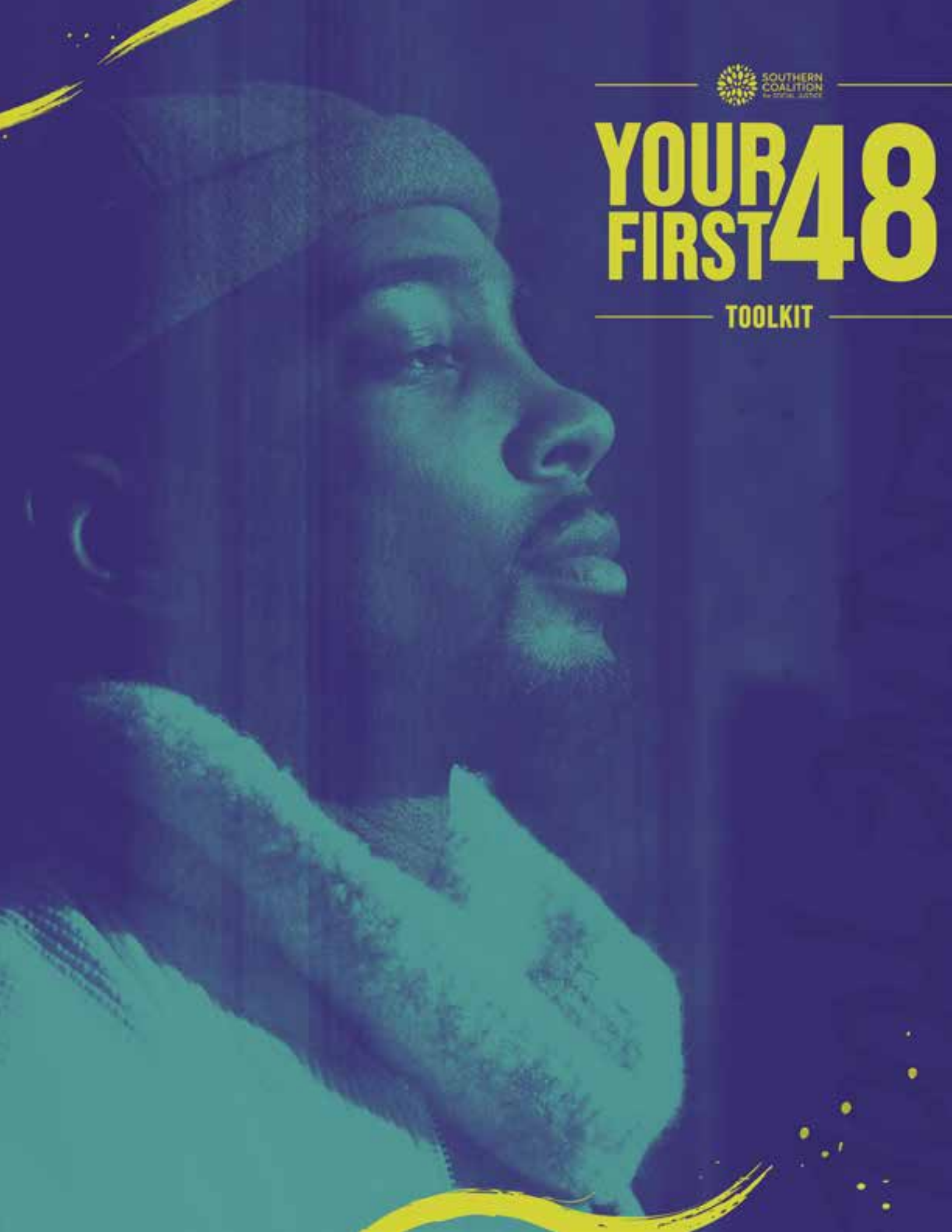




SOUTHERN
COALITION
for SOCIAL JUSTICE

YOUR FIRST 48

TOOLKIT





EQUALITY FOR ALL

INTRODUCTION

Your First 48 Hours Toolkit is a Durham County resource guide for successful reentry after incarceration, connecting you to resources and service providers that help overcome the barriers to a successful reentry. Returning to your community with a criminal record can be a difficult task due to the collateral consequence of incarceration that limit access to employment, housing, healthcare and education.

