

# **The** ***Middlesex*** ***County*** **Smart Book**



## **A Resource Guide** **For Going Home**

*“Reaching for Success”*

**Drafted 2009**  
*by*  
**The New Jersey Department of Corrections**  
**Office of Transitional Services**

## **Quick Reference: Useful Numbers and Hotlines**

<b>American Friends Service Committee Prisoner's Resource Center</b>	1-973-643-2205
<b>CDC National STD and AIDS Hotlines</b>	
Spanish:	1-800-344-7432
English:	1-800-227-8922
<b>Addictions Hotline of NJ</b>	1-800-238-2333
<b>Alcoholics Anonymous</b>	1-800-245-1377
<b>Division of Disability Services (DDS)</b>	1-888-285-3036
<b>Division of Youth &amp; Family Services</b>	1-800-792-8610
<b>Hyacinth AIDS Foundation</b>	1-800-433-0254
<b>Legal Services of New Jersey</b>	1-888-576-5529
<b>NJ Motor Vehicle Commission</b>	
Driver's License Suspension Hotline	1-609-292-7500
Main Information	1-888-486-3339
<b>Narcotics Anonymous of NJ</b>	1-800-992-0401
<b>National Suicide Crisis Hotline</b>	1-800-784-2433
<b>New Jersey AIDS STD Hotline (Beth Israel)</b>	1-800-624-2377
<b>2-1-1 First Call For Help</b>	2-1-1/
Se habla español or toll free	1-800-331-7272
<b>Middlesex County One Stop</b>	1-877-995-2600
<b>Social Security Office</b>	1-800-772-1213
<b>Statewide Domestic Violence Hotline (Woman's Space, Inc.)</b>	
Bilingual and TTY accessible	1-800-572-7233

# The Middlesex County Smart Book

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## **The Start of a New Beginning:**

### **How to use this book**

This book is intended to prepare you for your arrival home and reintegration back into society. In order to make the transition smoother for you a list of resources have been compiled along with a list of necessary items you will find that are essential to your success. This book focuses on the first few weeks and months of your arrival home and assisting you on managing the transition. Although not every resource available to you will be found in here, there are many that will help to guide your journey.

**Unless a fee or charge is listed, all of the services and resources listed here are free.**

Each section of this book is categorized by items that you will need in order to find employment, return to school, and to obtain identification. It will also provide addresses, websites, phone numbers, and general tips on how to acquire that particular service. You can use the table of contents to easily identify what service you require, and follow instructions as to how to contact providers.

**FYI: \*\*Please feel free to utilize your social services department for assistance in contacting an agency or inquiring information about a service found in this book. There are some services that may be free to you that you can contact through your social services department before making an out-of-pocket expense.**

There are things that can be completed prior to release from prison. Two things specifically are requesting a duplicate social security card for **FREE** and applying for a birth certificate for a **fee**. Please contact your social worker six months prior to release to apply for these items. By doing this while still in custody, you are taking a large step towards making your transition back into the community easier for you. Providing both documents are processed successfully, you will have two necessary forms of identification made available to you the day you are released. This will speed up the process of finding employment.

You will not find every service or organization in **Middlesex County** in this book however there will be many to help you begin. Also, the organizations that are listed may be able to offer additional resources to you. For current information as services change procedure and or cost please visit [www.njsuccess.org](http://www.njsuccess.org).

**You may visit your local library for Free**

**Internet access.**

## **Getting Started:**

### **Identification (I.D.) and Other Documents**

In order to apply for employment, rent an apartment, apply for general assistance, food stamps, or Medicaid, proper identification will be required. The more identification you have in your possession, the easier it will be for you to obtain these services. Certain items can be obtained while you are still incarcerated ask your social worker for assistance, and, for the remainder, this book will point you in the right direction.

**FYI:** In order to obtain identification, various agencies will require proof of address. It is smart to keep bills in your name or official documents that have your name and address for further verification of your address.



#### **A. Social Security Card**

If at all possible, apply for a duplicate social security card with your social worker six months prior to release. If for some reason this is not possible or your application has been denied, you will need to visit your closest Social Security Office to apply. The following offices are the local branches in Middlesex County. Please find which office is closest to your residence.

**Social Security Administration**

29 Davenport Street  
Somerville, NJ 08876

**Social Security Administration**

3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
190 Middlesex Turnpike  
Iselin, NJ 08830

**Social Security Administration**

52 Charles Street  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

**Office hours Monday- Friday 9:00am-4:00pm**

Phone numbers:  
Toll Free 1-800-772-1213  
TTY- 1-800-325-0778

If you choose to visit your local office to apply you will need to fill out the application at the office. To save time you can download the application online

([www.ssa.gov/replace\\_sscard.html](http://www.ssa.gov/replace_sscard.html)). You will need to show proof of identification. **Prison release papers count as proof of identification. Also, use your NJDOC Temporary ID card.**



## B. Birth Certificate

The office of Vital Statistics in the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services has all the New Jersey birth, marriage, and death records. The fee is **\$25.00**. However, depending upon where you were born in Middlesex County, you may be able to apply for a birth certificate for a lesser fee.

**FYI:** You are able to apply for a birth certificate while you are still in custody and have six months left prior to release. Please see your social worker to do so.

If you were born in the following towns you may go to your registrar's office and apply for a birth certificate at the cost listed below.

<u>Town/ Address</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>	<u>Fee</u>
Carteret Borough 61 Cooke Avenue Carteret, NJ 07008	732-541 3892	Birth- \$10 Death- \$10
Cranbury Township 23 A No. Main St. Cranbury, NJ 08512	609-395-0900 x234	No Birth Certificates Death- \$6
Dunellen Borough 355 North Ave Dunellen, NJ 08812	732-968-3033	Birth-\$15 Death \$15
East Brunswick 1 Jean Walling Civic Ctr P.O. Box 1081 East Brunswick, NJ 08816	732-390-6850	Birth- \$10 Death \$10
Edison Township 100 Municipal Blvd P.O. Box 3011 Edison, NJ 08817	732-248-7293	Birth-\$25 Death- \$25

Helmetta Borough Borough Hall 60 Main St P.O. Box 378 Helmetta, NJ 08828	732-521-4946 x100	
Highland Park 221 So. 5 <sup>th</sup> Ave Highland Park, NJ 08904	732-777-6014	Birth- \$10 Death- \$10
Jamesburg Borough 131 Perrineville Rd Jamesburg, NJ 08831	732-521-2222 x108	Birth- \$10 Death- \$10
Metuchen Borough 500 Main St Metuchen, NJ 08840	732-632-8503	Birth- \$10 Death- \$8
Middlesex Borough 1200 Mountain Ave Middlesex, NJ 08846	732-356-8090 x254	Birth- \$10 Death \$10
Milltown Borough 39 Washington Ave Milltown, NJ 08850	732-828-2100 x129	Birth- \$15 Death-\$15
Monroe Township 1 Municipal Plaza Monroe, NJ 08831	732-656-4573	Birth-\$7 Death-\$7
New Brunswick City 78 Bayard Street New Brunswick, NJ 08903	732-745-5003	Birth-\$25 Death- \$25 **Same day requests are add'l \$5
North Brunswick Township 710 Hermann Road North Brunswick, NJ 08902	732-247-0922 x470	Birth- \$10 Death-\$10
Old Bridge Township 1 Old Bridge Plaza Old Bridge, NJ 08857	732-721-5600 x 6200	Birth- \$10 Death- \$10
Perth Amboy 1 Olive Street Perth Amboy, NJ 08861	732-826-1690 x4310 or x4309	Birth-\$10 Death-\$10
Piscataway Township 455 Hoes Lane Piscataway, NJ 08854	732-562-2323	Birth-\$10 Death-\$10

Plainsboro Township 641 Plainsboro Road Plainsboro, NJ 08536	609-799-0909 x303	Birth-\$15 Death-\$15
Sayreville Borough 49 Dolan Street Sayreville, NJ 08872	732-390-7012	Birth-\$10 Death-\$10
South Amboy City 140 N. Broadway South Amboy, NJ 08879	732-525-5924 or 5925 <b>Call before 1:00pm</b>	Birth-\$10 Death-\$10
South Brunswick Township 540 Ridge Road Monmouth Junction, NJ 08852	732-329-4000 X7237 or 7238	Birth- \$7 Death-\$7 <b>**Same day requests are add'l \$5</b>
South Plainfield Borough 2480 Plainfield Ave South Plainfield, NJ 07080	908-226-7630	Birth-\$10 Death-\$10
South River Borough 48 Washington St South River, NJ 08882	732-257-1999	Birth-\$15 Death-\$15
Spotswood Borough 77 Summerhill Road Spotswood, NJ 08884	732-251-0700	Birth-NA Death-\$10
Woodbridge Township 1 Main Street Woodbridge, NJ 07095	732-634-4500 x6443	Birth-\$7 Death-\$7

### C. County I.D.

You can obtain a county identification card by going to the Middlesex County Clerk's Office located at:

75 Bayard St. 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901.

**Hours of operation:** Monday through Friday 8:30am-12:00pm.

**The fee for a card is \$16.00.** You must show proof of residence in Middlesex County (so you can only do this after you are released), proof of age, and provide a social security number.

