

# The Passaic County Smart Book



## A Resource Guide For Going Home

*“Your Re-Entry Compass”*

Drafted 2010 (revised)

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>	
Toll-free Hotline, Mon.– Fri.	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 or 1-609-292-6500
<b>NJ Transit</b>	
For routes, schedules, & fares 6am to Midnight, daily	1-800-772-2222
<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>Passaic County One Stop</b>	1-973-340-3400
<b>Social Security Office</b>	1-800-772-1213
<b>Service Empowering Rape Victims (SERV)</b>	1-856-964-SERV
<b>Statewide Domestic Violence Hotline (Womanspace, Inc.)</b>	
Bilingual and TTY accessible	1-800-572-7233

# The Passaic County Smart Book

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## First Things First: How to Use this Book

The purpose of this book is to help you get ready to leave prison and return home, and to help you find the things you need to get back on your feet once you're there. It is specifically focused on what you'll need to know during the first weeks and months that you're back, which can be a hard time of adjustment. This book will not answer all of the questions you will face in preparing for and adjusting to being back in the community, but it can help you get started. It will also tell you where to go to get more information.

**Unless a fee or charge is listed, all of the services and resources listed here are free. However, please note that the fees and charges listed in this guide are subject to change**

Each section of this book gives you some general tips and things you need to know, provides addresses, phone numbers and other information about different programs and resources in Passaic County. Things that you can do to get a head start before you are released are highlighted. Getting started early, before you get out, may be one of the best things you can do for yourself to make your first days home easier. In the back of this book, you will find a **"Game Plan"** for the first few weeks, a chart to help you plan ahead. We have also provided space where you can write down other useful phone numbers and appointments.

You won't find here every service or organization in Passaic County, but, again, this book should give you a place to start. The organizations that are listed can help refer you to other places in the area that can be of help to you. For more listings, and for up-to-date information about office hours and changes in policies, you can go to the website designed to help former prisoners in Passaic County, [www.njsuccess.org](http://www.njsuccess.org), when you get to this site, click on the Northern New Jersey tab. You can also contact the folks who provided the resources listed in this book, Workforce Investment Board of Passaic County at our website [www.wibpc.org](http://www.wibpc.org).

### **GETTING FREE ACCESS TO THE INTERNET**

All of the public libraries listed on page 33 should be able to provide you with free internet access.

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

In order to get a job, apply for public benefits (such as general assistance, food stamps or Medicaid) or other programs, get job training or apply for an apartment, you will need to have as many identification documents in hand as possible. While many people lose these documents when they are incarcerated, the good news is that you can begin to collect them again before you are released, by mail or with the help of your social worker. Below is a list of different documents and how to get them.

**Helpful tip:** Save any envelopes from bills or official mail. You might need these to prove your address.



### A. Social Security Card

You can obtain a replacement card if you have a Social Security number (even if you don't remember what it is.) You can get a new card by mail from prison, or can get it after you are released by going to the social security office.

**PRE-RELEASE:** The New Jersey Department of Corrections has an agreement in place with the Social Security Administration that allows inmates in the release process to apply for a replacement Social Security Card. This service is offered through the Social Services Department of the correctional facility. The application and card are free. Once approved the card is sent to your correctional facility and will be issued to you upon your release from custody. For more information contact the Social Services Department at your correctional facility.

**POST-RELEASE:** You can also get the application by phone or by mail, or by walking into the Passaic County Social Security Offices at 935 Allwood Rd. in Clifton 07013 or 200 Federal Plaza in Paterson 07505. The form SS-5 can also be downloaded from the Social Security website [www.ssa.gov/replace\\_sscard.html](http://www.ssa.gov/replace_sscard.html). You can fill it out there and show proof of identification. **Prison release papers count as proof of identification.**



### 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 Passaic County, you may be able to apply for a birth certificate for a lesser fee.

### New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services

Bureau of Vital Statistics and Registration

P.O. Box 370

Trenton, NJ 08625-0370

You can go directly to the Bureau of Vital Statistics on the first floor of the Health and Agriculture Building in Trenton, on the corner of Warren and Market Street. In-person counter service is available from 8:30 to 4:00 and you can usually get the certificate on the same day.

**Contact information for the NJ Bureau of Vital Statistics and Registration:**

1-609-292-4087

1-866-649-8726 (toll-free nationwide)

**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.

You can also obtain a birth certificate from Vital Statistics, City Hall, 155 Market Street, Paterson 973-321-1277 or the office of Vital Statistics in the town/ city of your birth. The following are a list of Vital Statistics Registrars in Passaic County. If you were born in one of the towns listed, you can apply for your birth certificate using the information listed below.