Your First 48 Hours Toolkit promotes social and economic independence through relationship building, strong community involvement, education and public support. The Toolkit will help you foresee barriers to a successful reentry and identify likely solutions by informing you of who to connect with and what questions to ask.

The Southern Coalition for Social Justice (SCSJ) is a legal nonprofit organization promoting justice by partnering with communities of color and economically disadvantaged communities to defend and advance their political, social, and economic rights. SCSJ created Your First 48 Hours Toolkit because the last 3-to-6 months before release and the first 48 hours after release are critical to a successful reentry.

DEFINITIONS

RECIDIVISM

When individuals who previously had contact with the criminal justice system are arrested, convicted or incarcerated following their release from custody or supervision.

COLLATERAL CONSEQUENCES

Legal, economic, social and emotional harms caused by contact with the justice system, including:

- Legal costs and court fees;
- Separation from family;
- Physical and emotional trauma;
- Challenges to immigration status;
- Loss of housing or housing assistance; and
- Loss of employment.

CATCHMENT AREA

The geographic location (city, town, and county) where the arrest took place.

REENTRY SERVICE PROVIDER

Provides reentry services to individuals who are released from incarceration to support their transition back into the community.

BAN THE BOX POLICIES

Encourage employers: (1) not to ask about arrest or conviction history; (2) to remove questions about criminal history from initial job application forms; and (3) to ask the question about criminal history only in instances where it relates to the job in question.

FEDERAL BONDING

Federal program that provides an insurance policy that protects employers against any possible losses incurred due to actions of employees with previous contact with the justice system.

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

Provides monthly support for purchasing nutritious food. If you qualify, you will get a debit card to use for groceries.

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF)

Considered a welfare to work program, TANF is designed to help families in need achieve self-sufficiency by providing financial assistance.

SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY

Disability benefits or funds provided from public or private sources to a person who is ill or who has a disability that prevents them from working fulltime.

“SECTION 8” HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM

Allows private landlords to rent apartments and homes at fair market rates to qualified low-income tenants through government subsidies.

REENTRY

The process by which recently incarcerated people are released and return to the community.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE RESOURCE CENTER

Provides supervision, rehabilitation and resources for justice-involved individuals.

LOCAL REENTRY COUNCIL

A network of individuals and agencies that help provide supervision and coordinate reentry support.

COLLATERAL CONSEQUENCES

The collateral consequences of incarceration create barriers to accessing housing, employment, government assistance and education. Nationally, there are nearly 38,000 laws that create economic and social obstacles for individuals reentering society. Additionally, 86% of employers consider a person's criminal record when making hiring decisions, making it difficult for those with criminal records to obtain gainful employment.

This online tool will help you determine which collateral consequences are related to charges on your record and how these charges may affect your search for education, benefits and employment under North Carolina law.

Collateral Consequences

Assessment Tool (C-CAT): <https://ccat.sog.unc.edu/>

How to use (C-CAT): <https://ccat.sog.unc.edu/how-to-use-ccat>



86% of employers conduct criminal background checks



38,000 laws nationwide deny access to services or limit an individual's rights based on a criminal record



More than 1.7 million people in NC have a criminal record

In 2019, an average of 3,351 people were released from North Carolina detention per month. Of those 3,351 individuals, many were told by property owners that there is a 5 year, 10 year or permanent ban on their housing application because of a specific charge. Many were told by employers that hiring them is too risky. Others applied for government assistance programs like Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers and Supplemental Nutrition Assistant Program (SNAP), but were denied. An even smaller number of those released applied to college and occupational license programs, but were denied acceptance or could not secure financial aid.

Your First 48 Hours Toolkit will help you navigate the difficult waters of reentry as you seek to secure housing, employment, public benefits and education. This toolkit provides a list of government agencies and non-profit organizations that can help you obtain these resources and successfully reenter society.