**Primary documents for proof of identity is as follows:**

- ✓ Certified Birth Certificate
- ✓ Valid U.S. Passport
- ✓ Adoption Papers
- ✓ Certificate of Naturalization
- ✓ Certificate of Citizenship
- ✓ Valid foreign passport with I-551 stamp/valid visa

**Secondary Documents**

**One of the following:**

- ✓ Social Security Card
- ✓ NJ Drivers License with a Middlesex County Address
- ✓ DD-214 Military Discharge Record



**D. Driver's License**

Once you are released from prison, you can go to the Motor Vehicle Commission (MVC) to get a new driver's license, replace a lost one, or renew a card that has expired. If you believe that your license has been suspended, you should confirm this and figure out what you need to do to get it back. If you were convicted of any kind of drug offense, your license has been suspended.

**Prior to your release**, you can get a copy of your driver's license record, which is called an "abstract." Please contact your social worker if you are interested in obtaining an abstract. **The fee for an abstract is \$15.00**

**Upon your release**, you can go to the MVC offices in Middlesex County (see below) or a Regional Service Center to request a driver's abstract. If you have internet access, you can also request an abstract online at [WWW.STATE.NJ.US/MVC](http://WWW.STATE.NJ.US/MVC). You will still have to pay **\$15.00**. If your license was suspended for six months or more because of a drug conviction, the period of the suspension will begin from the time of your release. Other kinds of suspension, such as failure to pay parking tickets, insurance surcharges, or child support, will last until you have paid the fine or worked out a payment plan. For questions about suspension, call the suspension hotline: **609-292-7500**.

**Restoration Fees, Tickets, and Surcharges:** If you found out that your license has been suspended, you will have to pay a

restoration fee of **\$100.00** in order to have your license reinstated. This does not include any additional fines or surcharges you are required to pay. This fee can be paid at your local MVC Offices in Middlesex County or a Regional Service Center (see below). If you have internet access, this fee can be paid online at [WWW.STATE.NJ.US/MVC](http://WWW.STATE.NJ.US/MVC). You can pay your surcharges and parking tickets on this website as well.

**MVC LOCATIONS IN MIDDLESEX COUNTY**  
**For questions, Please call 1 (888) 486-3339.**

**East Brunswick:** 271 Route 18  
Mon- Fri 8:00 am - 4:30 pm; Sat 8:00 am - 12:00 pm

**Edison:** 45 Kilmer Rd  
Mon- Fri 8:00 am - 4:30 pm; Sat 8:00 am - 12:00 pm

**South Plainfield:** 698 Oak Tree Ave  
Mon- Fri 8:00 am - 4:30 pm; Sat 8:00 am - 12:00 pm

**Regional Office: Trenton Agency**  
**120 S. Stockton & Front St.**  
**Trenton, NJ 08611**

Services: Driver conferences, driver records, (issuances and inquiries), points and surcharge (inquiries), suspensions and restorations.

Hours: Mon- Fri 8am-4:30pm; Sat 8am-12pm

To replace a lost or stolen license, you will have to bring identification to the MVC and pay an **\$11.00 fee**. The MVC now has very specific kinds of I.D. that are required under the new "Six Point" system:

*Please use this guide to prepare yourself for your trip to MVC. Make sure you have the six points of identification necessary to obtain your drivers license or non drivers I.D.*

**SIX POINT SYSTEM OF IDENTIFICATION**

**Primary Documents:**

(4 Points)

- Birth Certificate or Certified Copy from one of the 50 states.
- U.S. Dept. of State Birth Certificate
- US Passport-Current or Expired less than 3 years
- Current US Passport card
- Current NJ Digital Drivers License
- Valid Active Duty US Military Photo ID Card
- US Adoption papers

- Certificate of Naturalization
- Certificate of Citizenship

**Secondary Documents:**

(3 Points)

- Civil Marriage/Domestic partnership/ Civil Union Certificate: Issued by the Municipality or State
- Order of Decree of Divorce
- Court Order for Legal Name Change: Signed by a judge or county clerk
- US Military Photo/Retiree Card

(2 Points)

- U.S. Military Discharge Papers (DD214)

(1 Point)

- Current/ Expired (Less than 1 year) Non-Digital NJ Photo Drivers License
- Social Security Card
- Bank statement or record
- ATM Card w/ pre-printed name and applicant signature
- NJ Public Assistance Card w/ Photo
- High School Diploma/GED/ College Diploma
- Veterans Affairs-Universal Access Photo ID Card

You can get a brochure on this new “Six Point” system from the MVC offices listed above or from the Motor Vehicle Commission website, [www.state.nj.us/mvc](http://www.state.nj.us/mvc). If your license has expired, you will have to go with your six points of I.D. to the MVC to fill out a renewal application. You may have to take the written test again. License renewal costs **\$24.00**.

**E. Non-driver’s State I.D.**

New Jersey provides a state photo identification card for non-drivers. **You can get this official state I.D. even if your driver’s license is currently suspended.** This may be a good option for you if it is going to be some time before you get your license back. You will still need to bring the same type of identification documents described previously, under the new “Six Point” system.

**F. Certificates of Naturalization or Citizenship**

This certificate is necessary for employment upon your release. In general, if you need to replace lost forms, you can contact the US Citizenship & Immigration Service or Application Support Centers to find out about identification and fingerprint verifications. There is a fee to process an application for replacement documents. The National Customer Service Hotline is 1 (800) 375-5283.

## **Citizenship Locations**

### **US Citizenship & Immigration Service**

530 Fellowship Rd.  
Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054  
856-439-5799

### **US Citizenship & Immigration Service**

Peter Rodino, Jr. Federal Building  
970 Broad St.  
Newark, NJ 07102

### **Application Support Center**

285-299 Broad Street  
Elizabeth, NJ 07201.

### **Application Support Center**

24 Commerce Ave.  
Newark, NJ 07102

## **G. Alien Registration Card “Green Card”**

To replace a missing Green Card, you must go to the US Citizenship & Immigration Service Office (see above) to fill out an I-90 form. Please make sure that you bring I. D. with you.

You can also visit the website and download the forms at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov). It costs **\$290.00** for processing. **If you have any questions or concerns about your status as a result of your criminal conviction, call Legal Services of New Jersey at 1-888-576-5529 before going to immigration.**

## **H. Military Discharge Papers**

**FYI:** You may have the opportunity to meet with the VA liaison from the Veterans administration. The VA liaison can assist you in requesting a copy of your DD214 (discharge papers). Please notify your social worker of your veteran status.

You can request a copy of your records using the SF-180 form. Contact your institution's **P.R.E.P.A.R.E** social worker for assistance. This form can also be obtained by writing the Veteran Benefit Administration in New Jersey or the NPRC, which is the main records depository.

### **Veterans Benefit Administration in New Jersey**

**20 Washington Pl., 3rd Floor  
Newark, NJ 07102**

Main records depository,  
**NPRC, 9700 Page Ave**  
**St. Louis, MO 63132-5100**

Upon your release, you can also call the **Veterans Affairs main number 1-800-827-1000** or you can go to the website [www.vetrecs.archives.gov](http://www.vetrecs.archives.gov) to request your records. The website will instruct you to print a signature page. This can either be mailed or faxed to the Veterans Benefit Administration. Upon the receipt of your form, the Veterans Benefit Administration will mail your records directly to you. website [www.vetrecs.archives.gov](http://www.vetrecs.archives.gov) and follow the on screen instructions for requesting personnel records. You will be asked to print out a signature page which can either be mailed or faxed. Upon receiving the form, the records will be mailed directly to you.



## **I. Passport**

Although a passport may not seem like an important item to have at this point, since it is a widely accepted, it can more easily serve as a form of I.D. for you. A passport will cost you money. To obtain one after you are released, please visit:

**Middlesex County Clerk's Office,**  
**75 Bayard Street 4<sup>th</sup> Floor New Brunswick, NJ 08901**  
**(732) 745-3000.**

### **You will need to bring:**

- ✓ An original or certified copy of a birth certificate with a raised seal and file date issued by Vital Statistics
- ✓ A naturalization certificate
- ✓ A previous US passport; photocopies aren't accepted.
- ✓ Your social security number
- ✓ I.D., such as a valid driver's license, government identification or previous passport issued after your 16th birthday. The expired passport should not be more than 15 years old.
- ✓ 2 identical copies of a 2X2 face front regulation passport photo.

