are very complicated, and if you can get **a lawyer, you should**. Contact the Legal Services of New Jersey hotline, from 9:00 am - 4:30 pm, at 888-576-5529, or the Union County Bar Association Lawyer Referral Service at 908-353-4715. You can also contact Central Jersey Legal Services at 60 Prince Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07208 at 908-354-4340. From prison, you can also contact the Prisoner’s Self-Help Legal Clinic, PO Box 768, Newark, NJ 07101.

#### **Getting And Enforcing A Child Support Order**

If you have custody of your children, and want financial support from the non-custodial parent, you can apply for child support at the Union County Family Court Building, 2 Broad Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Annex, Elizabeth, NJ 07207, 908-659-4600. There is a possible fee. You can also call 1-877-NJKIDS1 for more information about this.

#### **Paying Child Support**

If you have kids that you did not have custody of before you went to prison, there may be a child support order requiring you to pay a certain amount every month for their support. Even if you did not go to court, for example, the parent with custody



filed for the order while you were incarcerated, the court can still order you to pay child support. The amount you pay in child support is tied to your income, and if the court does not know your income, they will assume you are working 40 hours a week at minimum wage. Child support payments are usually taken out of your paycheck. If you have not paid at all or missed payments, you will owe "arrear." Unless you got a modification of your child support order when you went into prison (see below), the amount of arrears that you owe will have continued to grow while you were inside. When you come out, and get a job, they can begin to take out not just the monthly amount you owe for child support, but more money to pay back the arrears (up to 65% of your pay in total). They may also suspend your driver's license. Here are some things you can do:

**To locate a parent prior to an order, contact:**

Mercer County Board of Social Services  
200 Woolverton Street  
P.O. Box 01450  
Trenton, NJ 08650  
1-877-655-4371

**To enforce an existing order, contact:**

Mercer County Child Support  
175 South Broad Street  
P.O. Box 8068  
Trenton, NJ 08650  
1-877-655-4371  
Hours: M-F 8:30am-4:30pm

**To establish or change an order, contact:**

Mercer County Family Court Bldg  
175 South Broad Street  
P.O. Box 8068  
Trenton, NJ 08650  
1-877-655-4371

**D. Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Resources**

The following places provide counseling, support and shelter or referrals to shelter in domestic violence situations. You can also call these 24-hour hotlines:

**New Jersey Coalition for Battered Women:  
(800)-572-SAFE.**

**Domestic Abuse Hotline for Men and Women:  
(888) 7HELPLINE (1-888-743-5754)**

**WOMANSPACE, INC.**

1530 Brunswick Ave.  
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648  
609-394-0136  
Email: info@womanspace.org  
Emergency Shelter  
**24-Hr. Hotline: (609) 394-9000**

## Getting More Education

Although getting more education may not be part of your short term plans, it certainly should be something to think about for the future, especially if you do not have a high school diploma or a GED.



### **A. High School Diploma/GED Certificate/High School Equivalency Degree (HSED)/Vocational School Certificates**

It is very important to keep records of any degrees and certificates of completion and work-related licenses that have earned. Before you are released, you can write to the school or agency where you earned your degree or certificate to obtain a copy. Once you have a copy in your possession, this should be kept in your strong box.

**FYI:** If you earned your GED while incarcerated, please call the Education Department of the institution you were in to obtain a copy.

You can also request your GED transcript or diploma verification from the New Jersey Department of Education providing you completed your diploma in a traditional setting. You will have to fill out a GED Information Request Form.

Please call 609-777-1050 for further assistance.

You may ask that it be sent to you; or you may pick up the form at a local testing center (which you can do after you are released); by downloading the form from the website <http://www.state.nj.us/njded/students/ged/ged7.htm>; or by writing to: GED Testing Program, Bureau of Adult Education and Family Literacy, New Jersey Department of Education, PO Box 500, Trenton, NJ 08625.

Your chances of getting a job that pays a living wage and of moving forward in a career will improve with more education, and not having the high school diploma or GED will simply lock you out from a lot of opportunities.



## **B. GED Classes**

The places in Mercer County below offer classes to help you prepare for the GED exam. Call for exact times and procedures. Many locations offer classes at low cost or no cost. For more information, contact the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Workforce Readiness & Literacy at (609) 943-5921. Call individual programs for information on classes offered, fees and/or time schedules.