PRE-RELEASE



The first 3-to-6 months before you are released should be used to connect with family and community organizations to establish a strong home plan.

01 CORRECTIONAL CASE MANAGERS

Your correctional case manager is the first bridge between your release and critical resources such as housing and education.

02 BUILD A PLAN

Family: Being able to rely on family and friends for a stable, safe environment is the most effective way to transition back into the community.

If you are returning on probation, make sure that your family is aware of all the restrictions and requirements of your probation.

Churches: Churches and other religious organizations provide services such as financial assistance for temporary housing, clothing and transportation to members and non-members.

In the Durham area, these include Catholic Charities Social Ministries and Grey Stone Baptist Church.

Catholic Charities Social Ministries

Provides emergency financial assistance, accredited immigration legal services, weekly food pantry (Wednesdays 9:30am – 1:00pm) and nutrition classes for families.

Address: 2020 Chapel Hill Rd., Suite 30 Durham, NC 27707
Phone: 919-286-1964
Email: barbara.mazza@raldioc.org
Website: www.catholiccharitiesraleigh.org/durham/

COVID-19

All in-person appointments have been canceled for emergency assistance services, but clients can continue to seek emergency services by phone. Also, distribution of food gift cards have been suspended during the pandemic.

Grey Stone Baptist Church, Second Mile Ministries

Provides emergency financial assistance and food services.

Address: 2601 Hillsborough Road, Durham, NC 27705
Phone: 919-286-3596
Website: https://rentassistance.org/program/grey_stone_church_second_mile_ministry_durham_nc.html

COVID-19

During Covid-19, Second Mile Ministries will be open on Wednesdays from 9:00am to 11:00am for emergency services. Photo identification and a copy of past due bills are required for financial assistance. Individuals will be seen by appointment only. There will be a sign-up sheet outside the building. Clients are asked to sign the sheet and wait in the parking lot to be called.

03 SERVICE PROVIDERS

Contact the reentry service providers mentioned in this toolkit as soon as possible. Reentry service providers in your area build connections between returning citizens and important services.

Make sure you ask your correctional case manager about the Durham Criminal Justice Center and the Durham Local Reentry Council.



YOUR FIRST 48 HOURS



The clock starts ticking the moment you are released. Your chances for success and stability are greatly improved if you can secure identification, housing, employment and other supports during the first 48 hours after your release.

01 DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES (FIRST 3 HOURS)

Photo Identification is required for most services you will need after being released.

After release, your first stop should be the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

02 HOUSING (FIRST 5 HOURS)

Finding affordable housing can be difficult and time consuming.

If you are unable to stay with friends or family and do not otherwise have a home, there are other temporary options such as rehabilitation housing, reentry housing and shelters.

03 PRE-EMPLOYMENT (FIRST 24 HOURS)

Within your first 24 hours of being released, you should be contacting organizations about mock interviews, clothing and job readiness programming.

04 EMPLOYMENT (FIRST 36 HOURS)

Within your first 36 hours, you should be updating resumes, searching for jobs and applying for grants.

Employment service providers, “ban-the-box” employers and federal bonding programs provide assistance in these areas.

05 BENEFITS (FIRST 48 HOURS)

While incarcerated, benefits such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistant Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Social Security Disability and Healthcare are lost and can be time consuming to regain.

06 EDUCATION (FIRST 48 HOURS)

Job training and continuing education programs are available to you for little to no cost.

You are also eligible for limited financial aid if you plan to enroll in certain educational or vocational programs.

D.M.V.

Your Transition Document Envelope (TDE) should include official documents proving identification. These documents may include an identification card, social security card, driver's license, prison identification, birth certificate and official release documents. Documents enclosed in the TDE are crucial to a successful reentry process.

PRIOR TO RELEASE

You can obtain North Carolina Identification from the DMV.

You can obtain an identification card with assistance from a Department of Corrections Official or designee and the proper documents that verify your identity and permanent mailing address.