The cost for a passport for 16 and older is **\$100.00**. Bring a check for **\$75.00** made payable to US Dept. of State and a check or money order for **\$25.00** made payable to the County Clerk. A passport will be valid for 10 years.

## **J. NJDOC Release Papers/ Temporary ID Card**

Make sure you keep your prison release papers and temporary ID card. The release papers can serve as identification in some circumstances and the ID card is valid for 30 days.

## **First Steps After Release:**

### **Where Do I Go to Find...**

This section provides resources for food, shelter, clothing, money, and other emergency needs. We have provided some options in Middlesex County that you can utilize upon release.

**FYI:** Important paperwork will be needed repeatedly throughout your life. Make sure to invest in a folder or safe to keep important documents. Never carry your birth certificate or social security card with you. You will only need to produce these items upon request. It is smarter to keep them in a safe place.

Also, make sure to keep a notebook and a pen with you to write down the names and phone numbers of the people you come in contact with at various agencies. Remember, nobody is going to care about your success as much as you do.

Provided for you are agencies and services that can assist you in finding your basic needs.

**FYI:** It is a good idea to call first to check that the hours of operation haven't changed. Please try to be patient with those that are attempting to assist you.

See the following pages for list of resources.

## **A. First Stops**

The agencies below provide a range of services and/or, depending on what you need, can refer you to other places.

### **FIRST-STOP AGENCIES**

#### **2-1-1/First Call for Help**

Dial 211

800-331-7272 (Homeless Hotline)

Hours: Mon - Fri 8:30am - 4:30pm

Emergencies and homeless calls are 24 hours/day

211 provide 24 hour comprehensive human service

information and referral for residents of Middlesex County.

211 can help access information as well as locate

services/programs to connect residents to the resources that are available to them in the community. 211 is equipped for TTY callers and has language line to connect to 140 different languages.

## **B. Shelter**

Access to most of these shelters can be obtained through the Middlesex County Board of Social Services or through a general walk in. These shelters will also provide showers and laundry services.

### **Men Only**



#### **Catholic Charities-The Ozanam Inn**

2022 Abeel St, New Brunswick  
732-729-0850  
Hours: 24 hours/day

#### **Catholic Charities-The State Street Program**

929-933 State Street, Perth Amboy  
732-826-7711  
Hours: 24 Hours/Day

#### **Salvation Army- Care House Transitional Housing**

433 State Street, Perth Amboy  
732-826-7040  
Hours: 6pm- 7am

### **Women & Children**

#### **Catholic Charities- Ozanam Family Shelter**

89 Truman Dr, Edison  
732-985-0327  
Hours: 24 Hours/Day

#### **Catholic Charities- Naomi's Way**

4 Roosevelt St, New Brunswick  
732-729-0850  
No walk-ins allowed. Referral through the Middlesex County Board of Social Services required.

## **C. Food/Clothing**

Here are the food pantries and soup kitchens in Middlesex County. Although each agency has been verified, please call to check for most current hours of operation.

## **Food Pantries/Soup Kitchens**

**FYI:** Please note that any food pantry that also sells or provides clothing will be indicated next to the address by the designated symbol.

### **Elijah's Promise Soup Kitchen/Food Pantry**



18 Nielson St, New Brunswick  
732-545-9002

**Hours:**

**Lunch: Mon-Fri: 11am-12:15 pm**

**Dinner: Mon-Fri: 6pm-7pm**

**Weekends: 3:30pm- 4:30pm**

### **Abundant Life Worship Church Food Pantry**



302 Suydam St, New Brunswick  
732-846-1719

**Must call for services**

### **Broken Loaves at Calvary Chapel Food Pantry**



135 White Oak Ln, Old Bridge  
732-769-4837

**Hours: Tues-Fri: 10:30am-2:30pm**

### **Salvation Army Food Pantry/**



#### **Daily Feeding Program**

433 State St, Perth Amboy  
732-826-7040

**Hours: 11:30 am-12:30pm on the last 10 days of the month**

### **Jamesburg Presbyterian Church Board of Deacon's Food Covered**



177 Geatzmer Ave, Jamesburg  
732-521-1711

**Hours- 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the Month**

### **St Cecelia Food Pantry**



Corner of Oak Tree Rd and Rte 27, Iselin  
732-283-0150 ext 21 or 23

**Hours: Tues: 10am-2pm**

**Ebenezer Baptist Church Soup Kitchen/Food Pantry**

126 Lee Ave, New Brunswick  
732-247-2459

**Hours: Tues 11am-1pm**



**North Brunswick Food Bank**

710 Hermann Rd, North Brunswick  
732-247-0922 x 475

**Hours: Tues 10am-12pm/ Thurs 6pm-8pm**



**Old Bridge Food Bank**

1 Old Bridge Plaza, Old Bridge  
732-721-5600 x 6600



**Sayreville Care and Share Food Bank**

423 Main St, Sayreville  
732-651-6902



**Plainsboro Twp Food Pantry**

641 Plainsboro Rd, Plainsboro  
609-799-0909 x 218



**South Brunswick Food Pantry at  
South Brunswick Senior Center**

Monmouth Junction  
732-329-4000 x677



**South River Food Bank**

732-238-3020



**D: Transportation**

There is no general program that will provide assistance paying for transportation. NJ Transit will no longer accept release papers in substitution for bus tickets. You may purchase transit tickets from NJDOC for \$2.00 prior to release. You will be provided with the accurate amount of tickets to ensure your arrival to your destination.

Some of the programs listed in this book will provide bus passes or bus cards to help you participate in that particular program. If you need that help, make sure that you ask.

For specific bus line information contact NJ Transit: 800-772-2222 or <http://www.njtransit.com>. If you click on the “trip planner” section you can find out routes.

**FYI:** You may want to purchase a monthly or weekly pass if you intend to use the discounted transportation services provided in Middlesex County.

If you intend to drive places, remember that you **must** have a valid driver’s license, and valid insurance for any vehicle that you are driving. New Jersey now has a “Dollar-A-Day Car Insurance Program” for low-income individuals who receive Medicaid and want to insure a car registered in their name. It costs **\$360.00** per year if you pay all at once and **\$365.00** if you pay in installments. You cannot get this insurance if your license or registration are revoked or suspended. Other restrictions may apply. For more information contact: 800-652-2471; <http://www.state.nj.us/dobi/dollaradayqna.htm>.

**Transportation for seniors, disabled, and other dependent residents of middlesex county**

**MCAT-MIDDLESEX COUNTY AREA TRANSIT**

711 Jersey Avenue  
New Brunswick, NJ  
732-745-7456

To make a reservation please call 1-800-221-3520  
(All reservations must be made M-F 7:15-4:15)

**E. Money**

Once you get out of prison, you will need a source of income, until you can find a job. (see under “Finding a Job” for information about looking for work). **The DOC does not provide any “gate money,” except for the money you may have in your inmate account. If it is possible to save any money before you are released, you should try to do so.** Based on need, Parole can give up to \$300.00 in emergency funds, but it is at their discretion. Ask your parole officer about this.

You may be eligible to get some kind of public assistance (welfare), but not everyone qualifies for this.



Here are the basics of what you’ll need to know about getting benefits.

**GENERAL ASSISTANCE (WFNJ-GA) AND TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (WFNJ-TANF)** provide cash benefits, GA for single people and TANF for people who have custody of their children. Both programs will require you to work or actively look for work and both have a five-year lifetime limit. Work First New Jersey also has an Emergency Assistance program that you may qualify for if you are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless: it can pay for things like food, clothing and transportation costs to look for housing, but also temporary rental or mortgage payment assistance and utility payments. Depending on the county you are returning to, you may be able to meet with the **P.R.E.P.A.R.E** social worker at your institution and complete an application prior to release. You can contact your social worker for more information.

**WFNJ-GA AND WFNJ-TANF APPLICATION SITES:**

**WFNJ/General Assistance**

181 How Lane  
New Brunswick  
732-745-3500 OR 1-800-SOCIAL2

Provides emergency/financial services to adults without children for all the towns in Middlesex County that are not listed below.

**\*Please note residents of Plainsboro will need to go to their town municipal to apply.**

**WFNJ/TANF-Perth Amboy, South Amboy**

252 Madison Avenue  
Perth Amboy  
732-324-5500

**FYI:** If you were convicted of an offense involving distribution or sale of drugs after August 22, 1996, you cannot receive cash benefits under GA or TANF. If you were convicted of an offense after that date that only involved possession of drugs, you may be able to get benefits if you completed or are enrolled in a licensed drug treatment program, or completed a program in prison and are drug free (you will have to submit to drug testing). If you apply for welfare and the case worker asks about your criminal background, you should answer truthfully and to the best of your knowledge. If you provide false information, you may be found “ineligible” and could also be prosecuted.

## FOOD STAMPS

### **You may apply for food stamp while applying for GA/TANF.**

If you were convicted after August 22, 1996 of a drug distribution or sales offense, you may still be able to get Food Stamps if you have completed or are enrolled in a licensed drug treatment program, or completed a program in prison and are drug free (you will be tested). Same goes for possession offenses.