**Bloomington Borough**

101 Hamburg Turnpike  
Bloomington, NJ 07403  
Phone: (973) 838-0778

**Fee:** [Call for fee](#)

**Clifton City**

City Hall  
900 Clifton Avenue  
Clifton, NJ 07013  
Phone: (973) 470-5824 x5825

**Fee:** \$10

**Haledon Borough**

510 Belmont Avenue  
Haledon, NJ 07508  
Phone: (973) 595-7766

**Fee:** \$15

**Hawthorne Borough**

Municipal Building  
445 Lafayette Avenue  
Hawthorne, NJ 07506  
Phone: (973) 427-4011

**Fee:** \$5

**Little Falls Township**  
Municipal Building  
225 Main Street  
Little Falls, NJ 07424  
Phone: (973) 256-0170  
**Fee: \$8**

**North Haledon Borough**  
Municipal Building  
103 Overlook Avenue  
North Haledon, NJ 07508  
Phone: (973) 427-7793  
**Fee: \$5**

**Passaic City**  
City Hall  
330 Passaic Street  
Passaic, NJ 07055  
Phone: (973) 365-5602  
**Fee: \$10**

**Paterson City**  
Department of Health  
176 Broadway  
Paterson, NJ 07505  
Phone: (973) 321-1277  
**Fee: \$15**

**Pompton Lakes Borough**  
25 Lenox Avenue  
Pompton Lakes, NJ 07442  
Phone: (973) 835-0143 x228  
Fax: (973) 839-8132  
**Fee: \$5**

**Prospect Park Borough**  
106 Brown Avenue  
Prospect Park, NJ 07508  
Phone: (973) 790-7902 x516  
**Fee: \$15**

**Ringwood Borough**  
Borough Hall  
60 Margaret King Avenue  
Ringwood, NJ 07456  
Phone: (973) 962-7079  
**Fee: \$10**



**Totowa Borough**  
537 Totowa Road  
Totowa, NJ 07512  
Phone: (973) 956-1000  
**Fee: \$10**

**Wanaque Borough**  
Municipal Building  
579 Ringwood Avenue  
Wanaque, NJ 07465  
Phone: (973) 839-3000 Ext 7122  
**Fee: \$5**

**Wayne Township**  
Wayne Health Department  
475 Valley Road  
Wayne, NJ 07470  
Phone: (973) 694-1800 Ext 3243  
**Fee: \$5**

**West Milford Township**  
Town Hall  
1480 Union Valley Road  
West Milford, NJ 07480  
Phone: (973) 728-2720  
**Fee: Call for fee**

**Woodland Park Borough**  
Municipal Building  
5 Brophy Lane  
West Paterson, NJ 07424  
Phone: (973) 345-8106 or 8100  
**Fee: \$10**

The Office of Vital Statistics in the New Jersey Dept. of Health and Senior Services has all New Jersey birth, marriage, and death records. The fee is **\$25**. For more information, there is also a website: [www.state.nj.us/health/vital/](http://www.state.nj.us/health/vital/)

**C. County I.D.**

You can obtain a county identification card by going to the Passaic County Sheriff's Department located at 11 Sheriff's Plaza, Paterson, NJ 07505. They may be contacted by phone at 973-881-4600. You will need your original birth certificate, original social security card, and three proofs of your home address that have been mailed out to you within the last 60 days. The Sheriff's Department is available for county identification Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9am-3pm. You must show proof of residence in Passaic County (so you can only do this after you are released), proof of age, and provide a social security number.



#### **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 Passaic County (listed 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 Passaic 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 PASSAIC COUNTY**

Paterson  
125 Broadway-Suite 201  
Paterson, NJ 07505

Wayne  
481 Route 46 West  
Wayne, New Jersey 07470

#### **Agency, Driver Testing Closed on Mondays**

Tuesday, Thursday 8:00 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Saturday 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Inspection

Wayne NJ 07470

Mondays 8:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Saturday 7:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Road Testing

Tuesday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

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 state photo identification card for non-drivers. **You can get this kind of official state I.D. even if your driver's license is currently suspended**, so this may be a good option for you if it looks like it will take you a long time to get your license back. You will still need to bring the kinds of identification documents described above, under the new "Six Point" system. **Duplicate driver licenses cost \$11.**

#### **F. Certificates of Naturalization or Citizenship**

You will need this for employment if you are not a citizen. 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 800-375-5283.