A replacement driver's license or identification card can be mailed to a prison facility before your release. The driver's license or identification card will be placed in a transition envelope because you cannot be in possession of a driver's license or identification card before you are released.

REQUIREMENTS FOR NORTH CAROLINA DMV IDENTIFICATION

One Document Verifying Age Or Identity

- Birth Certificate
- Real Identification
- Court Documents

One Document Proving You Have A Social Security Card

- Social Security Card
- W-2 form with full Social Security Number and Name
- Payroll with full Social Security Number and Name

One Document Proving Residency

- Utility or Cable Bill
- Letter from a Homeless Shelter
- North Carolina Vehicle Registration
- Letter from a homeowner where you are staying

COVID-19

Some North Carolina DMV Driver License offices closed Wednesday, March 18, 2020 due to COVID-19. Before visiting an office, please check to see if it is open using the DMV locator tool: <https://www.ncdot.gov/dmv/offices-services/locate-dmv-office/Pages/dmv-offices.aspx>



FINDING HOUSING



PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY

It is not the policy of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to ban people with a criminal record. However, HUD gives the Public Housing Authority broad authority to set limits on their housing applications.

HUD allows for a 3-year discretionary ban on all felonies and misdemeanors. This means that when you are first released, public housing agencies and Section 8 properties can choose whether or not to consider your criminal background as part of your housing application for 3 years.



TEMPORARY AND TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

Local nonprofits run temporary housing in Durham County. Rules for payment and admittance vary by age, gender and criminal charges. For example, Straight Talk Transitional House will only take men ages 18 and up and will only turn you away if you have a sex offense.

Straight Talk is a reentry house for men. Cost varies, and the stay ranges from 90 days to 6 months. Straight Talk also does not accept sex offenders. Payment usually has to come from a 3rd party organization, like the Criminal Justice Resource Center, Durham Local Reentry Council or a local church. However, in some cases, payment may be submitted directly by you or your family member.

Bessie Elmore

Address: 1101 N Mangum Street Durham, NC 27701

Phone: 984-219-1001

Email: Stsg1101nd@gmail.com

Website: straighttalksupportgroup.org/



FRIENDS AND FAMILY

During your first 48 hours, it is best to rely on people you know and trust to provide shelter and assistance. Affordable housing, shelters and reentry housing usually have long wait times, and the process for obtaining housing can be complicated.

If you have loved ones that can provide temporary or extended shelter, reach out to them. This will help service providers build a more stable housing plan and find resources that fit you and your loved ones.



SHELTERS

If you are seeking shelter, go to Aging and Adult Services at the Durham Department of Social Services (Durham DSS) or the Exchange Building and ask about Entry Point intake.

Durham DSS (Aging and Adult Services)

Address: 414 E. Main Street, Durham, NC 27701

Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:00 am to 3:00 pm

Instructions: Aging and Adult Services in DSS is on the 2nd floor in Lobby 27

The Exchange Building

Address: 801 Gilbert Street, Durham, NC 27703

Hours: Monday – Friday, 12:00 noon to 8:00 pm; Weekend/Holiday, 4:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Instructions: Look for sidewalk sign and ring the bell on the sign

COVID-19

Due to COVID-19, Durham DSS is operating with limited staff, but will continue to offer mandated and core services during the COVID-19 pandemic. Individuals are encouraged to call Durham DSS at 919-560-8000 to inquire about services prior to visiting the Health and Human Services Building.



If you have a history of alcohol or substance misuse, programs like the Oxford House, Love and Respect and Freedom House can provide a clean environment for sobriety and housing at a low cost. With proper planning you will be able to contact the Durham Local Reentry Council, a local church, or Durham DSS Entry Point to receive grants until you can pay for housing on your own.

Oxford House offers housing for men and women. The cost is \$99 per week, and a person can stay as long as needed for recovery.

Contact: Paula Harrington
Email: Paula.harrington@oxfordhouse.org
Website: <https://oxfordhousecw.com>

Love and Respect offers housing for men and women. The cost is usually \$100 per week with a \$50 deposit, which may be waived depending on your circumstances.

