

# Common Challenges Post-Release

in North Carolina

Having a criminal record can affect your ability to meet your basic needs after release. Certain policies and discriminatory practices can create barriers to re-entry for formerly incarcerated people in North Carolina (NC). This resource lists information to help you navigate those barriers in NC.

## Housing

Finding affordable housing after incarceration can be difficult, but there are housing coordinators that can help you if you are not staying with family or friends.

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) does not necessarily ban people with a criminal record from getting housing. However, public housing and section 8 properties can choose whether or not to consider your criminal record as part of your housing application for up to 3 years following release.



## Employment

Finding a job after incarceration can be difficult because some laws automatically exclude you from certain jobs or obtaining certain licenses needed to work.

Employers are not allowed to ask about your criminal record on job applications or during an initial interview, but they can ask about your criminal record after the interview and use their discretion in hiring. Employment coordinators can help you understand your rights and find jobs that you are qualified for.



## Nutritional Assistance

Some people have trouble affording groceries after release. Also, NC law prohibits formerly incarcerated individuals who received a controlled substance felony from receiving benefits through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) programs. However, there are exceptions.

Depending on your criminal record, you may be eligible for assistance under the SNAP and TANF programs. SNAP and TANF coordinators can help you with your specific situation.



## Healthcare

Depending on your health insurance status before incarceration, you may need to restart insurance when you are released. There is a special 60-day enrollment period following release when you can sign up for health insurance coverage.

If you are eligible for Medicare following release (e.g., if you are 65 years or older), you may be able to start or resume coverage following release.

If you do not have health insurance, there are still programs that can help you access medical care for free/reduced cost after release.



## Social Security

If you are currently receiving Social Security disability or Supplemental Security Income (SSI), these benefits are suspended for most people who are incarcerated.

You may be able to restart benefits following release. The amount of time you have to wait before re-starting depends on your situation. There are people who can help you check to see if you are eligible for social security after release, and help you apply.

# Resources for Navigating Life Post-Release

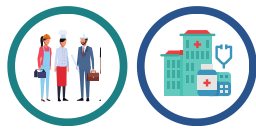
## in North Carolina



**North Carolina Department of Public Safety** - This website has information on re-entry Programs & Services in each NC county. Click on your county to see resources that are available to you:  
<https://www.ncdps.gov/our-organization/adult-correction/prisons/transition-services/county-reentry-resource-information>



**Local Reentry Councils** - There are local reentry councils & case coordinators in most counties in NC that can help you navigate local housing systems following release. This website lists the name & contact information of case coordinators you can contact in your county:  
<https://disabilityrightsn.org/resources/resources-for-a-successful-reentry/>



**Recidivism Reduction Educational Programs Services Inc. (RREPS)** - RREPS is a non-profit organization that provides incarceration reduction, recidivism prevention & life enrichment services, including programs related to employment & wellness:  
<https://rreps.net>



**NCWorks** - This website will help you get connected with a career center near you that can help you overcome the barriers toward employment created by a criminal record:  
<https://www.commerce.nc.gov/jobs-training/resources-job-seekers/former-offenders-seeking-jobs-north-carolina>



**National Inventory of Collateral Consequences of Conviction:** This website allows you to search and view details of policies relating to collateral consequences of a criminal conviction.  
<https://niccc.nationalreentryresourcecenter.org/>



**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)** - This program provides food to low-income families. This website provides information on eligibility for SNAP benefits:  
<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/child-and-family-well-being/food-and-nutrition-services-food-stamps>

Steps to apply for SNAP:

<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/child-and-family-well-being/food-and-nutrition-services-food-stamps/apply-food-and-nutrition-services-food-stamps-nc>



**Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)** - North Carolina's TANF program is called Work First (WF). Work First provides parents with training and services to help them get jobs and become self-sufficient:  
<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/social-services/work-first-family-assistance>



**NC FIT** - This program connects formerly incarcerated individuals who have a chronic disease, mental illness and/or substance use disorder with healthcare services and other reentry resources:  
<https://www.med.unc.edu/fammed/service-to-the-community/clinical-care/formerly-incarcerated-transition-program/>



**Healthcare.gov** - This website provides information about insurance coverage, including private and public coverage under Medicaid:  
<https://www.healthcare.gov/incarcerated-people/>

Medicaid Eligibility:

<https://www.healthcare.gov/lower-costs/>

Steps to apply for Medicaid:

<https://www.healthcare.gov/medicaid-chip/>

Medicare while incarcerated:

<https://www.medicareinteractive.org/get-answers/medicare-health-coverage-options/medicare-and-incarceration/medicare-coverage-during-incarceration>



**Social Security Administration:** This website provides information on eligibility for social security benefits, including Social Security disability and Supplemental Security Income. For those that had social security benefits before incarceration, this website has additional resources on how to get re-connected to those benefits following release.  
<https://www.ssa.gov/reentry/benefits.htm>

### Key (Type of Resource)

 **Housing**

 **Employment**

 **Healthcare**

 **Nutritional Assistance**

 **Social Security**

## RESOURCE LIST

*This list was developed in partnership with Recidivism Reduction Educational Programs Services Inc. (RREPS). RREPS provides incarceration reduction, recidivism prevention and life enrichment services. <https://rreps.net>*

### HOUSING

**North Carolina Department of Public Safety:** The NC Department of Public Safety has collected information on Re-entry Programs & Services for formerly incarcerated people in each of North Carolina's 100 counties, including resources and programs related to transitional housing and transportation. This website allows you to click on your county and see programs and services that may be available to you.