#### **CITIZENSHIP LOCATIONS**

##### **Immigration & American Citizenship Association**

651 Main Ave.  
Passaic, NJ 07055  
973-472-4648

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

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

##### **Application Support Center**

24 Commerce Ave.  
Newark, NJ 07102

##### **Application Support Center**

116 Kansas St., Main Floor  
Hackensack, NJ 07601

#### **G. Alien Registration Card ("Green Card")**

To replace a missing Green Card, you must go to the US Citizenship & Immigration Service Office (see above), bring identification, and fill out a I-90 form or you can go to the website and download the forms at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov). It costs \$260 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 Veterans Administration (VA) liaison from the Veteran's Administration during your incarceration. The VA liaison can assist you in requesting a copy of your DD214 (discharge papers) by completing the SF-180 form. Please notify your institution's **P.R.E.P.A.R.E** social worker for assistance with your requests and to obtain information on your veteran status. You can also obtain the SF-180 by writing the Veteran Benefit Administration in NJ or the NPRC, which is the main record 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

#### **Passaic County Veterans Affairs**

100 Hamilton Plaza, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Paterson, NJ 07505  
973-977-4050/4051/4556  
Fax: 973-977-4464

Upon your release, you can also visit the following website to request military records; [www.vetrecs.archives.gov](http://www.vetrecs.archives.gov). Once on the website, 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 thing to have at this point, it can serve as an easier form of widely accepted identification. The passport has a fee. If you're interested in obtaining one after your release Please go to the following places:

#### **Passaic County Clerk's Office**

401 Grand Street 1st floor, Paterson  
973-225-3632 ext.306

#### **Paterson Main Post Office**

194 Ward St.  
973-977-4621

**Little Falls Main Post Office**

229 Main Street  
973-256-0784

**Clifton Main Post office**

1114 Main Ave.  
973-249-7527

**Philadelphia Passport Agency**

U.S. Custom House  
200 Chestnut St., Room 103  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
877-487-2778

(only serves customers who are traveling or submitting their passports for foreign visas within 14 days).

You will need to bring: an original or certified with a raised seal and file date issued by Vital Statistics, a naturalization certificate, or a previous U.S. passport; photocopies aren't accepted. You will also need to furnish a social security number, and bring 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. However, if you do not have those forms of I.D., you can bring with you an identifying witness who has known you for at least 2 years and has a valid driver's license. In addition to this witness, you'll have to bring 3 other forms of I.D. You must bring 2 copies of a 2 X 2 face front photo. The cost from the clerk's office or any of the post offices is \$97 for a first time adult and \$67 for a renewal.

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

It is very important to have records of any degrees, school completion certificates or work-related licenses that you may have. This will help you get a job, and can also provide additional identification if you need it. Before you are released, you can write to the school or agency that gave you your degree or certificate. Each of these will have separate procedures. You should also get copies of certificates for programs or classes completed while in prison.

You can also request a GED transcript or diploma verification from the New Jersey Department of Education, if you got your GED/diploma in New Jersey, and not at a correctional facility, local district high school, or local adult high school. You will have to fill out a GED Information Request Form, which you can get sent to you by calling the GED information line at 609-777-1050 and requesting that it be sent to you; picking 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.

Once you have filled out the form, send it to the above address with a **money order for \$5**. They do not accept personal checks.

#### **K. Prison Release Papers**

Make sure you hold on to your prison release papers. These can serve as identification in some circumstances.

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

The first days after you get out can be the toughest. This section will give you information to help you get on your feet: places to go for food, shelter, clothing, money, and other emergency needs. While every agency in Passaic County isn't listed, we've listed places to help you get started, places that will work with people coming out of prison. Here are some pointers for the first days out:

**BE PREPARED:** Put all your paperwork and identification in one place, a folder or an envelope, and have it with you, so you can answer questions that people ask.

**KEEP RECORDS:** Write down the full names and phone numbers of people that you've talked to, and when you spoke to them. Keep copies of any money orders or receipts for things you've paid for and any letters you've gotten from government agencies, the courts, or organizations that are helping you.

**BE PATIENT:** You are probably going to have to wait in a lot of lines for things, and be put on hold by telephone operators. You will meet a lot of workers who are trying to help a lot of people, not just you. Expect to wait. Expect that you may be sent to different offices and workers to get something taken care of. Try to be patient and be polite — it will help.

Below you'll find the names, addresses, phone numbers and descriptions of agencies and services that can help you. It is a good idea to call first to check that their hours of operation haven't changed:

See following pages for list of resources for after your release.

### **A. First Stops**

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

#### **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 Passaic 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**

These are some of the places providing temporary places to stay.