Address: 1604 Angier Ave., Durham, NC, 27703
Phone: 919-672-0934
Email: Director.luvrespect@yahoo.com
Website: <http://www.luvrespect.org>

Freedom House provides housing for women. The cost is usually \$80 per week, but may vary depending on an individual's needs and circumstances. A needs-based assessment is conducted during initial interview and intake.

Address: 407 Salem Street, Durham, NC 27703
Phone: 919-957-7386
Website: <https://freedomhouserecovery.org/services>

COVID-19

Freedom House Recovery Center is open during the pandemic with all services observing strict social distancing and sanitation guidelines.

Freedom House (Durham Men's House) stay is usually \$80 per week but cost may vary depending on each individual's needs and circumstances. Needs based assessment is conducted during initial interview and intake.

Address: 529 Holloway Street, Durham, NC 27701
Phone: 919-425-5472
Website: <https://freedomhouserecovery.org/services>

COVID-19

Freedom House Recovery Center is open during the pandemic with all services observing strict social distancing and sanitation guidelines.



PRE EMPLOYMENT

As soon as you are released, you should begin obtaining skills and making personal connections that improve your chances for obtaining employment during reentry.



Clothing: When going into an interview, being dressed for the position can set you apart as a serious candidate. The following resources can help you obtain proper clothing for employment interviews.

Dress for Success (Women)

Address: 1058 W. Club Blvd, Suite 662 Durham, NC
Phone: 919-286-2128
Website: <https://trianglenc.dressforsuccess.org/>

COVID-19

Dress for success is currently offering virtual services and limited in-person suiting by appointment only. Appointments may be booked through the Dress for Success webpage.

Criminal Justice Resource Center

Address: 326 East Main St. Durham, NC
Phone: 919-560-0500
Email: CJRC@dconc.gov
Website: <https://www.dconc.gov/government/departments-a-e/criminal-justice-resource-center>

COVID-19

The Criminal Justice Resource Center (CJRC) building will be closed during the COVID-19 pandemic, but you can still receive services by contacting CJRC via phone 919-560-0500 or email CJRC@dconc.gov.

From Locked Up to Living Life, LLC.

Contact: Chukwuemeka Manning
Phone: 919-451-6969
Email: Lockeduptolivinglife@gmail.com
Mail: P.O. Box #1831, Durham, North Carolina 27701
Facebook: www.facebook.com/lockeduptolivinglife/
Website: <https://www.durhamiteam.org/>

JOB TRAINING

It can be very difficult finding employment when you return to the job market with a criminal record. Durham NC Works Career Center and Durham DSS Work First programs can help you build the skills necessary to find gainful employment with a criminal background.

DURHAM NC WORKS CAREER CENTER

Kimberly Gammons

Address: 1105 S. Briggs Ave. Durham, NC 27703

Email: kimberly.gammons@nccommerce.com

Phone: 919-560-6880

Website: <https://durhamnc.gov/572/NCWorks-Career-Center>

COVID-19

The Durham Office of NC Works Career Center is currently closed due to Covid-19. Please contact their office via telephone or email to find out how best to receive their services.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SECURITY (WORK FIRST)

Nancy Santos

Address: 200 E Main Street Durham, NC 27701

Email: Nsantos@dconc.gov

Phone: 919-560-8000

Website: <https://www.dconc.gov/government/departments-f-z/social-services/work-first-employment-services-wfes>

COVID-19

Due to COVID-19, Durham DSS is operating with limited staff, but will continue to offer mandated and core services during the COVID-19 pandemic. Individuals are encouraged to call Durham DSS at 919-560-8000 to inquire about services prior to visiting the Health and Human Services Building.

INMATES TO ENTREPRENEURS

Address: 4011 Westchase Blvd Suite 250, Raleigh, NC 27607

Website: <https://inmatestoentrepreneurs.org>



EMPLOYMENT



Connecting with employment service providers within your first 48 hours of release can ensure that you take advantage of all available employment opportunities.