**F: Veterans Benefits:** If you were receiving veteran's benefits, either for disability or a pension, and you were incarcerated for more than 60 days, you will have to get reinstated after you are released. If you were not receiving benefits and you are a veteran, you may be eligible for benefits or for some of their other programs and services, including health care. You can contact the **P.R.E.P.A.R.E** social worker in your institution located in the social services department for assistance. You can also contact the VA for questions about benefits at 800-827-1000; the health benefit number is 877-222-VETS. The 24 hour veterans mental health hotline is **1-866-VETS-NJ4U**.

The VA Benefit Administration is located at  
20 Washington Pl., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Newark  
973-645-1441 (regional office).



The following are some websites that can assist you in looking for information about veteran services:

Federal Veterans Information:

[www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)

Info for NJ Veterans:

[www.vetsinfo.com](http://www.vetsinfo.com)

New Jersey Dept of Veterans Affairs: [www.state.nj.us/military](http://www.state.nj.us/military)

New Jersey Veterans Guide:

[www.state.nj.us/military/veterans/njguide](http://www.state.nj.us/military/veterans/njguide)

VA Home Loans:  
[www.homeloans.va.gov](http://www.homeloans.va.gov)

Veterans Counseling Service Center:  
[www.va.gov/rcs/newjersey/html](http://www.va.gov/rcs/newjersey/html)

**Be aware that the VA takes considerable time to make decisions. On average, it can take 273 days to process a new application for benefits.**

**OTHER BENEFIT PROGRAMS:** You may be eligible for other cash benefits, including Supplemental Security Income (SSI) disability benefits (if you are seriously disabled and cannot work) call 1-800-772-1213 and the Women's, Infants, Children (WIC) program, which gives food vouchers to low-income parents. You can inquire about WIC at the city and county welfare offices.

### **Taking Care of Yourself: Getting Support**

The transition from prison back to society may take some time to get adjusted and we want to provide you with options to lessen the burden. Taking care of your mind and body will be important for your success. Below are a few places to that may be of assistance.



### **Taking Care of Yourself: Health Care Resources**

It is very important that you pay attention to your health during the period after you are released, and that you make sure you have a plan to get any prescriptions that you need filled and see a doctor if you have health conditions that need care. Also, stress and changes in routine can make many health conditions worse. Below, you'll find information on paying for health care and clinics and other resources in Middlesex County.

#### **A. Health Care Benefits: Am I eligible?**

In New Jersey, the **Medicaid** program provides health care benefits for some low-income people. If you gain custody of children under 18 when you are released, you may qualify if you are single, or if the main breadwinner in the household is unemployed, or isn't

earning enough to support the family. Otherwise, if you are single, you will only qualify for Medicaid if you are low-income and are aged (meaning over 65), blind or so disabled that you are unable to work. If you are disabled and are applying for SSI, you will also be screened for Medicaid at that time. If you qualify for General Assistance benefits, you will get some very basic health care benefits through Medicaid (Plan G). **Medicaid is a separate program from GA or TANF, so you don't have to be eligible for those benefits to qualify for Medicaid.**

**For questions about Medicaid eligibility, or to apply for Medicaid in Middlesex County go to:**

**Middlesex County Board of Social Services**  
181 How Lane  
New Brunswick  
732-745-3500 OR 1-800-SOCIAL2

If you are a veteran, you may be eligible for health care benefits through the **Veteran's Administration**, which provides a "Medical Benefits Package" for enrolled veterans. You can call 877-222-VETS for more information about eligibility and applying for benefits.

If you are HIV+ or have AIDS, you may also be eligible for the **AIDS Drug Distribution Program (ADDP)**, which provides help paying for AIDS medication for people who don't have other ways of paying. **You can apply for this program before you are released.** Contact the **Aids Drug Distribution Program** at 609-588-7038 or toll free 877-613-4533, Mon-Fri 9am-5pm to apply.

**Easter Seals New Jersey** provides information, referrals and loans of medical equipment (including wheelchairs) to people in need. For information call 732-257-6662.

## **B. General HealthCare Providers**

Even if you do not have Medicaid or other health insurance or benefits, Middlesex County has clinics that provide primary health care at low cost, sliding scale or for free. They are listed below. Most hospitals have charity care and you should ask about this if you go to a hospital emergency room for treatment.



**Middlesex County Community Health Centers**

**Jewish Renaissance Medical Center**

272 A Hobart Street  
Perth Amboy, NJ 08861  
732-376-9333  
Hours: M, TH 8am-8pm, T, W, F 8am-5pm

**Raritan Bay Medical Center**

530 New Brunswick Ave  
Perth Amboy NJ 08861  
732-442-3700

**JFK Medical Center**

65 James Street  
Edison, NJ 08818  
732-321-7000

**Eric B. Chandler Health Center**

277 George Street  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
732-235-9099  
Hours: T,W,F 8am-5pm, TH 8am-7:30pm, S 8:30am-12pm

**St. Peter's Family Health Center**

123 How Lane  
(Women's) 254 Easton Ave 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
732-7456642  
Hours: M-F 8:30am-4:30pm

**Joseph S. Yewaisis Outpatient Center, Raritan Bay Medical Center**

516 Lawrie Street  
Perth Amboy, NJ 08861  
732-324-3300  
Hours: M-F 8:30am-5pm

All of these centers accept Medicaid and some insurance plans, but also provide services on a sliding scale basis, additional fees for x-rays and lab work. Primary and preventive care. Staff there can help you apply for Medicaid or other benefits if you may be eligible.

**Middlesex Department of Human Services**

1 JFK Square  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901 Phone: 732-745-4042  
Middlesex County Prescription Discount Plan  
1-800-633-0037  
[www.gspops.com](http://www.gspops.com)

**Planned Parenthood of Central NJ**

<http://www.ppcnj.org/>

New Brunswick: 732-842-9300

Spotswood: 732-251-9649

Perth Amboy: 732-442-4499

**Provides:**

- ✓ Gynecological exams,
- ✓ Pregnancy testing/counseling,
- ✓ Prenatal care,
- ✓ STD testing/counseling,
- ✓ Teen programs,
- ✓ Emergency contraception,
- ✓ Family planning
- ✓ Male programs.

*Sliding scale fees based on income and family size, Medicaid and most insurance is accepted.*

**C. Services for People with HIV/AIDS**

In addition to the clinics listed above, a number of places in Middlesex County offer care and support services specifically for people with HIV and AIDS.

**Catholic Charities Case Management for HIV Disease**

24 Abeel St.

New Brunswick NJ 08903

732-745-9800

**Hyacinth AIDS Foundation**

317 George Street Suite 203

New Brunswick, NJ 08901

732-246-0204 or call the state's hotline 877-613-4533.

Hours: Mon-Fri 9am-5pm

Services include case management, support groups, buddy services and treatment advocacy.

**NJ AIDS/STD Hotline**

UMDNJ/65 Bergen St, Newark

1-800-624-2377 – 24 hours/day

The hotline gives referrals, general information, counseling, testing locations and treatment information.

**New Jersey Women and Aids Network**  
103 Bayard Street 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
New Brunswick NJ 08901  
Sister Connect Warm Line: 1-800-747-1108  
732-846-4462  
Hours: M-F 9am-5pm

**HIV Health Services Planning Council**  
Center for Children and Families Rutgers University  
100 Joyce Kilmer Avenue  
Piscataway, NJ 08854  
**732-445-0512 x121 Contact: Natalie Aloyets-Artel**

### **D. Services for People With Tuberculosis and Hepatitis C**

In addition to the general medical care facilities listed above, there are a few services especially for people with tuberculosis and hepatitis C.

**National Hepatitis C Coalition**  
**951-766-8238**

**Mercer County Hepatitis Support Group**  
Robert Wood Johnson  
Whitehorse Hamilton Square Road and Klockner Road  
Hamilton NJ  
Contact: Peggy Goodale 609-371-3401

**Global TB Institute at the University of Medicine and Dentistry**  
Hotline: 1-800-4TB-DOCS

**TUBERCULOSIS CONTROL PROGRAM**  
29 Oakwood Avenue  
Edison NJ 08837  
732-321-5297  
Hours: M-F 8:30am-4:15pm

### **E. Dental Care**

Most of the locations listed below don't provide free care, but do have a sliding scale for those without insurance. Waiting lists can be long.

