

ACJC WORKGROUP ON BARRIERS TO REENTRY

**Staff Notes and Member Assignments**

from October 29 Meeting, 1:30 -3:30 pm @ Denali Commission

Commissioners Attending: Brenda Stanfill (tel.), Greg Razo, Fred Dyson, Jeff Jessee (tel.)  
Staff Attending: Mary Geddes (MG), Susie Dosik  
Also Participating: Ron Taylor, Carmen Gutierrez, Deb Periman, Chuck Kopp, Steve Williams

**The next workgroup meeting is: Tuesday, November 18, 8:00 – 10:00 AM**  
**Snowden Conference Center, 820 W. 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue,**  
**Anchorage, AK 99501**

INFORMATION:

Mary Geddes presented information concerning the local groups currently working on ‘prisoner re-entry’ issues. Generally speaking, those groups are seeking to better integrate, direct and expedite existing services. They are not working on statutory reform.

QUESTIONS:

- Strong interest was expressed in the mechanism of expungement and the range of ameliorative actions that can be taken after a person’s conviction. Have we criminalized too much conduct such that codes become barriers to employment? Minor Consuming Alcohol convictions have impeded security clearances for military.
- Concerned that the lack of a provisional driver’s license can undermine employability.
- Are there laws that unfairly link the privilege to drive with unrelated matters?
- Should Alaska consider a “ban the box” statute or other measures which may ease the difficulties in the employment and housing of persons with a criminal record?
- Should the criminality of fish and wildlife offense be revisited?
- How does Alaska criminal law impact the right to use firearms?
- How do criminal defendants learn about the consequences of a conviction?

INFORMATION/BACKGROUND

- Jeff Jessee of the Mental Health Trust spoke on the joint effort, currently underway, by various state agencies to reduce recidivism. The Legislature had charged DOC, the Mental Health Trust, the Department of Labor, the Department of Health and Human Services, and Alaska Housing Finance to work together to come up with a plan which is to be presented in February. Strategy must be evidence based (what has worked elsewhere), must explain how existing efforts can be better coordinated and evaluated for cost-effectiveness, and propose a timeframe for implementing the recommendations. Expectation is that the Recidivism Reduction Plan will inform the Commission’s work.
- Ron Taylor, the Deputy Commissioner of DOC, emphasized the ongoing efforts of DOC to get its institutional staff and its probation staff all on the same page as to the DOC mission to better

integrate ex-offenders back to the community. On November 14 and 15, DOC and others involved in reentry will jointly assess its efforts thus far. DOC is working to generate pipeline data , i.e. identify who is coming back to the community and what his or her needs will be.

- Carmen Gutierrez noted the work of the ABA in its Inventory of Collateral Consequences. This is a state-by-state specific compilation of laws identifying statutory barriers to reentry of offenders. The Alaska inventory was expedited at the request of state lawmakers. The Inventory is found at an interactive website: <http://www.abacollateralconsequences.org/> (on ACJC website)
- Chuck Kopp noted that, last year, an informal group (including Mary Geddes, Carmen Gutierrez, Chuck Kopp, Deb Periman) had considered two issues for state legislative reform: (1) the lifetime exclusion from food stamps of persons convicted of drug felonies from food stamps and (2) Courtview reform. Even though the issues seemed like relatively 'low-hanging fruit,' only the second issue moved through the legislature (approved as SB 108) and was vetoed by the governor.

## RESOLUTIONS

- The workgroup would like a forum on expungement, pro and con. Workgroup wants to understand the current law in Alaska along these lines, and in particular pertaining to a SIS (suspended imposition of sentence) and how it works.
- The workgroup would like to understand the impact of convictions on the use of firearms.
- The workgroup would like to have a general presentation on the types of responses made by states following the identification of consequences.

## HOMEWORK:

Commissioners to review the following materials collected by staff which concern the subjects under discussion.

- "The Hidden Impact of a Criminal Conviction: A Brief Overview of Collateral Consequences in Alaska" Deborah Periman (2007)  
<http://www.ajc.state.ak.us/acjc/collateral/periman07.pdf> (on ACJC website)
- Other States' Expungement Laws, Alaska Research Services Report February 2012  
<http://www.ajc.state.ak.us/acjc/collateral/expunge.pdf> (on ACJC website)\_
- Alaska Narrative [5 pages] , NACDL Restoration of Rights Project September 2013,  
[https://www.nacdl.org/uploadedFiles/files/resource\\_center/2012\\_restoration\\_project/state\\_narr\\_ak.pdf](https://www.nacdl.org/uploadedFiles/files/resource_center/2012_restoration_project/state_narr_ak.pdf)
- State Law Relief From Federal Firearms Disabilities [chart, including Alaska], Margaret Colgate Love, NACDL Restoration of Rights Project, August 2014  
[https://www.nacdl.org/uploadedFiles/files/resource\\_center/2012\\_restoration\\_project/State\\_Law\\_Relief\\_from\\_Federal\\_Firearms\\_A](https://www.nacdl.org/uploadedFiles/files/resource_center/2012_restoration_project/State_Law_Relief_from_Federal_Firearms_A)

- Judicial Expungement, Sealing and Set Aside [chart, including Alaska], Margaret Colgate Love, NACDL Restoration of Rights Project  
[http://www.nacdl.org/uploadedFiles/files/resource\\_center/2012\\_restoration\\_project/Judicial\\_Expungement\\_Sealing\\_and\\_Set-Aside.pdf](http://www.nacdl.org/uploadedFiles/files/resource_center/2012_restoration_project/Judicial_Expungement_Sealing_and_Set-Aside.pdf)
- “Collateral Consequences and Reentry in Alaska: An Update,” Deborah Periman, UAA Justice Forum (Fall 2013/Winter 2014)  
<http://justice.uaa.alaska.edu/forum/30/3-4fall2013winter2014/303-4.fall2013winter2014.pdf>  
(on ACJC website)