NOTABLE INITIATIVES

Ban the Box

Statewide: Effective November 1, 2020, the North Carolina statewide ban-the-box initiative will ban state employers from asking about your criminal record on the initial application or during the initial interview process. However, the employer may ask about your criminal history after completing the job interview and make a determination based on your criminal history if your criminal history relates to the job for which you are applying.

Counties: The following North Carolina counties have banned the box: Alamance, Buncombe, Catawba, Cleveland, Cumberland, Forsyth, Halifax, Henderson, McDowell, New Hanover, Orange, Rowan, Rutherford, Wake, and Wilkes.

Cities: The following North Carolina cities have banned the box: Durham, Asheville, Carrboro, Charlotte, New Bern, and Spring Lake.

Federal Bonding

Provides an insurance policy to protect employers against any losses due to actions of employees with previous contact with the justice system who commit theft, fraud, larceny or embezzlement while employed.

Former Offender Initiative (Kimberly Gammons)

Provides classes that teach critical skills and tactics on how to navigate job markets and apply for jobs with a criminal record. (Offered at NC Works)

Employment Organizations

N.C. Works provides computers for resume building, career readiness programs, job postings and job fairs that give participants a chance to meet employers.

Address: 1105 S Briggs Avenue
Durham, NC 27703
Phone: 919-560-6880
Website: <https://durhamnc.gov/572/NCWorks-Career-Center>

COVID-19

The Durham Office of NC Works Career Center is currently closed due to Covid-19.

Local Reentry Council

Durham Local Reentry Council connects former offenders with a network of resources and service providers in the employment field.

Address: 326 E. Main St. Durham, NC 27701
Phone: 919-560-7589
Email: Durhamlrc@dconc.gov
Website: <https://www.dconc.gov/government/departments-a-e/durham-local-reentry-council>

Community Empowerment Fund

Community Empowerment Fund offers savings opportunities, financial education and support to individuals who are seeking employment and housing. Community Empowerment Fund is currently scheduling intakes for new members on Mondays at 11am and Thursdays at 6pm. You should call their office to schedule an appointment for a new member intake meeting.