#### **Men Only**

##### **Good Shepherd Mission**

336 Broadway, Paterson

973-742-9244

Hours: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Referrals only

Sunday-Saturday

##### **The Place of Promise: Permanent Supportive Housing Program**

64 Clinton Street-Paterson, NJ

973-720-9127

General Hours: 8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

##### **St. Paul's Shelter**

449-456 Van Houten Street, Paterson

973-278-7900

##### **Eva's Sheltering Program**

389 Main Street, Paterson

973-247-0143

Hours: 24/7

#### **Women & Children**

##### **Passaic County Women's Center**

P.O Box 244, Paterson

973-881-1450

24/7 hotline



**Mother's Vineyard**

33 Holsman Street, Paterson, NJ  
973-720-9127

General Hours: 8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

**Strengthen Our Sisters**

198 Lincoln Ave.

West Milford, NJ

973-728-2506

Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, & Saturday

9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday & Friday 9:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.;

Sunday 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.



**C. Food**

There are three ways to get help with food:

1. Public benefits to help purchase food
2. Food pantries that provide groceries
3. Soup kitchens that provide hot or prepared food.

\*\*\*Food stamps and other public benefits are discussed under "Money" and food pantries and soup kitchens are below.

**Food Pantries**

**Center for Food Action**

21 Church Street, Elmwood Park

201-703-9857

Hours: Monday, Wednesday & Friday 9:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

**CUMAC/Echo**

223 Ellison Street, Paterson

973-742-5518

Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.;

Wednesday 8:00 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.

During Summer July/August closed on Fridays

**Catholic Family and Community Services**

24 De Grasses Street, Paterson

973-279-7100

Hours: Tuesday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

by appointment only.

**Center for Food Action**

12 Morris Road, Ringwood

973-962-9001

Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

**Concerned Parents for Head Start**

87-99 Clinton Street, Paterson  
973-754-7417  
Hours: Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

**Creech Community Food Pantry**

221 Hamilton Avenue, Paterson  
201-757-7516  
Hours: Tuesdays & Wednesdays 10:00 a.m. -  
12:00 p.m. Reopen at 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

**Deliverance Holy Tabernacle Food Pantry**

2 Barnet Place, Paterson  
973-595-1624  
Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
Every 2nd & 4th Saturday of each month: 11:00a.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
Persons must bring ID, proof of income, address, and children.

**Father English Food Pantry (The People's Choice)**

435 Main Street, Paterson  
973-881-0127  
Email: carlitocolumbia@yahoo.com  
Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

**God's Holiness & Righteousness Church**

55 17th Avenue, Paterson  
973-278-8365  
Once a Month: 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. & 9:00a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
Call for Date of the Month

**Hispanic Multi-Purpose Center**

911 East 23rd Street, Paterson  
973-684-3320  
Fax: 973-684-7422  
Hours: Monday, Wednesday & Thursday 1:00p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

**Love of Jesus Food Pantry**

385 Broadway, Paterson  
Hours: Wednesday 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

**Madison Avenue Cross Roads Food Pantry**

498 Madison, Paterson  
973-278-5627  
Hours: Monday - Friday 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
Proof of income & address, ID & all documents must be current.

**New Christian Missionary Baptist Food Pantry**

16-18 Bridge Street, Paterson, NJ  
973-279-4118  
Every 2nd Saturday of each month: 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

**Madison Park Epworth**

66 Bloomfield, Paterson, NJ  
973-279-9446  
Fridays 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

**New Hope Community Food Pantry**

331 North 11th Street, Prospect Park, NJ  
973-942-4059  
Every 2nd & 4th Saturday of each month: 9:00a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

**St. Mary's Church Food Pantry**

22 Lakeside Avenue, Pompton Lakes  
973-831-4442  
Hours: Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

**St. Peter's Haven Food Pantry**

390 Clifton Ave., Clifton  
973-546-3406  
Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday 9 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

**Salvation Army**

550 Main Street, Passaic  
973-779-1155  
Hours: Monday & Friday 8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.  
Referrals only with proof of income & address,  
ID & all requirements must be current.

**True Witness Church of Jesus Christ**

234 Godwin Street, Paterson, NJ  
973-333-5054 or 973-569-3417  
Hours: Every 2nd & 4th Saturday of each month 9 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

**United Passaic Food Pantry-First**

**Presbyterian Church**

112 Washington Place, Passaic, NJ  
973-472-2478  
Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 9:30 a.m. - 2:30p.m.

**William Chapel AME Zion Church**

133 Myrtle Avenue, Passaic  
973-472-3256  
Must have a referral from Father English  
Hours: Monday & Wednesday 11:00 a.m. - 1:00p.m.

