

# Planning & Implementation Guide

Second Chance Act

Comprehensive Statewide Juvenile Reentry System Reform  
Implementation Program

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## DESCRIPTION

This Planning & Implementation Guide is intended for recipients of the Second Chance Act Comprehensive Statewide Juvenile Reentry System Reform Implementation Program grants, administered by the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Grantees will complete this guide in partnership with the technical assistance provider from the National Reentry Resource Center over the course of their grants.

*The Council of State Governments Justice Center prepared this guide with support from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.*

## About the Implementation Guide

The National Reentry Resource Center (NRRC) has prepared this Implementation Guide to support you in implementing your comprehensive, system-wide reentry strategy to reduce recidivism and improve other outcomes for youth under system supervision. Completion of this guide will position your agency to meet the requirements of the implementation grant and effectuate high-quality and consistent policy and practice changes over time.

While the guide was developed as a tool for grantees, it also serves as an important tool for your NRRC technical assistance provider (“TA provider”) to understand the status and progress of your project, the types of challenges you are encountering, and the ways your TA provider might be helpful to you in making your project successful.

This is an exciting opportunity for your agency to use implementation funding to generate significant long-term, jurisdiction-wide policy and practice changes to improve reentry outcomes for youth. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention’s (OJJDP) vision is that the outcome of the work produced as a result of the JSR grant will serve as a model for other states and counties interested in implementing comprehensive juvenile reentry outcome improvement initiatives.

Any questions about this guide should be directed to your TA provider.

## Contents of the Guide

The guide is divided into four sections, each with a series of questions that are intended to serve as a guide for implementing your reentry strategic plan effectively. You will be prompted to write short responses and are encouraged to share any relevant documents with your TA provider. Your answers will provide insight into how you are currently translating (or planning to translate) your priority reform objectives into actionable policies and practices. Your TA provider may also send you additional information on specific topics to complement certain sections. If you need additional information or resources on a topic, please reach out to your TA provider.

### TA Provider Contact Information

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Exercise 4: Developing a Plan for Sustainability

*The chart on the following page provides a description of the key JSR implementation activities, a projected timeline for the technical assistance process, and the general technical assistance plan to guide and support your agency to accomplish these activities.*

## Key JSR Activities

## Timeline/Process

- *Refine the JSR Implementation Plan*

Activity: Grantees will review the JSR implementation plan and solidify the team overseeing the plan. Grantees will designate management staff responsible for specific deliverables, solidify the format and structure of the reentry task force meetings, and establish a concrete set of implementation deliverables.

- *Advance Communication and Buy-in Strategies*

Activity: Grantees will develop a plan for communicating the goals and activities of the JSR project to policymakers and other external constituents. Grantees will also develop a strategy for communicating with line staff and cultivating their buy-in for the tasks reflected in the implementation plan that relies on internal champions.

- *Track Implementation Progress*

Activity: Grantees will evaluate new policies and practices, and continue using data to guide ongoing policy and practice improvements, evaluate overall system impact, and hold staff accountable for improving reentry outcomes for youth.

- *Develop a Plan for Sustainability*

Activity: Grantees will outline a plan for sustaining implementation changes in the short-term and long-term.

- October: NRRC/OJJDP Orientation Webinar outlining expectations for JSR grantees
- November: Initial call with your TA provider that includes your agency leadership to discuss your grant proposal, the strategic plan and corresponding implementation plan, as well as the technical assistance you will receive
- November/December: Call with your TA provider to discuss the implementation process guide and begin planning for an initial site visit
- December: Conference call with your TA provider for all JSR grantees to learn about each other's implementation initiatives
- December/January: First site visit from your TA provider to review your implementation plan, strategies, deliverables, and progress
- January–May: Regular, ongoing phone calls and video-conferencing with your TA provider to support the implementation plan, troubleshoot challenges, and further assess opportunities for improvement.
- June/July: Second site visit from your TA provider to evaluate and support implementation progress
- August/September: Ongoing phone calls with your TA provider to and help support the development of a sustainability plan for continuing implementation changes beyond the 12-month implementation grant period.



## SECTION 1: REFINE THE JSR IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The JSR 12-month planning period required the development of an implementation plan for advancing statewide policy and practice changes to reduce recidivism and improve other youth reentry outcomes. Below is a set of questions to guide your agency's continued efforts to finalize your implementation plan. Your TA provider will review these questions with you, identify gaps and barriers to system improvement, and help you to advance implementation best practices.



### EXERCISE 1: REFINING THE JSR IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

1. Since the start of the JSR planning phase, have there been any additions or changes to your reentry task force and/or external partners? (If so, please send any updates to your TA provider).
2. Have all key internal managers and external partners formally reviewed and approved the implementation plan?
3. Does your implementation plan clearly identify a set of priority objectives that are realistic and achievable over the 12-month implementation period and in the future?
4. Do these objectives include administrative policy, practice, and funding changes as well as consideration of potential legislative or appropriation changes that would support your work?
5. For each objective...
  - a. Have you identified specific tasks, timelines, and responsible parties?
  - b. Have you considered how new programs/policies will be institutionalized?
  - c. Have you identified quality assurance and performance measures, with available data, that will enable you to both assess implementation progress and evaluate the results of policy and practice changes?
6. Has a team of internal management staff been assembled to manage the implementation plan? How will this team function and staff be held accountable?
7. What is the role of the reentry task force and other external stakeholders in advancing the implementation plan?
8. How will the work of internal and external staff, and multiple subcommittees (if applicable) be coordinated and managed?