### **GED Testing Centers**

Mercer County Community College  
102 North Academy Street  
Trenton, NJ 08608-1702  
(609) 570-3185  
Spanish Language Testing Offered

Hamilton Township Adult School  
90 Park Avenue  
Hamilton, NJ 08690  
(609) 631-4100 x3025



## **C. Higher Education**

If you already have a high school diploma or a GED certificate, you may want to move forward and get your associate's degree, bachelor's degree or graduate degree.

### **Local Area Colleges**

Thomas Edison State College  
101 West State Street  
Trenton, NJ 08608  
(888) 442-8372

The College of New Jersey (TCNJ)  
2000 Pennington Rd.  
Ewing, NJ 08628  
(609) 771-2131

Rider University  
2083 Lawrenceville Road  
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648  
(609) 896-5000

Princeton University  
Princeton, NJ 08544  
(609) 258-3000

Mercer County Community College  
1200 Old Trenton Rd  
West Windsor, NJ 08550  
(609) 586-4800

Westminster Choir College Of Rider University  
101 Walnut Lane  
Princeton, NJ 08540  
(609) 921-7100

Princeton Graduate College  
Clio Hall, Princeton, NJ 08544  
(609) 258-3030

Strayer University  
3150 Brunswick Pike #100  
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648  
(609) 406-7600

### **Can I Get Financial Aid?**

To pay for this, you will probably try to get some financial aid. If you are applying for any federal financial aid programs after release (such as Pell Grants, Perkins Loans, Federal Family Education Loans, etc.), you are not restricted unless you have a drug-related offense. For possession offenses, a first offense means one year of ineligibility (after your conviction), a second offense, two years, and third offense means you are “indefinitely” ineligible, which to the government means permanently ineligible. For a sales or distribution crime, a first offense has two years of ineligibility, a second offense makes it permanent. Private financial aid or loan programs may not have any restrictions.

## **Other Things You Need to Know**

### **A. Getting Legal Assistance**

To get assistance with civil (not criminal) cases, you can contact the toll free hotline for **Legal Services of New Jersey (LSNJ)**, which provides information and referrals, **888-576-5529**. For local Mercer County legal services please contact the office located nearest to you:

Central Jersey Legal Services  
198 West State Street  
Trenton, NJ 08608  
County: Mercer County  
Phone: (609) 695-6249  
Fax: (609)392-7952  
Website: [www.lsnj.org/cjls](http://www.lsnj.org/cjls)

## **B. Checking and Correcting Your Criminal Record (“rap sheet”)**

Since employers, landlords and others will be performing criminal background checks and getting copies of your criminal record, it is important that you know what is on it, and that it is accurate. You should also be prepared to answer any questions about your background.

**FYI:** Background checks are now only done electronically. You may contact State Police Headquarters to inquire how to correct your criminal record at the following address.

State Section of Identification  
Records and Identification Bureau  
New Jersey State Police  
P.O. Box 7068  
West Trenton, NJ 08628  
1-609-882-2000 ext 6425  
1-609-530-4856 fax

## **C. Expungement: Cleaning Up Your Criminal Record**

You may have heard about expungement as one way to clean up your criminal record as you get some distance from your old arrests and convictions. Unfortunately, expungement is fairly limited in New Jersey. You can expunge any arrest that did not lead to a conviction at any point. You can expunge “disorderly persons offenses,” which are low level offenses in New Jersey, after 5 years, and most municipal ordinance offenses after 2 years. Convictions for “indictable offenses” (felonies), can be expunged 10 years from the date of conviction, payment of any fine, satisfactory completion of probation or parole or release from incarceration, but whichever is latest. The most serious of these offenses, such as murder, kidnapping, aggravated sexual assault, robbery, arson, perjury and distribution, sale or possession with intent to distribute of controlled dangerous substances (drugs), can never be expunged. Expungement is a broader remedy for offenses committed as a juvenile. Legal Services of New Jersey has published a guide to cleaning up your record through expungement.

To obtain a copy of the book, call 888-576-5529, or go to the LSNJ web site, where you can download it for free: <http://www.lsnj.org/english/crime/municipalcourt/clearingyourrecord.cfm>.