**RWJ Dental Services**  
1 Robert Wood Johnson Place  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
732-937-8653  
Hours: M-F 8:30am-4:30pm



## **F. MENTAL HEALTH /SUBSTANCE ABUSE RESOURCES**

**FYI:** Drug addiction can be fatal to your health, not to mention illegal and can result in jail time. In order to be successful in society seeking services for a drug or alcohol addiction will be necessary. Many of the health clinics, support centers and other resources listed in this guide can help refer you to treatment that most fits your needs. Listed below are some of Middlesex County's treatment resources, and each of these will also help with referrals if they can not help you. If you want treatment, you should also ask your parole officer for help — beds in treatment facilities are hard to come by, and they can help get you in. There are Narcotics Anonymous (NA) and Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) support group meetings all over Middlesex County. To find a meeting near you, call 866-920-1212 (for AA) or 800-992-0401 (for NA). For other self-help group resources, call the New Jersey Self Help Clearinghouse at 800-367-6274. Also, you can call the Addictions Hotline of NJ at 800-238-2333.

### **Detoxification**

**Triple S Detoxification Center**  
530 New Brunswick Ave  
Perth Amboy, NJ 08861-3654  
(732) 442-3794

**University Behavioral Health Care**  
671 Hoes Lane  
Piscataway, NJ 08855  
1-800-996-5300

**New Brunswick Counseling Center**  
320 Suydam Street  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
732 246 4025

**Addictions Hotline of New Jersey**  
PO Box 1004  
Williamstown, NJ  
800-238-2333  
Hours: 24 hours/day  
Provides NJ residents with information about the types of detoxification, evaluation, treatment, professional and support groups available to drug and alcohol abusers or addicts who wish to stop their use of chemical substances.

**National Clearinghouse for Drug and Alcohol Information**

11420 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland  
800-729-6686

Hours: 24 hours/day

The nation's one-stop resource for substance abuse prevention and treatment information.

**Damon House Inc.**

105 Joyce Kilmer Avenue  
New Brunswick NJ 08901  
732-828-3988

Substance Abuse Only

Long term residential, Therapeutic Community

**FYI:** While the medical care and drug treatment facilities listed above may be able to assist you with medication for mental health issues, and some counseling as well, there are also places to go to get counseling and therapy and other mental health services. Some of these services require Medicaid or other insurance, but some will also have sliding scale payments.

**Although the services below provide mental health services, some may also offer substance abuse services, as well.**

**Outpatient and Residential Treatment**

**Catholic Charities Diocese of Metuchen**

288 Rues Lane  
East Brunswick, NJ 08816  
732-257-6100

[www.ccdom.org](http://www.ccdom.org)

MICA Outpatient

**Comprehensive Care Services**

4 Ethel RD Suite 404 A&B  
Edison, NJ 08817  
732-287-4044

[www.comprecares.com](http://www.comprecares.com)

Outpatient, Intensive outpatient, Partial Care/ MICA

**Community Care Behavioral Health**

131, Ethel Road West,  
Piscataway, N.J. 08854  
(732)-572-4666

[www.communitycare.us](http://www.communitycare.us)

Mental Illness/Developmental Disabilities Partial Care Program

**JFK/Center For Behavioral Health**

65 James Street  
Edison, NJ 08818  
732-321-7189  
Outpatient

**New Brunswick Counseling Center**

320 Suydam Street  
New Brunswick NJ 08901  
732-246-4025  
Outpatient, OPIOID Maintenance- Outpatient

**Princeton House Behavioral Health**

1460 Livingston Avenue  
North Brunswick, NJ 08902  
732-729-3600  
[www.princetonhcs.org](http://www.princetonhcs.org)  
Intensive Outpatient, Partial Care/ MICA

**Raritan Bay Medical Center**

500 Convery BLVD  
Perth Amboy, NJ 08861  
732-442-7030  
[www.rbmc.org](http://www.rbmc.org)  
Outpatient, OPIOID, Maintenance- Outpatient, Methadone  
Outpatient, Detoxification, Hospital Inpatient- Detoxification

**Strathmore Clinic, INC.**

1 Lower Main Street  
South Amboy, NJ 08879  
732-727-2555  
OPIOID Maintenance- Outpatient, Methadone Outpatient-  
Detoxification

**The Open Door (New Hope Foundation)**

New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
732-246-4800  
[www.newhopefoundation.org](http://www.newhopefoundation.org)  
Outpatient, Intensive Outpatient, Partial Care/MICA  
Treatment

**University of Medicine & Dentistry**

390 George Street  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
732-235-3440/ 1-800-969-5300

## **G. Emergency Mental Health Services**

**FYI: If at any time you may want to hurt yourself or someone else, please call 911. If you feel like you may be a danger to your self or others. It is very important that you call someone for help. Here are a few numbers of places that would be more than willing to come to your aid.**

### **Middlesex County Mental Health Administration**

732-745-5186

[www.co.middlesex.nj.us/humanservices](http://www.co.middlesex.nj.us/humanservices)

### **Raritan Bay Medical Center Crisis Stabilization**

Perth Amboy

732-324-5289 /5105

### **UMDNJ Crisis**

Piscataway

732-235-5700

### **Middlesex County Prescription Discount Plan**

**1-800-633-0037**

[www.gspops.com](http://www.gspops.com)

## **H. Free/Low Cost Eyeglasses and Eye care**

### **Atlantic Medical Eye Care**

**Dr. Scharfman**

**Raritan Bay Medical Center**

3 Hospital Plaza Suite 310

Old Bridge NJ 08857

732-607-0555



### **American Council of the Blind of New Jersey**

21 Island Drive

Old Bridge, NJ 08857

### **National Federation of the Blind of New Jersey**

69 Prospect Place

Belleville, NJ 07109

(973) 450-3030

## Finding a Job: Employment Assistance and Training Programs



Getting a job is usually one of the most important necessities when released from prison. Not everyone can obtain employment immediately, sometimes things like getting drug treatment, dealing with your housing, health or family situation may come first. For most people, though, finding work is the first step to getting back on your feet. It will be very challenging to get a job once you have been in prison, but it is not impossible, and you need to be persistent and patient. Below are some pointers on job searching, and information about resources that can help you find a job or get training for the job you want.



### A. Things to Know Before You Start Your Job Search

**Be Prepared:** It is essential that you are organized, and have all records of previous employment available when beginning a job search. A resume is the smartest thing you can create. If you are unsure of how to do so, you may go to your local one-stop career center and seek assistance. Not only will employers want to know your work history, they will inquire of accurate dates that you were employed with the company. Knowing this information is vital to ensuring employment. Employers will not be interested in hearing that you do not remember dates or addresses for your work history. If an employer decides to hire you he will also need your identification so make sure that is readily available.

**Presentation:** Look as neat, clean and organized as possible, no matter what the job is. Be polite and respectful, even when people are not polite and respectful to you, and many won't be. Making the person you want to help you or hire you mad won't get you the job you want.

#### **Talking About Your Criminal Record:**

Never omit or falsify a document that asks you specifically if you have a criminal record. The application may ask you to give details to the nature of your crime and it may not. Chances are a criminal background check will be administered prior to employment and lying will cost you the job.

**FYI:** Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC): With the Work Opportunity Tax Credit, your employer may be able to save up to \$4800 the first year you are hired. Make sure to inform your potential employer of this benefit.

**For questions regarding WOTC, please call 609-292-5525 or 1-800-792-8881**

**Federal Bonding Program:** Provides bonding “or insurance coverage” for employers who hire individuals with criminal histories who are otherwise qualified but cannot gain employment due to their criminal backgrounds. Please contact your local one stop for more information. (732) 418-3347 and toll free 1-800-233-2258.

### **Middlesex County Apprenticeship Programs**

**Contact:** Mr. Bruce Negri  
Middlesex County Vocational and Technical Schools  
112 Rues Lane, PO Box 1070  
East Brunswick, NJ 08816  
732.257.3300 x1921  
732.390.4252 FAX  
[negrib@mail.mcvts.net](mailto:negrib@mail.mcvts.net)  
[www.mcvts.net](http://www.mcvts.net)  
NJ LWD Representative – James Spinola

### **IT’S A JOB FOR RIGHT NOW, IT’S NOT THE REST OF YOUR LIFE**

When you are first starting out, especially if you’ve been out of the job market for a while, or have never had a job, you need to build a work history, and, of course, you need to make some money. Take whatever job you can get for now — it doesn’t have to be the exact job you want, or what you eventually want to be doing. Do this job well—even if it’s not a great job—and it can help you get a better one in the future. A year of good job performance will make your criminal record matter less.

### **B. Help with Job Search and Job Training: Resources**

***The following are good places to start in looking for a job.***

**Middlesex County One-Stop/Workforce New Jersey**  
506 Jersey Avenue  
New Brunswick NJ  
One Stop: 732-937-6200  
Workforce NJ: 732-745-3955  
Hours: M-F 8:30am-5:30pm

Perth Amboy Office  
161 New Brunswick Ave  
Perth Amboy, NJ  
One Stop: 732-293-5016  
Workforce NJ: 732-826-3200  
Hours: M-F 8:30am-5:30pm

**Jewish Family and Vocational Service**

Milltown Office: 32 Ford Ave Milltown  
732-777-1940  
Monroe Office: 52 Concordia Shopping Center Monroe  
609-395-7979

Offers: comprehensive career assistance to unemployed, underemployed, refugees, asylees, individuals seeking a new job and/or those seeking a career change.