## SECTION 2: ADVANCE COMMUNICATION AND BUY-IN STRATEGIES

The development of a communications plan and staff buy-in strategy is aimed at ensuring that there is a collective agency-wide message in place articulating the importance of JSR as well as the discrete activities you will be undertaking with your JSR implementation proposal. It will also provide a communications structure and associated set of communications material for key audiences such as policymakers and other external constituents (e.g. agencies that serve youth, judges, or the public) designed to garner top-level support and promote the long-term success and sustainability of your JSR activities.

The reforms that were identified during the JSR planning process also require the development of staff buy-in and support, which can be accomplished through education, training, and ongoing coaching and feedback. It is critically important that your agency formulate a clear strategy for how to communicate changes to staff and provide opportunities for staff to express concerns, challenges, and successes related to implementing the JSR changes.



### EXERCISE 2: ADVANCING COMMUNICATION AND BUY-IN STRATEGIES

Below are key questions to help guide your development of an effective communication plan and staff buy-in strategy. Your TA provider will review these questions with you, identify gaps and barriers to system improvement, and help you to advance implementation best practices:

1. What opportunities exist for publicizing the JSR award and resulting changes to different local and agency media sources (e.g. agency website and intranet, JSR webpage on agency website, JSR write-up posted in newsletters of community/state agencies, local/state media clips on the radio, etc.)?
2. How does the agency plan to share information and updates on the objectives, proposed policy/practice/funding changes, progress, and accomplishments of JSR activities with key external constituents (such as legislators, governor's staff, and judicial leaders) throughout the grant period?
3. For policy/practice changes that involve close collaboration with other state/local agencies, what mechanisms will be put in place to promote this collaboration and ensure that agencies fulfill commitments made during the planning phase?
4. What is your strategy for sharing this information with middle management and front-line staff?
  - a. What are likely the key areas of resistance from staff in terms of adhering to new policies and practices?
  - b. How will staff be trained and supported to implement new policies and practices? Can staff leaders be identified and mobilized to help with this process?

- c. How will new policies be codified and institutionalized to support this process, and how will staff be held accountable for compliance?
  - d. What types of opportunities will be provided for eliciting feedback from staff on the nature and level of their support for JSR changes (e.g. focus groups, interviews, or surveys)?
5. For changes that involve service improvements, how will external service providers be engaged and educated on what these changes entail for their programs and funding?
- a. How will providers be trained and supported to adopt new and/or more evidence-based services and held accountable for adherence to these models and producing improved outcomes?



## SECTION 3: TRACK IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

“Big picture” and long-term goals related to recidivism and other youth outcomes will not be realized for 2 to 5 years. Your agency should develop and monitor intermediate outcomes with set target dates to track the progress and successes of the tasks that comprise your implementation plan. These intermediate outcomes allow your agency to celebrate midterm successes and continue building JSR momentum. Furthermore, tracking progress on JSR reforms allows your agency to adjust implementation activities, should unanticipated challenges or barriers arise, or should your agency meet implementation deliverables sooner than expected. Your TA provider can help your agency use these milestones to develop and promote success stories that grantees may share with relevant stakeholders. Your TA provider is available to assist in developing press releases and memos to stakeholders, as your agency deems helpful.



### EXERCISE 3: TRACKING IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

Below are key questions to guide you in your JSR tracking and reporting efforts. Your TA provider will review these questions with you, identify gaps and barriers to system improvement, and help you to advance implementation best practices:

1. **Key Objectives:** What are the key objectives of your JSR initiative? (These objectives should be tied directly to your implementation plan and be concrete and measurable so that it is easier to monitor how they support “what works” to reduce recidivism and improve other youth outcomes, how well these activities are being implemented, and to track the impact of the changes).
2. **Interval:** What are the intervals at which you’ll formally measure progress and impact related to each of the objectives? (Six-month intervals are recommended, at a minimum)
3. **Measures:** How you will measure the implementation progress of each of the objectives at each interval?
4. **Reporting:** How will progress and challenges be communicated to external constituents, partner agencies, agency leadership, and management and front-line staff?
5. **Improvement and Accountability:** How will these measurement and reporting processes help your agency to identify and address implementation activities in need of improvement and hold staff and partners accountable for results?



## SECTION 4: DEVELOP A PLAN FOR SUSTAINABILITY

It is important that the agency, the reentry taskforce, and its key partners have discussed and developed a plan for sustaining implementation activities beyond the 12-month grant period, providing the necessary implementation oversight and accountability, and securing the resources needed to advance improved reentry outcomes. Below are questions to help guide the agency in its sustainability planning. Your TA provider will review these questions with you, identify gaps and barriers to sustainability planning efforts, and help you to advance sustainability best practices.



### EXERCISE 4: DEVELOPING A PLAN FOR SUSTAINABILITY

1. What is your agency's overall strategy for sustaining JSR policy, practice, and funding changes following the 12-month implementation period?
2. How will your agency partners and stakeholders be engaged in sustainability planning? The reentry task force?
3. What will be the most significant internal and external barriers to achieving this sustainability?
4. What additional funding will be needed to sustain JSR changes in the short-term and long-term?
5. What are the anticipated and potential sources of additional funding?
  - a. What is the strategy for securing this funding?