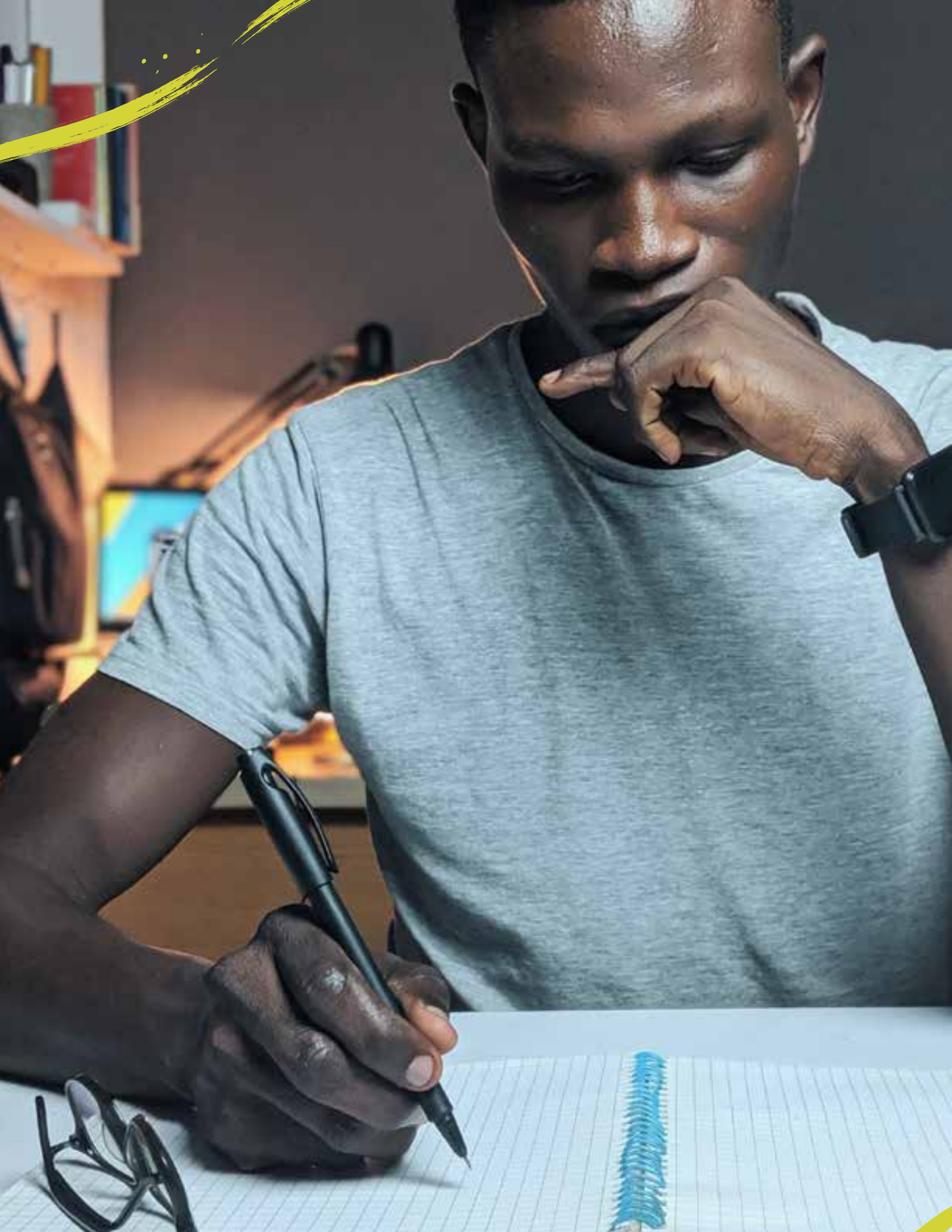
Address: 2634 Durham-Chapel Hill Blvd, Suite 6 Durham, NC 27707
Phone: 919-797-9233
Website: <https://communityempowermentfund.org/>

COVID-19

Community Empowerment Fund is open for limited operations, and you are required to complete a COVID-19 screening before entering the office. The Community Empowerment Fund will maintain the following schedule during COVID-19:

- Monday-Thursday from 10:00am-12:00pm & 1:00pm-3:00pm
- Thursdays from 5:00pm-7:00pm





EDUCATION

01 GOING BACK TO SCHOOL

Typically, the decision to accept an individual with a criminal record into trade schools, community colleges or four year universities is made by the dean of admissions.

However, you should check to see whether the particular program has licensing requirements, and if your specific charge prevents you from obtaining the license.

For example, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction may deny your North Carolina educators' license application based on a conviction of a sex crime.

02 PAYING FOR SCHOOL

Financial Aid

Generally, financial aid restrictions are removed after you are released from incarceration. However, your financial aid eligibility may remain suspended in certain circumstances.

If you were convicted for possession or sale of illegal drugs while you were a student receiving federal student aid, your financial aid eligibility may remain suspended after release.

You are ineligible to receive a federal Pell Grant if you were convicted of a forcible or non-forcible sexual offense and you are subject to an "involuntary civil commitment" after being released from incarceration for that offense.

An involuntary civil commitment occurs when a court orders an individual to be confined in a psychiatric hospital or within a specific community.

Community Funding

You may be able to seek funding from various non-profit and government agencies.

Ashley Spikes, the Case Manager for the Durham Local Reentry Council, can help you obtain funding for continuing education classes at Durham Technical Community College. Ashley can be reached by phone at 919-560-0016 or email at aspikes@dconc.gov.

HEALTH & BENEFITS



HEALTH F.I.T. PROGRAM

Health (Formerly Incarcerated Transition) F.I.T. Program

After being released from incarceration, you may frequently be without work, without health insurance and without a medical home. The Formerly Incarcerated Transition (FIT) Program helps connect formerly incarcerated individuals who have chronic diseases with a primary care provider and a comprehensive reentry plan.