*\* Also offers women's job center at Milltown office.*

Services include: Career Evaluation and Assessment, Career counseling, Career planning, Job Search Techniques, Resume Writing, Interview Preparation, Job Seeker Support Group, Education and Academic Counseling, Computer Training, English Language Training

**NJ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services**

New Brunswick, NJ  
732-937-6300

This program includes diagnostic evaluation, vocational guidance and counseling, therapies, vocational training, rehabilitation workshop and training, tools, supplies, assistive devices, vehicle modification, supported employment/job coaching and job placement assistance. Disability must be significant impediment to employment.

**New Brunswick Public Schools Adult Learning Center**

268 Baldwin Street 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
New Brunswick  
732-745-5300 x4100  
Offers computer access for job searches and resume writing.  
Offers additional services for ages 16-20.  
M-F 9:30am-4:30pm

**Civic League of greater New Brunswick**

47-49 Throop Ave  
New Brunswick  
732-247-9066  
Offers public access to computers for job searches and resume writing.  
M-F 9:00am-5:00pm.

**Elijah's Promise- Culinary Arts Training Program**

The Promise Jobs Culinary School offers a full-time, intensive training program that prepares participants for employment in the food service industry.

211 Livingston Ave

New Brunswick

(732) 545-9002, ext. 113

**Middlesex County Apprenticeship Programs**

**Contact:** Mr. Bruce Negri

Middlesex County Vocational and Technical Schools

112 Rues Lane, PO Box 1070

East Brunswick, NJ 08816

732.257.3300 x1921

732.390.4252 FAX

[negrib@mail.mcvts.net](mailto:negrib@mail.mcvts.net)

[www.mcvts.net](http://www.mcvts.net)

NJ LWD Representative – James Spinola

**C. Legal Restrictions on  
Employment and Protections  
Against Discrimination**

If you are interested in getting a job and building a career in a particular area, you should make sure that it isn't one that is forbidden to someone with the kind of criminal conviction that you have on your record. There are about 22 categories of jobs in New Jersey that exclude people with convictions (which conviction it is varies by job). These include: aircraft/airport employees; paid public school employees, school bus drivers and school crossing guards; bank employees; bartenders and waiters in establishments where liquor is served; housing authority and municipal police and parking enforcement officers; New Jersey Turnpike Authority employees; liquor retail, wholesale, manufacturing or distributing employees; paid firefighters; child care center employees; community residences for individuals with developmental disabilities. A much larger number of jobs require that you disclose your criminal record, and that employers perform background checks; some of these, however, also require that employers consider evidence of rehabilitation. These include most jobs in the health care and counseling fields (including drug and alcohol counseling) and social workers.

If you are going to begin training in a particular field, make sure you find out from the training course whether there are any restrictions that will keep you from getting a job.

**Protections For Licensed Occupations:**

If you are not absolutely barred from a position because of your conviction, New Jersey law says that you cannot be denied a professional license simply because of your conviction unless the crime for which you were convicted relates to the occupation you want to enter. If the licensing board or agency wants to deny you a license because the crime is related to the occupation, they have to explain, in writing, that they have considered certain factors like the seriousness of the crime, the circumstances of the crime, the date and your age when convicted, whether the crime was an isolated or repeated event, social conditions, and evidence of rehabilitation. You can ask your parole officer about applying for a “certificate of rehabilitation,” which can be used in your license application.

**D. Benefits for Employers Who Hire People With Criminal Records**

As you look for a job you can tell employers that the federal government has programs to support employers who hire people coming out of prison.

**FYI:** Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC): With the Work Opportunity Tax Credit, your employer may be able to save up to \$4800 the first year you are hired. Make sure to inform your potential employer of this benefit.

**For questions regarding WOTC, please call 609-292-5525 or 1-800-792-8881**

**Federal Bonding Program:** Provides bonding “or insurance coverage” for employers who hire individuals with criminal histories who are otherwise qualified but cannot gain employment due to their criminal backgrounds. Please contact your local one stop for more information. (732) 418-3347 and toll free 1-800-233-2258.



### **E. Opening a Checking or Savings Account**

After you've gotten a source of income, you may want to open a checking or savings account. A checking account is a great idea because many jobs provide direct deposit, and your check is automatically deposited into your account on payday. Using checks to pay for your bills is also cheaper than using money orders. To open a checking account you usually need a picture I.D. (driver's license or non-driver state I.D.), proof of address, birth certificate, and a social security card. You can also request a debit card with your account, which you can use just like a credit card (as long as you have the money in your account already). You can get a debit card for either a checking account, or a savings account, but with a savings account you can earn interest on the money you've saved. Fees for these accounts will vary depending on the type of account and bank. Many banks now offer free checking.



### **F. Public Libraries**

Your local public library can be a good resource for your job search. Public computers provide internet access (and help using the computer), job and course listings, and other local directories. Libraries also often carry the government forms mentioned in this guide, and librarians can help you find other information that you need.

#### **LIBRARIES**

##### **New Brunswick Library**

60 Livingston Ave  
New Brunswick  
(732) 745-5108

##### **Highland Park Library**

31 North 5<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Highland Park  
732-572-2750

##### **North Brunswick Library**

880 Hermann Road  
North Brunswick  
732-246-3545

**Plainsboro Library**  
641 Plainsboro Road  
(609) 275-2897

**South River Library**  
55 Appleby Ave  
South River  
732-254-2488

**Plainfield Library**  
340 Plainfield Ave  
Edison  
732-287-2298

**North Edison Library**  
777 Grove Avenue  
Edison  
732-548-3045

**Clara Barton Library**  
141 Hoover Ave  
Edison  
732-738-0096

**Spotswood Library**  
548 Main St.  
Spotswood  
732-251-1515

**East Brunswick Library**  
2 Jean Walling Civic Center  
East Brunswick  
732-390-6950

**Jamesburg Library**  
229 Gatzmer Ave  
Jamesburg  
732-521-0440



### **Reconnecting with Family**

As you prepare to come home, you may be thinking about reuniting with family members, including those you may not have seen for a long time. You may be excited to see your kids, your spouse, your parents, and others who are part of your family, and while most will be glad to see you home, others may be reluctant. All kinds of issues can come up, and you may need some help solving

some of the problems that arise. This section provides some information and resources to help solve these issues.

### **Hotlines For Family Services Resources**

**NJ Child Abuse/ Neglect Hotline:**  
1(877)NJABUSE (652-2873)

**Child Care Hotline:**  
1(800) 332-9227

**NJ Child Support Hotline:**  
1 (877) NJKIDS- 1 (655-4371)

**Division of Family Development:**  
1(800) 792-9773

**NJ Division of Youth and Family Services:**  
1 (800) 331-DYFS (3937)

**Family Health Line:**  
1 (800) 328-3838

**Family Help Line (for stressed parents):**  
1 (800) THE KIDS (843-2537)

**National Domestic Violence Hotline:**  
1(800) 799-7233

**NJ Domestic Violence Hotline:**  
1(800) 572-7223

**Parents Anonymous:**  
1(800) 843-5437

### **A. Family Counseling Resources**

The following places can provide support, marital and family counseling and parenting classes to help you reunite with your family.

#### **Catholic Charities – Middlesex Counseling Center**

319 Maple Street  
Perth Amboy, NJ 08861  
732-324-8200  
\*DYFS Clients Only

271 Smith Street,  
Perth Amboy, NJ 08861

**Phone:** 732.826.9160

*\*Non-DYFS clients accepted*

**Catholic Charities – Connections Program**

26 Safran Avenue,  
Edison, NJ 08816  
732.738.1323

Hours: Call for hours

Provides high quality, low cost, individual, couple, family and group counseling services to all individuals requesting treatment.

**My Daughter’s Keeper, Inc.**

1086 Livingston Avenue, Suite 2,  
North Brunswick, NJ 08902  
732.565.9313

**New Jersey MENTOR**

80 Cottontail Lane, Suite 330  
Somerset, NJ 08873  
732.627.9890

**Family Support Organization of Middlesex County**

1 Ethel Road, Suite 108 A  
Edison, NJ 08817  
732.287.8701



**Grandparents raising Grandchildren**

P.O. Box 1523  
Rahway, NJ 07065  
732.248.8255

**Parents Anonymous of New Jersey, Inc.**

127 US Highway 206, Suite 10, Hamilton  
609-585-7666  
800-843-5437 (24 hour hotline)

Hours: Call to confirm group times at different locations

Self-help for parents who are under stress and who want to improve their relationship with their children. Groups meet weekly and are facilitated by a volunteer professional; many groups provide child care. Groups meet in most counties throughout the state with some bilingual groups available.