## **D. Checking and Correcting Your Credit Record**



While New Jersey allows employers to look at your criminal record, many employers — and others like landlords and mortgage companies — will use a credit report instead of or in addition to the state's records. Credit records are maintained by private companies and generally have information about your debts, your history of paying bills and other financial matters, but may also have information about your criminal record. The information may not be correct, and the law does offer you some protections. For example, if an employer uses a credit record to deny you a job, they have to tell you this, and give you the name, address and phone number of the agency that provided the report, and the agency must give you a copy of that information on your request. They cannot charge you money for that request if the employer used the report to deny you a job. If the records of the credit agency contain incorrect information, they must investigate and correct inaccurate information.

You can get ahead of the curve by getting a copy of your credit record and making sure there isn't any incorrect information on it. New Jersey residents are allowed one free credit report each year. Three companies that provide this service are:

**Equifax Information Systems, LLC.:**  
P.O. Box 740241, Atlanta, GA 30374  
800-685-1111.

**Transunion Personal Credit Report:**  
PO Box 1000, Chester PA 19022  
800-888-4213.

**Experian:**  
PO Box 2002, Allen, TX 75013  
800-397-3742.

**FYI:** By mail, be sure to include your full name, current address, Social Security number, and most recent former address for file-matching purposes.

## **E. Voting Rights**

New Jersey law does not allow you to vote while you are in prison, or while you are on probation or parole for an indictable offense (disorderly person's offenses don't disqualify you).

**Once you have completed your parole or probation term, you may register to vote.** Make sure that you are registered in the county in which you reside. **Applications for registration can be obtained from Social Services prior to release.** Also you may apply with the Division of Elections, the

Commissioners of Registration office in the County where you live or from your Municipal Clerk once you are released. Registration forms are also available in various State agencies and at Division of Motor Vehicle offices and can be obtained while transacting agency business. If you are not sure, you can visit [http://www.state.nj.us/lps/elections/vote\\_doe.html](http://www.state.nj.us/lps/elections/vote_doe.html). You will be able to download a voter's registration form and mail it in. This site also explains who can register to vote and where you can register.

## **F. Registration of Sexual Offenders (Megan's Law)**

Sex offenders are required to register with the police under Megan's Law. Offenses include: aggravated sexual assault; sexual assault; aggravated criminal sexual contact; endangering the welfare of a child by engaging in sexual conduct which would impair or debauch the morals of the child; luring or enticing and, if the victim were a minor and the offender not a parent, kidnapping; criminal restraint and false imprisonment and promoting prostitution of a child under 18. **You will be registered prior to release, but must re-register your home address at least 10 days prior to any move with the law enforcement agency with which you were registered when released.** You will also need to verify your address annually or every 90 days if you are a repetitive and compulsive offender.

## The Game Plan

Your first weeks out after leaving prison can be overwhelming. This section is set up to help you get organized and keep yourself on track toward your goals. First, think about what those goals are? What do you want or need to get done in your first week out? In your first month out? Where do you want to be in six months? There are lots of things that other people need you to do — your parole officer, for example, and your family — but you also need to think about what you expect from yourself.

Here are some pages to use to plan your first days out of prison. There are some questions to ask yourself about what you plan to do. It's best to write things down and plan ahead. **\*\*\*You should also refer to your discharge plan created by your social worker that outlines your needs.** Have a wonderful and successful reentry!

### DO I Have my Basic Needs?

**Shelter:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Food:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Health Care:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Clothing:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Transportation:** \_\_\_\_\_

### DO I Have Support?

**Family:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Friends:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Do I Have Identification?

#### **I.D. Checklist**

<b>Documents</b>	<b>Have?</b>	<b>Need?</b>
Strong Box	_____	_____
Social Security Card	_____	_____
Birth Certificate	_____	_____
County I.D.	_____	_____
Driver's License	_____	_____
Non-driver's I.D.	_____	_____
Certificate of Naturalization	_____	_____
Green Card	_____	_____
Military Discharge Papers	_____	_____
Passport	_____	_____
High School Diploma Or GED Certificate	_____	_____
Prison Release Papers	_____	_____



**Other things I need to do (job leads, appointments, prescriptions, go to a support group, etc.):**

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Important Names and Phone Numbers  
(Parole, Mentor, Emergency Contact, etc)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

# Smart Book Topics



**Getting Started:  
I.D. and Other Documents**



**First Steps After Release:  
Where Do I Go to Find...**



**Taking Care of You:  
Getting Support**



**Taking Care of You:  
Health Care Resources**



**Finding a Job:  
Employment Assistance  
and Training Programs**



**Reconnecting With Family**



**Getting More Education**



**Other Things You Need to Know**



**The Game Plan**