**Soup Kitchens**

**Coffee Pot Ministry-St. Phillip's**

9 North 1st Street, Paterson, NJ  
973-720-9127  
Breakfast: 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.;  
Lunch: 11:30a.m. - 1:30 p.m.;  
Dinner: 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

**Eva's Kitchen**

393 Main St., Paterson, NJ  
973-279-0783  
Hours: Sunday - Saturday 11:30 a.m. Serving 12:00 p.m.

**Salvation Army**

550 Main Street, Passaic, NJ  
973-779-1155  
Hours: Monday - Friday 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

**Emergency Food**

**CUMAC Food Pantry**

223 Ellison St., Paterson  
973-742-5518  
Hours: Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

**Emergency Food, Coalition of Passaic County**

435 Main Street, Paterson  
973-881-0415  
Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.



**D. Clothing**

The following places provide free or low-cost clothing.

**Salvation Army Thrift Shop**

31 Van Houten Street, Paterson  
973-742-1126 Ext. 201  
Hours: Monday - Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 5:30p.m.

**St. John Episcopal Thrift Shop**

215 Lafayette Avenue, Paterson  
973-779-0966  
Hours: Tuesday & Saturday 11:00 a.m. - 4:00p.m.

**Red White & Blue Thrift Shop**

765 River St., Paterson  
973-278-6021  
Hours: Monday- Saturday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

**What U Got Good Thrift Shop**

85 Passaic St., Garfield  
973-777-7933



### **E. Showers and Laundry**

The following places provide free showers and laundry facilities.

#### **Well of Hope CDC Drop-in Center**

207 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Paterson

973-523-0700

Hours: Monday - Wednesday 8:30 a.m. - 4:00p.m.

Thursday 4:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. & Friday 8:30a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

People who drop in are eligible for showers, laundry, refreshments, referrals, Intensive Case Management Services, comprehensive risk counseling, therapeutic, support, health education groups.



### **F. Transportation**

#### **Meadowlink Transportation Counseling Center**

Located at 52 Church Street, 1st floor, Paterson, New Jersey 07505 or you can call 1-888-447-2435. Eligible candidates can receive free bus passes (TANF & GA only), bus tickets (TANF & GA only), transit schedules, emergency ride home, car & vanpool assistance, shuttle to work, and transportation to job fairs.

There is no general program to provide assistance paying for transportation. Though NJ Transit no longer will accept release papers in substitute for bus tickets; many correctional facilities offer one-way tickets home. Some of the programs listed in this book will provide bus passes or bus cards to help you participate in the program. If you need that help, make sure you ask. For specific bus line information contact NJ Transit: <http://www.njtransit.com> or 800-772-2222. If you click on the “trip planner” section you can find out routes. If you are going to drive places, remember that you must have a valid driver’s license, and you must have 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 who want to insure a car registered in their name. It costs \$360 per year if you pay all at once and \$365 if you pay in installments. You cannot get this insurance if your license or registration has been revoked or suspended. For information, contact <http://www.state.nj.us/dobi/dollaradayqna.htm> or 1-800-652-2471.

**Transportation For The Disabled** 1-800-955-2321 Call between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday- Friday. NJ Transit’s Access Link paratransit service is comparable to the local bus service. This service is specifically for people whose disability prevents them from using the local fixed route bus service. You must call to be interviewed in person to determine your eligibility



### **G. Money**

Once you get out, you will need a source of income, at least temporarily, 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 any money you may have in your inmate account. If it is possible to save any money before you get out; you should try to do so. Parole can give up to \$300 in emergency funds, based on need, but it’s at their discretion — ask your parole officer. You may be able to get some kind of public assistance (“welfare”), but not everyone qualifies. 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 their children with them. Both programs will require you to work or be actively looking for work and both have a five-year lifetime time 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 look for housing, but also temporary rental or mortgage payment assistance and utility payments. You can contact your social worker for more information.

#### **WFNJ-GA and WFNJ-TANF Application Sites**

##### **Passaic County Board of Social Services**

80 Hamilton St., Paterson  
973-881-0100  
Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

##### **Passaic County Board of Social Services**

114 Prospect St., Passaic  
973-881-0100  
Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

##### **Passaic County Board of Social Services**

200 Wanaque Ave., Pompton Lakes  
973-881-0100  
Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

##### **Food Stamps**

80 Hamilton St., Paterson  
973-881-2500  
Hours: Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

##### **Social Security (SSI, Medicare, Medicaid)**

935 Allwood Rd. 3rd Fl., Clifton  
1-800-772-1213  
Hours: Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

NOTE: 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 lie, you may be found "ineligible" and could also be prosecuted.