Parents Anonymous also offers an on-line support group as well.



**B. Child Custody and Visitation**

Establishing visitation and gaining custody of your children once you are released is not an overnight procedure. If you had custody of your kids at the time you were incarcerated, and no family was able to take care of them, they may have been placed in foster care. If this is the case, and you do not know your

child's case manager's name or number, contact the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS), at 732-246-5640 or 800-531-1091. You will have to make an appointment with the case manager for an interview. They may not be willing to give you information over the phone. You'll be asked a series of questions in order to assess when and if you will be given visitation rights, so that you may reestablish your relationship with the child and hopefully gain custody again. This is just a quick overview of what to do and what you can expect.

**If you were convicted of any violent or sexual offenses against children, you may be unable to live with or regain custody of your children.**

### **C. Getting and Paying Child Support**

Whether you have custody of your children on your own when you get out, and need help from an absent "non-custodial" parent, or you do not have custody of kids who need your support, child support payments will be an important part of your life after you are released. Some basic information is included below, as well as other places to go to get more information.

**Child support, custody and visitation issues are very complicated, and if you can get a lawyer, you should.** Contact the Legal Services of New Jersey hotline, from 9:00 am - 4:30 pm, at 888-576-5529, or the Middlesex County Bar Association Lawyer Referral Service at (732) 828-3433. You can also contact Middlesex County Legal Services, at 317 George Street, Suite 201, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 Phone: (732) 249-7600 / 313 State Street, Suite 308 Perth Amboy, NJ 08861 Phone: (732) 324-1613. From prison, you can also contact the Prisoner's Self Help Legal Clinic, P.O. Box 768, Newark, NJ 07101.

### **Getting and Enforcing a Child Support Order**

If you have custody of your children, and want financial support from the non-custodial parent, you can apply for child support at the Superior Court of NJ Family Division, 56 Paterson St., New Brunswick, (732) 519-3200. There is a possible fee. You can also call 1-877-NJKIDS1 for more information about this. If you are receiving public assistance, there is no fee, and Work First New Jersey/TANF can help with the application, locating the absent parent, and paternity testing, but you will also not get most of the money paid in support while you are receiving public assistance, because it will go

to pay back the state for what has been paid to you. Child Support Services of the Probation Division is located at the **Perth Amboy office**: 262 State St., Perth Amboy/ **New Brunswick office**: 96 Bayard St, New Brunswick which helps enforce child support orders. The phone number for Child Support Enforcement is (877) 655-4371.

### **Paying Child Support**

If you have kids that you did not have custody of before you went to prison, there may be a child support order requiring you to pay a certain amount every month for their support. Even if you did not go to court — if, for example, the parent with custody filed for the order while you were incarcerated — the court can still order you to pay child support. The amount you pay in child support is tied to your income, and if the court does not know your income, they will assume you are working 40 hours a week at minimum wage. Child support payments are usually taken out of your paycheck. If you have not paid at all or missed payments, you will owe “arrear.” Unless you got a modification of your child support order when you went into prison (see below), the amount of arrears that you owe will have continued to grow while you were inside. When you come out, and get a job, they can begin to take out not just the monthly amount you owe for child support, but more money to pay back the arrears (up to 65% of your pay in total). They may also suspend your driver’s license. Here are some things you can do:

**Pre-Release:** Before you are released, you can seek a modification of a child support order, based on your change in circumstances (incarceration). You would be asking the court to reduce the amount you owe, so that arrears do not continue to build up while you are in prison. This process can be done without a lawyer but it is complicated, because you have to fill out and send the appropriate papers to court, the other parent or his or her lawyer, and to the Probation Division. The forms you need and the instructions are available at the state judiciary website, [www.judiciary.state.nj.us/prose/infmpjm.pdf](http://www.judiciary.state.nj.us/prose/infmpjm.pdf), or may be available in your prison law library.

**Post-Release:** You can find out how much you owe, and whether there is an existing child support order by going to the Family Division at the Hall of Justice, 120 New St. PO BOX 2691 New Brunswick NJ 08903. If you have not been paying child support, you should be aware that

there may be a warrant issued for your arrest — this may have been addressed at the time you were being released, but you should still call before you go there: 732-519-3242. Tell them who you are, that you have just been released from prison and want to find out about how to pay your child support, and ask if there is a warrant. You can ask if they will “recall” the warrant so that you can come in, possibly work out a payment plan, and get a modification of the child support order.

#### **D. Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Resources**

The following places provide counseling, support and shelter or referrals to shelter in domestic violence situations. You can also call these 24 hour hotlines:

**New Jersey Coalition for Battered Women:**  
**(800)-572-SAFE.**

**Domestic Abuse Hotline for Men and Women:**  
**(888) 7HELPLINE (1-888-743-5754)**

**Child Assault Prevention**  
11 Ely Avenue, Laurence Harbor  
Old Bridge Township, NJ 08879  
732.582.1120

**Catholic Charities**  
288 Rues Ln., East Brunswick (732) 257-6100  
271 Smith St., Perth Amboy (732) 826-9160

**Central Jersey Regional Sexual Abuse Program**  
Sexual Abuse Management (SAM) Clinic  
Dorothy B. Hersh Regional Child Protection Center  
123 How Lane., New Brunswick (732) 565-

**Institute for Family Services**  
3 Clyde Rd, Suite 101, Somerset (732) 873-1663

**Middlesex County- Rape Crisis Intervention Center**  
29 Oakwood Ave, Edison (732) 321-1189

**Women Aware, Inc.**  
P.O. Box 7565, North Brunswick (732) 249-4900

**Women Helping Women**  
224 Main St, Metuchen (732) 549-6000

## Getting More Education

Although getting more education may not be part of your short term plans, it certainly should be something to think about for the future, especially if you do not have a high school diploma or a GED.



### **A. High School Diploma/GED Certificate/High School Equivalency Degree (HSED)/Vocational School Certificates**

It is very important to keep records of any degrees and certificates of completion and work-related licenses that have earned. Before you are released, you can write to the school or agency where you earned your degree or certificate to obtain a copy. Once you have a copy in your possession, this should be kept in your strong box.

**FYI:** If you earned your GED while incarcerated please call the Education Department of the institution you were in to obtain a copy.

You can also request your GED transcript or diploma verification from the New Jersey Department of Education providing you completed your diploma in a traditional setting. You will have to fill out a GED Information Request Form.

Please call 609-777-1050 for further assistance.

You may ask that it be sent to you; or you may pick up the form at a local testing center (which you can do after you are released); by downloading the form from the website <http://www.state.nj.us/njded/students/ged/ged7.htm>; or by writing to: GED Testing Program, Bureau of Adult Education and Family Literacy, New Jersey Department of Education, PO Box 500, Trenton, NJ 08625.

Your chances of getting a job that pays a living wage, and of moving forward in a career will improve with more education, and not having the high school diploma or GED will simply lock you out from a lot of opportunities.



## **B. GED Classes**

The places in Middlesex County below offer classes to help you prepare for the GED exam. Call for exact times and procedures. Many locations offer classes at low cost or no cost.

### **GED Locations**

#### **Middlesex County College**

2600 Woodbridge Avenue | Edison, NJ 08818 - 3050 |  
Phone: 732.548.6000 | Information Line: 732.906.2555  
Admissions: 732.906.4243 |  
Continuing Education: 732.906.2556

#### **Middlesex County One-Stop/Workforce New Jersey**

##### **Middlesex Office**

506 Jersey Avenue  
New Brunswick NJ  
One Stop: 732-937-6200  
Workforce NJ: 732-745-3955  
Hours: M-F 8:30am-5:30pm

##### **Perth Amboy Office**

161 New Brunswick Ave  
Perth Amboy, NJ  
One Stop: 732-293-5016  
Workforce NJ: 732-826-3200  
Hours: M-F 8:30am-5:30pm

##### **East Brunswick Adult and Community Education**

380 Cranbury Road  
Room A1  
East Brunswick, NJ 08816  
**Phone:** (732)613-6981

##### **Jewish Family and Vocational Service of Middlesex County** (732) 777-1940 *Fee may be required.*

##### **East Brunswick High School**

(732) 613-6980

##### **Community Learning Center at Roosevelt**

1 Roosevelt Drive  
Edison, NJ 08837  
**Phone:** (732)321-2201

**Perth Amboy Adult School**  
178 Barracks Street  
Perth Amboy, NJ 08861  
**Phone:** (732)376-6243

### **C. Higher Education**

If you already have a high school diploma or a GED certificate, you may want to move forward and get your associate's degree, bachelor's degree or graduate degree. Below are phone numbers for Middlesex County.