Dorel Clayton (FIT Program Community Health Worker)

Phone: 919-672-8929

Email: Dclayton@dconc.gov



SNAP AND TANF

Federal law prohibits anyone convicted of a controlled substance felony from participation in the SNAP and TANF programs, but provides that states may opt out of the prohibition or limit the period of probation. [U.S.C.A 862(a)]

North Carolina state law allows for individuals convicted of Class H or I controlled substance felony offenses to participate in the Work First Program and the food and nutrition services program if:

- (1) You do not receive an additional controlled substance felony within 6 months of being released from custody; and
- (2) You successfully completed or are continuously participating in a required substance abuse treatment program determined by the area mental health authority. [North Carolina § 108A-25.2]

However, the Durham DSS will require individuals who have been convicted of Class H or I controlled substance felony offenses to participate in substance abuse treatment in order to receive Work First Program or electronic food and nutrition benefits.



MEDICAID & DISABILITY

Medicaid

If you were receiving Medicaid before you were arrested, you may continue to be enrolled in the program while incarcerated and continue the program once released.

Social Security Disability

Your disability benefits will automatically be suspended if you spend more than 30 days in jail or prison. You are not eligible for disability if you became disabled or your condition worsens while in jail or prison.



GETTING YOUR BENEFITS BACK

SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (S.O.A.R.)

S.O.A.R. is a national program that assists eligible adults who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in applying for Social Security Insurance (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) disability benefits.

Emily Carmody

Email: soar@ncceh.org

Phone: 919-755-4393



RECOMMENDATIONS

There are many hurdles to a successful reentry, including barriers that are imposed by state and local governments. The following is a list of demands that will help support Durham residents returning from incarceration.

01 IDENTIFICATION



Issue: After being released, proper state identification is needed to access many of the resources that support a successful reentry, including stable housing, public benefits, employment and educational enrollment. However, many individuals struggle to gather the necessary documentation and funds to secure state identification after being released.



Recommendation: The North Carolina Department of Corrections can mitigate this issue by working with NC DMV to utilize Mobile DMV services to provide driver's licenses and state identification cards to individuals who are within 6 months of release.

02 HOUSING



Issue: In Durham, there is one transitional house that is not linked to drug rehabilitation. Individuals are often released without a housing plan due to limited community options and a lack of government housing assistance. As a result, many of them return to a housing situation that is worse than before they were incarcerated.



Recommendation: Durham County can address this issue by increasing "Housing First" funding, which is a homeless assistance approach that prioritizes providing permanent housing to people experiencing homelessness. Other states have implemented similar measures.

Examples:

Portland, Oregon – SE Works and the Housing Authority of Portland (HAP) offers up to 18 months of rental assistance to formerly incarcerated individuals. Participants can use their rental assistance for transitional or permanent housing.

King County, Washington – The King County Housing Authority (KCHA) provides Section 8 housing vouchers for 46-unit transitional housing developments. Participants stay between 18 and 24 months before transitioning to conventional public housing. During this transition, participants do not undergo any additional screening. Additionally, eligible parents who are reuniting with children receive parenting and life skills classes as well as job search assistance from the YMCA.

03 EMPLOYMENT



Issue: Although Ban the Box policies help promote employment opportunities for people with a criminal record, it only applies to the interview process and only extends to public sector jobs, not private employment



Recommendations: Counties should increase incentives to hire individuals with a criminal record, like providing businesses with a 6 month period of subsidized pay for a percentage of employee's salary. Additionally, the County should encourage small business owners to utilize programs like the Work Opportunity Tax Credit and Federal Bonding.

04 BENEFITS

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)



Issue: North Carolina law does not allow anyone convicted of an H or I controlled substance felony (possession with intent to distribute) to participate in SNAP until 6 months after release. [G.S. 108A-25.2].



Recommendation: The North Carolina Legislature should remove this arbitrary ban on SNAP and allow all those in need to access the resources immediately upon release.





SOUTHERN
COALITION
for SOCIAL JUSTICE