**Food Stamps** provide a monthly sum to buy food. You apply at the same place you apply for cash benefits. 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 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 Veteran's Administration 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).

A graphic with a yellow background and a stylized American flag at the bottom. The text is centered and reads:

**The Veterans Services Office for  
Passaic County**

**Passaic County Veterans Affairs**  
100 Hamilton Plaza, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Paterson, NJ 07505  
973-977-4050/4051/4556  
Fax: 973-977-4464

Visit this local VA office to reinstate benefits or apply for new programs and services.

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**

Coming home and readjusting to living on the outside can be tough, and there are places where you can get some support from people who have been through it already and know how the game is played. They can help you get back on your feet. Below are a few places to start. In addition, there are Narcotics Anonymous (NA) and Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) support group meetings all over Passaic 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.

### **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 much health conditions worse. Below, you'll



find information on paying for health care and clinics and other resources in Passaic 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 learning 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 receiving those benefits to qualify for Medicaid.** For questions about Medicaid eligibility, you can call 1-800-356-1561. To apply for Medicaid in Passaic County go to the Passaic County Board of Social Services at 80 Hamilton Street in Paterson 973-881-0100 or 973-881-1075.

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 Health Care Providers**

Even if you do not have Medicaid or other health insurance or benefits, Passaic 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.

**PASSAIC COUNTY COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS**

**Paterson Community Health Center**

227 Broadway, Paterson  
(973) 278-2600

Hours: Mon, Tues, Wed 9am-5pm; Thurs 9am-8pm

**Paterson Health Community Center**

32 Clinton Street, Paterson  
(973)790-6594  
Hours: Mon, Wed, Thurs, 9am-5pm;  
Tues & Fri 9am-8pm; Sat. 9am-3pm

**Paterson Community Clinic**

355 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Paterson  
(973) 523-9090  
Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 12pm-5pm  
Tuesday & Thursday 10am-3pm

**Medical Center at Willowbrook an Affiliate of Saint Joseph's  
Hospital Medical Center**

57<sup>th</sup> Willowbrook Blvd. Ste 1, Wayne  
(973) 754-4000  
Hours: Mon- Fri 8am-4:30pm

**Family Health Center**

21 Market Street, Paterson  
(973) 754-4200  
Hours: Mon-Fri 8:30am-4:30pm

**Community Family Health and Wellness**

909 Ringwood Avenue, Haskell  
(973) 831-6700  
Hours: Monday 10am-4pm, Wednesday 12pm-8pm, Thursday 2pm-  
7pm, Friday 10am-5pm, Saturday 9am-2pm

**Clifmed Medical Center**

385 Lakeview Avenue, Clifton  
(973)772-1004

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.

**PASSAIC COUNTY DEPT OF HEALTH and HUMAN SERVICES**

176 Broadway, Paterson  
STD's Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri 10:30am; **FIRST COME FIRST SERVE**  
HIV/AIDS Testing Mon-Fri 8:30am-3pm  
Tuberculosis Mon 8:30am-5:30pm  
Tues-Fri 8:30am-3:30pm  
Hours: Mon-Fri 8:30am-4:30pm

**PLANNED PARENTHOOD OF NORTHERN NJ**

171 Market Street, Paterson, NJ  
973-345-3883  
Hours: Monday – Tuesday 8:30am-5pm  
Wednesday- Friday 8:30am-4pm; Saturday 8:30am-1pm  
575 Main Street  
Hackensack, NJ 07601  
(201) 489-1140  
Monday – Thursday: 9 a.m. - 9 p.m.  
Friday: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Saturday: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Sunday: Closed

Provides gynecological exams, pregnancy testing/counseling, prenatal care, STD testing/counseling, teen programs, emergency contraception, family planning and 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 Passaic County offer care and support services specifically for people with HIV and AIDS.

**Buddies of New Jersey, Inc.**

149 Hudson St., Hackensack  
Hours: Mon.-Fri. 9am-5pm  
Services include food, psycho-social support, transportation, substance abuse counseling, clinical case management, case-management phase-out, and HOPWA (tenant based housing assistance, project based housing facility, emergency housing assistance, short-term rental, mortgage assistance, utilities assistance, supportive services)

**Capeco Resource Center**

100 Hamilton Plaza, Paterson  
973-742-6742  
Hours: Mon-Fri 8:30am-5pm  
Offers information about resources and services that are available in the community to people with HIV or AIDS.

