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TRIAD OF PUBLIC, PRIVATE AND NON-PROFIT CORRECTIONAL SERVICE PROVIDERS SHARE IN GOAL TO REDUCE RECIDIVISM

*Tennessee Department of Correction, Davidson County Sheriff's Office,
Corrections Corporation of America and Project Return
launch TNOffenderReentry.com*

NASHVILLE, TENN. – When offenders are released from prison or jail and return to their home communities, the distance between successful re-entry and a revolving door of recidivism may be just a click away.

That's what organizers hope with Tennessee Offender Re-Entry, a new online resource available to offenders, and the agencies that serve them, to help them get – and stay – on their feet. In an effort to help former offenders access resources and tools that promote productive living, the public, private and non-profit sectors have developed a “one-stop shop” of providers dedicated to helping them reintegrate with their families and communities and recover from substance dependencies and negative behavior.

The [Tennessee Department of Correction](#), [The Davidson County Sheriff's Office](#), [Corrections Corporation of America \(CCA\)](#) and [Project Return, Inc.](#) launched [Tennessee Offender Re-Entry](#) this month. The Web site connects visitors to non-profit, faith-based, government and for-profit community service agencies in and around the Middle Tennessee area, each sharing the same mission to serve ex-offenders and their families. The agencies featured on Tennessee Offender Re-Entry specialize in counseling, education, employment, health care, transportation and other key areas that, when neglected, can factor prominently in recidivism.

“The Nashville area has a number of nonprofit and faith-based organizations, state agencies and private companies that provide services for people re-entering the community from our jails and prisons,” said [David Delbridge](#), executive director of Project Return, Inc. “While some of these organizations have developed partnerships, it is often challenging to find the right service or resource for a specific need. This new Web site, catalogued by need and readily accessible to service providers and ex-offenders, encourages the maximum use of limited resources.”

“The TDOC believes the seamless re-entry of offenders back to society improves the quality of life for us all,” added [TDOC Commissioner George Little](#). “Our communities are safer, the ex-offenders and their families are better, and the public welfare is protected.”

A significant number of inmates in the State's corrections systems are repeat offenders, who were re-admitted due to parole, probation and/or community corrections violations. During fiscal year 2006-2007, nearly 41 percent, or 6,066, of TDOC felon admissions were comprised of parole, probation and community corrections violators. More broadly, according to The Pew Center on the States [“One in 100: Behind Bars in America 2008”](#) report, Tennessee's inmate population grew by 4.2 percent, or 1,093 inmates, in 2007.

“The road to becoming a repeat offender can start with not having knowledge of the sources available for critical needs, such as temporary housing, employment and transportation,” said [Louise Grant](#), CCA vice president of marketing and communications, who serves on the board of Project Return Inc. and as chairperson of CCA's charitable contributions committee. “We envision this Web site empowering corrections professionals and non-profit agencies to help guide offenders to enhanced recovery and achievement of long-term success.”

“The commitment to re-entry must begin at the point of entry into the jail system,” added [Davidson County Sheriff Daron Hall](#). “Although we prepare them for release while in jail through a variety of education and treatment programs, without a continuum of care in the community, many are doomed to fail. That is why providing an offender with community resources is imperative to their success and reduced recidivism rates, which ultimately helps us all.”

Grant said that Project Return, which will manage the www.tnoffenderreentry.com site, invites all non-profit, for profit and government agencies which serve offenders and ex-

offenders to add their organizational information (at no charge) to the site directory. Currently, the site primarily lists Middle Tennessee-area agencies, but agencies throughout the state are encouraged to include their information as well.

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About CCA

CCA is the founder and industry leader of the private corrections management industry, representing the nation's fifth-largest corrections system, behind the federal government and three states. CCA currently operates 66 facilities, including 42 that are company-owned, with a total design capacity of approximately 82,000 beds in 19 states and the District of Columbia, with more than 17,000 employees who provide comprehensive educational, vocational, therapeutic and addictions treatment programs intended to prepare inmates for successful re-integration with society.

About The Tennessee Department of Correction

The Tennessee Department of Correction supervises more than 20,000 inmates and employs more than 5,000 people. There are 16 prisons in the state system, three of which are managed privately by Corrections Corporation of America. Female inmates in the State of Tennessee are housed in two prisons, one in Nashville and the other in Memphis. Male inmates are housed in the 14 other prisons located across the state. Inmates in need of acute or continuing medical care are housed at the Lois M. DeBerry Special Needs Facility in Nashville

About The Davidson County Sheriff's Office

The Davidson County Sheriff's Office operates five jails, housing 3,000 offenders and employs a staff of nearly 900. It is the only agency of its kind fully accredited by the American Correctional Association. A variety of treatment, vocational, and educational programs are available to the inmate population. Additionally, the DCSO is responsible for the service of more than 200,000 civil warrants annually and offers community service through inmate works crews in all 35 council districts.

About Project Return

Project Return provides a broad range of assistance and support to anyone with a juvenile or criminal record, aid in the transition from incarceration to the community to ensure a chance for success, and education to the community and clients that offenders are human beings first and offenders secondly. The agency's vision is "to stop the waste of an ex-offender's lifetime and eliminate that cost to society."