<https://www.ncdps.gov/our-organization/adult-correction/prisons/transition-services/county-reentry-resource-information>.

**Local Reentry Councils:** There are local reentry councils and case coordinators in most counties in NC that can help you navigate local housing systems following release. This document lists the name and contact information of case coordinators you can contact in your county.

<https://disabilityrightsn.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/North-Carolina-Reentry-Stakeholder-Database-1.pdf> (last updated March, 2021)

This website has similar information:

<https://disabilityrightsn.org/resources/resources-for-a-successful-reentry/>

### EMPLOYMENT

**North Carolina Department of Public Safety:** The NC Department of Public Safety has collected information on Re-entry Programs & Services for formerly incarcerated people in each of North Carolina's 100 counties, including resources and programs related to continuing education and employability. This website allows you to click on your county and see programs and services that may be available to you.

<https://www.ncdps.gov/our-organization/adult-correction/prisons/transition-services/county-reentry-resource-information>.

**Local Reentry Councils:** There are local reentry councils and case coordinators in most counties in NC that can help you navigate local employment systems following release. This document lists the name and contact information of local reentry coordinators you can contact in your county.

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This website has similar information:

<https://disabilityrightsn.org/resources/resources-for-a-successful-reentry/>

**NCWorks:** The NC Department of Commerce Reentry Initiative provides resources and assistance to job seekers with criminal records to help them overcome the barriers toward employment created by a criminal record. This website will help you get connected with a career center near you.

<https://www.commerce.nc.gov/jobs-training/resources-job-seekers/former-offenders-seeking-jobs-north-carolina>

**National Inventory of Collateral Consequences of Conviction:** This website allows you to search and view details of policies relating to collateral consequences of a criminal conviction.

<https://niccc.nationalreentryresourcecenter.org/>

## NUTRITIONAL ASSISTANCE

**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP):** Food and Nutrition Services is a federal food assistance program that provides low-income families the food they need for a nutritionally adequate diet. This website provides information on eligibility for SNAP benefits:

<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/child-and-family-well-being/food-and-nutrition-services-food-stamps>

This website outlines the steps for applying to SNAP benefits:

<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/child-and-family-well-being/food-and-nutrition-services-food-stamps/apply-food-and-nutrition-services-food-stamps-nc>

**Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF):** North Carolina's TANF program is called Work First (WF). Work First provides parents with short-term training and other services to help them become employed and move toward self-sufficiency. This website provides more information about WF, and is where you can apply for WF benefits.

<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/social-services/work-first-family-assistance>

## HEALTHCARE

**North Carolina Department of Public Safety:** The NC Department of Public Safety has collected information on Re-entry Programs & Services for formerly incarcerated people in each of North Carolina's 100 counties, including resources and programs related to mental health and physical health, as well as transportation. This website allows you to click on your county and see programs and services that may be available to you.

<https://www.ncdps.gov/our-organization/adult-correction/prisons/transition-services/county-reentry-resource-information>.

**NC FIT:** The North Carolina Formerly Incarcerated Transition (NC FIT) Program, sponsored by UNC Family Medicine, connects formerly incarcerated individuals who have a chronic disease, mental illness and/or substance use disorder with appropriate healthcare services and other reentry resources. This website provides more information about the program, and who to contact in each county for more information about signing up.

<https://www.med.unc.edu/fammed/service-to-the-community/clinical-care/formerly-incarcerated-transition-program/>

**Healthcare.gov:** If you are currently uninsured, there is a special 60-day enrollment period following release when you can sign up for health insurance coverage. This website provides additional information on the options for coverage, including private insurance coverage and public insurance coverage under Medicaid:

<https://www.healthcare.gov/incarcerated-people/>

This website can help you determine whether you are eligible for Medicaid:

<https://www.healthcare.gov/lower-costs/>

And this website outlines the steps to apply for Medicaid:

<https://www.healthcare.gov/medicaid-chip/>

If you are eligible for Medicare following release (for example, if you are 65 years or older), you may be able to start or resume coverage following release. These websites provide additional information on Medicare while incarcerated:

- <https://www.medicareinteractive.org/get-answers/medicare-health-coverage-options/medicare-and-incarceration/medicare-coverage-during-incarceration>
- <https://www.ssa.gov/reentry/benefits>

## SOCIAL SECURITY

**North Carolina Department of Public Safety:** The NC Department of Public Safety has collected information on Re-entry Programs & Services for formerly incarcerated people in each of North Carolina's 100 counties, including resources and programs related to finances and employability. This website allows you to click on your county and see programs and services that may be available to you.

<https://www.ncdps.gov/our-organization/adult-correction/prisons/transition-services/county-reentry-resource-information>.

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<https://disabilityrightsncc.org/resources/resources-for-a-successful-reentry/>

**Social Security Administration:** This website provides information on eligibility for social security benefits, including Social Security disability and Supplemental Security Income (SSI), following release. For those that were already drawing social security benefits prior to incarceration, this website also links to additional resources on how to get re-connected to those benefits following release.

<https://www.ssa.gov/reentry/benefits.htm>



## Infographic References

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