**Catholic Charities**

24 Degrasse St., Paterson  
973-279-7100  
Hours: Monday- Friday 8:30am-4:30pm  
Referral to medical and social services.

**Hackensack University Medical Center**

20 Prospect Ave., Suite 507, Hackensack  
201-996-2693 or 201-498-0266  
Services outpatient medical care (lab diagnostic specialist), drug distribution

**Hyacinth AIDS Foundation**

100 Hamilton Plaza Suite 421, Paterson  
973-278-7636 or call the state’s hotline 800-433-0254.  
Hours: Mon-Fri 9am-5pm  
Services include case management, support groups, buddy services and treatment advocacy.

**NJ AIDS/STD Hotline**

1-800-624-2377 – 24 hours/day  
The hotline gives referrals, general information, counseling, testing locations and treatment information.

**Paterson Counseling Center**

319-321 Main St., Paterson  
973-523-8316 or 973-523-2248  
Hours: Monday, Thursday-Friday 6am-4pm  
Tuesday 6am-7pm, Wednesday 6am-5:30pm  
Saturday-Sunday 6am-9:30pm-medication only. Services substance abuse, clinical case management, case management-Phase-out, mental health therapy, outpatient medical care.

**Ryan White Title I Services**

125 Ellison St., 1<sup>st</sup> fl. Paterson  
973-321-1242 ext.2286  
Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30-4:30pm

**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.

**Tuberculosis Control Programs:**

**Clifton Health Department**

900 Clifton Ave., Clifton  
Hours: 1st & 3rd Monday 6:00 p.m. - 7:15 p.m. 1st & 3rd  
Wednesday 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
Provides free testing, treatment, and medical supervision of suspected or diagnosed cases of tuberculosis and also conducts educational programs.

**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.

**Paterson Community Health Center**



32 Clinton St, Paterson  
976-790-6594  
Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, 9am-5pm;  
Tuesday & Friday 9am-8pm; Sat. 9am-3pm  
Sliding fee scale, based on income and federal guidelines, all major insurance is accepted.

**Dental Directions**

139 Haledon Avenue, Haledon  
973-790-4747

Hours: Monday-Friday 8am-4:30pm

Sliding fee scale, based on income and federal guidelines, all major insurance is accepted.

**Access Dental**

1300 Main Avenue, Clifton  
973) 340-9000

Hours: Monday-Friday 8am-4:30pm

Sliding fee scale, based on income and federal guidelines, all major insurance is accepted.

**Affordable Dental Family Care**

547 Union Blvd., Totowa  
973-942-3233

Hours: Monday & Tuesday 9am-6pm, Wednesday 9am-2pm,  
Saturday (call for time)

**Belmont Dental Associates**

476 Belmont Ave., Haledon  
973-790-4494

Hours: Monday 1pm-6pm;

Tuesday & Wednesday 9am-5pm;

Thursday 10am-6pm

**F. Substance Abuse Resources**

Getting clean and staying clean if you've got a problem with alcohol or drugs will be a major task for you if you want to stay out of trouble. Many of the health clinics, support centers and other resources listed in this guide can help refer you to treatment that most fit your needs. Listed below are some of Passaic County's treatment resources and each of these will also help with referrals if they can't treat you there. 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. Also, you can call the Addictions Hotline of NJ at 800-238-2333 or Passaic County Office of Addiction Services, 401 Grand Street, Paterson, NJ 07505; Monday-Friday 8:30am-4:30pm.

**Detoxification Locations:**

**Straight & Narrow**

508 Straight St., Paterson, NJ  
973- 345-6000

Hours: Must call in and leave your information, someone will contact you. Contact the program for more information.

Services include hospital based detoxification, intensive outpatient, outpatient detoxification, residential short term and partial hospitalization.



**Paterson Counseling Center Inc.**

319 Main St., Paterson, Paterson, NJ  
973- 523-8316 x722

Hours: Monday, Thursday-Friday 6am-4pm  
Tuesday 6am-7pm, Wednesday 6am-5:30pm  
Saturday-Sunday 6am- 9:30pm-medication only

This program offers outpatient methadone maintenance and methadone detoxification.