#### **Local Area Colleges**

##### **Middlesex County College**

2600 Woodbridge Avenue | Edison, NJ 08818 - 3050 |  
Phone: 732.548.6000 | Information Line: 732.906.2555  
Admissions: 732.906.4243 |  
Continuing Education: 732.906.2556

##### **Middlesex County College, New Brunswick Center**

140 New Street  
New Brunswick, New Jersey 08901  
Telephone : 732-745-8866

##### **Middlesex County College, Perth Amboy Center**

60 Washington Street  
Perth Amboy, NJ 08861  
Tel: 732.324.0700

##### **Rutgers University**

65 Davidson Road  
Piscataway, NJ 08854  
732-445-4636

#### **Can I Get Financial Aid?**

To pay for this, you will probably try to get some financial aid. If you are applying for any federal financial aid programs after release (such as Pell Grants, Perkins Loans, Federal Family Education Loans, etc.), you are not restricted unless you have a drug-related offense. For possession offenses, a first offense means one year of ineligibility (after your conviction), a second offense, two years, and third offense means you are "indefinitely" ineligible, which to the government means permanently ineligible. For a sales or distribution crime, a first offense has two years of ineligibility, a second

offense makes it permanent. Private financial aid or loan programs may not have any restrictions.

## **Other Things You Need to Know**

### **A. Getting Legal Assistance**

To get assistance with civil (not criminal) cases, you can contact the toll free hotline for **Legal Services of New Jersey (LSNJ)**, which provides both information and referrals, **888-576-5529**. For local Middlesex County legal services please contact the office located nearest to you.

#### **Perth Amboy**

313 State Street, Suite 308  
Perth Amboy, NJ 08861  
Phone: (732) 324-1613  
Fax: (732) 324-6253

#### **New Brunswick**

317 George Street, Suite 201  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
Phone: (732) 249-7600  
Fax: (732) 249-7966

### **B. Checking and Correcting Your Criminal Record (Rap Sheet)**

Since employers, landlords and others will be performing criminal background checks and getting copies of your criminal record, it is important that you know what is on it, and whether it is accurate. It will also help you be prepared to answer any questions about your background. Go into your local police station and make an appointment to be fingerprinted on a State Applicant Fingerprint Card (SBI19). On that card, include your full name, social security number, date of birth and purpose for the record check. Mail the card with a cover letter listing the purpose of the request, the name of the person whose records are being requested, and the address where the records should be sent, to: (see next page)

State Section of Identification  
Records and Identification Bureau  
New Jersey State Police  
P.O. Box 7068  
West Trenton, NJ 08628  
609-882-2000 ext 6425  
609-530-4856 fax

**You must include a \$41 money order or cashier's check, certified check, or business check** made payable to: DIVISION OF STATE POLICE-SBI. No personal checks are accepted.

### **C. Expungement:**

#### **Cleaning Up Your Criminal Record**

You may have heard about expungement as one way to clean up your criminal record as you get some distance from your old arrests and convictions. Unfortunately, expungement is fairly limited in New Jersey. You can expunge any arrest that did not lead to a conviction at any point. You can expunge "disorderly persons offenses," which are low level offenses in New Jersey, after 5 years, and most municipal ordinance offenses after 2 years. Convictions for "indictable offenses" (felonies), can be expunged 10 years from the date of conviction, payment of any fine, satisfactory completion of probation or parole or release from incarceration, but whichever is latest. The most serious of these offenses, such as murder, kidnapping, aggravated sexual assault, robbery, arson, perjury and distribution, sale or possession with intent to distribute of controlled dangerous substances (drugs), can never be expunged. Expungement is a broader remedy for offenses committed as a juvenile. Legal Services of New Jersey has published a guide to cleaning up your record through expungement.

To obtain a copy of the book, call 888-576-5529, or go to the LSNJ website, where you can download it for free:  
<http://www.lsnj.org/english/crime/municipalcourt/clearingyourrecord.cfm>.

### **D. Checking and Correcting Your Credit Record**



While New Jersey allows employers to look at your criminal record, many employers — and others like landlords and mortgage companies — will use a credit report instead of or in addition to the state's records. Credit records are maintained by private companies and generally have information about your debts, your history of paying bills and other financial

matters, but may also have information about your criminal record. The information may not be correct, and the law does offer you some protections. For example, if an employer uses a credit record to deny you a job, they have to tell you this, and give you the name, address and phone number of the agency that provided the report, and the agency must give you a copy of that information on your request. They cannot charge you money for that request if the employer used the report to deny you a job. If the records of the credit agency contain incorrect information, they must investigate and correct inaccurate information.

You can get ahead of the curve by getting a copy of your credit record and making sure there isn't any incorrect information on it. New Jersey residents are allowed one free credit report each year. Three companies that provide this service are:

**Equifax Information Systems, LLC.:**

Write to them at P.O. Box 740241, Atlanta, GA, 30374, or call 800-685-1111. By mail, be sure to include your full name, current address, Social Security number, and most recent former address for file-matching purposes.

**Transunion Personal Credit Report:**

PO Box 1000, Chester PA 19022  
Call 800-888-4213.

**Experian:**

PO Box 2002, Allen, TX 75013  
Call 800-397-3742.

**E. Voting Rights**

New Jersey law does not allow you to vote while you are in prison, or while you are on probation or parole for an indictable offense (disorderly persons offenses don't disqualify you). **Once you have completed your parole or probation term, you may register to vote.** Make sure that you are registered in the county in which you reside. Applications for registration can be obtained from Social Services prior to release. Also you may apply with the Division of Elections, the Commissioners of Registration office in the County where you live or from your Municipal Clerk once you are released. Registration forms are also available in various State agencies and at Division of Motor Vehicle offices and can be obtained while transacting

agency business. If you are not sure, you can visit [http://www.state.nj.us/lps/elections/vote\\_doe.html](http://www.state.nj.us/lps/elections/vote_doe.html). You will be able to download a voter's registration form and mail it in. This site also explains who can register to vote and where you can register.

## **F. Registration of Sexual Offenders (Megan's Law)**

Sex offenders are required to register with the police under Megan's Law. Offenses include: aggravated sexual assault; sexual assault; aggravated criminal sexual contact; endangering the welfare of a child by engaging in sexual conduct which would impair or debauch the morals of the child; luring or enticing and, if the victim were a minor and the offender not a parent, kidnapping; criminal restraint and false imprisonment and promoting prostitution of a child under 18. **You will be registered prior to release, but must re-register your home address at least 10 days prior to any move with the law enforcement agency with which you were registered when released.** You will also need to verify your address annually or every 90 days if you are a repetitive and compulsive offender.



**Your First Weeks Out**

Here is a basic calendar to use to plan your first days out of prison. Below it, there are some questions to ask yourself about what you plan to do. You can mark appointments and tasks on the calendar, and write in dates in the small boxes.

<u>SUN</u>	<u>MON</u>	<u>TUES</u>	<u>WED</u>	<u>THURS</u>	<u>FRI</u>	<u>SAT</u>
<u>SUN</u>	<u>MON</u>	<u>TUES</u>	<u>WED</u>	<u>THURS</u>	<u>FRI</u>	<u>SAT</u>
<u>SUN</u>	<u>MON</u>	<u>TUES</u>	<u>WED</u>	<u>THURS</u>	<u>FRI</u>	<u>SAT</u>
<u>SUN</u>	<u>MON</u>	<u>TUES</u>	<u>WED</u>	<u>THURS</u>	<u>FRI</u>	<u>SAT</u>

For how long? \_\_\_\_\_

For how long? \_\_\_\_\_

For how long? \_\_\_\_\_

When? \_\_\_\_\_

When? \_\_\_\_\_

When? \_\_\_\_\_

Where/phone number?

\_\_\_\_\_  
Where/phone number?

\_\_\_\_\_  
Where/phone number?

**Other things I need to do (get I.D., get prescriptions, go to a support group, etc.):**

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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**I.D. Checklist**

<b>Documents</b>	<b>Have?</b>	<b>Need?</b>
Strong Box	_____	_____
Social Security Card	_____	_____
Birth Certificate	_____	_____
County I.D.	_____	_____
Driver's License	_____	_____
Non-driver's I.D.	_____	_____
Certificate of Naturalization	_____	_____
Green Card	_____	_____
Military Discharge Papers	_____	_____
Passport	_____	_____
High School Diploma	_____	_____
Or GED Certificate	_____	_____
Prison Release Papers	_____	_____

**Notes:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**My Contacts:**  
**Important Names and Phone Numbers**

Parole Officer: \_\_\_\_\_  
  
Parole Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
  
Parole Office: \_\_\_\_\_  
  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Smart Book Topics



**Getting Started:  
I.D. and Other Documents**



**First Steps After Release:  
Where Do I Go to Find...**



**Taking Care of You:  
Getting Support**



**Taking Care of You:  
Health Care Resources**



**Finding a Job:  
Employment Assistance  
and Training Programs**



**Reconnecting With Family**



**Getting More Education**



**Other Things You Need to Know**



**The Game Plan**