**Outpatient and Residential Treatment Centers:**

**Addictions Hotline of New Jersey**

PO Box 1004, Williamstown  
800-238-2333

Hours: 24 hours/day

Provides NJ residents with information about the types of detox, 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**

800-729-6686

Hours: 24 hours/day

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

**Challenge Programs**

175 Market St., Paterson  
973-345-9100

Men, Women, Adolescents, MICA

Call for hours

**Damon House, Inc.**

175 Market St., Paterson  
973-279-5563

Men, Women

Call for hours

**Eva's Village**

393 Main St., Paterson  
973-523-6220

Men, Women

Call for hours

**Hispanic Info. Center**

186 Gregory Ave., Passaic  
973-779-8110

Men, Women, Hispanic

Call for hours

**New Bridge, Inc.**

105 Hamburg Turnpike, Pompton Lakes  
973-831-0613  
Men, Women, Adolescents, MICA  
Call for hours

**New Life Recovery**

1810 Macopin Rd., West Milford  
973-728-7788  
Men, Women, Adolescents  
Call for hours

**Northeast Life Skills**

121 Howe Ave., Passaic  
973-777-2962  
Men, Women  
Call for hours

**Options Counseling Center**

175 Market St., Suite 309, Paterson  
973-345-1883  
Men, Women, Adolescents, MICA  
Call for hours

**Paterson Counseling Center**

319 Main St., Paterson  
973-523-8316  
Men, Women  
Call for hours

**SERV/Clifton**

777 Bloomfield, Clifton  
800-987-7378  
Call for hours

**St. Joseph's Hospital (Harbor House)**

703 Main St., Paterson  
Men, Women, MICA  
Call for hours

**Straight & Narrow**

508 Straight St., Paterson  
973-345-6000  
Call for hours

**G. Mental Health Services/Individual Counseling**

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.

**Christian Counseling Center**

352 Clifton Ave., Clifton  
973-365-2125

**Clifton Behavioral Health Care**

777 Bloomfield Ave., Clifton  
973-594-0125

**Division of Mental Health**

50 State St., Paterson  
973-977-4397

**Mental Health Association in Passaic County**

404 Clifton Ave., Clifton  
973-478-4444

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

**National Mental Health Association**

1-800-969-6642

Provides high quality, low cost individual, couple, family and group counseling services to all individuals requesting treatment. Fees are on a sliding scale.

**New Bridges Services**

105 Hamburg Turnpike, Pompton Lakes  
973-831-0613  
Call for Hours.

**Mental Health Cares**

24 Hour Hotline  
1-866-202-4357

**Seton Comprehensive Treatment Center of St. Mary's**

530 Main Ave., Passaic  
973-470-3056

\*Must set an appointment.

**St. Joseph's Hospital Mental Health Clinic**

56 Hamilton St., Paterson  
973-754-4750

\*Must set an appointment.

**Wayne Counseling and Family Service Center**

1022 Hamburg Turnpike, Wayne  
973-694-1234

Services include substance abuse assessment, as well as individual, marital and family therapy.  
Call for hours.



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



### **Clifton Eye Care**

403 Clifton Ave., Clifton

973-772-2223

Call for hours

This site offers low cost visions screening services.

### **Associated Eye Physicians**

1033 Clifton Ave., Clifton

973-472-6405

Hours: Monday Wednesday & Friday 9am-5pm;

Tuesday & Thursday 9am-8pm

Provides comprehensive, high quality, low cost eye and vision care services to the underserved population.

### **Medical Eyeglass Center II**

1211 Hamburg Turnpike, Wayne

973-696-0998

Call for hours

Provides comprehensive, high quality, low cost eye and vision care services to the underserved population.

### **Gold Optical**

136 Market St., Paterson

973-278-5300

Call for hours

Provides comprehensive, high quality, low cost eye and vision care services to the underserved population.



## **Finding a Job:**

### **Employment Assistance and Training Programs**

Getting a job is usually one of the most important things people need to do when they get out of prison. You need money coming in to support yourself and help your family and you want to get on with your life and do something productive. Not everyone can get to work right away — 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:** Have all your documents in order (I.D., school diplomas and training certificates). If you do not have a resume, make sure you have a list of any work experiences you've had, and schools and training programs you've completed, with names and addresses, so you can fill out applications. Figure out who your references will be and have their information handy: a former employer, a pastor or priest, a teacher or coach, somebody who knows you and can speak well of you.

**PRESENTATION MATTERS:** 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:**

If you are asked about your criminal record, you should not lie. If you do, and you are later found out, you'll probably be fired for the lying, even if the record wasn't going to be a problem. It is easy for employers to perform criminal background checks, and many do.

Before you apply for a job, think about what you will say when you are asked about your criminal background: you can be up front, but still stress what your strengths are, what you have to offer, what you have learned from your experience. Practice with a friend. While it is important to be honest, you should only answer the interview or application questions that you are asked. If you are asked, for example, about any felony convictions during the past 7 years, you don't have to volunteer information about misdemeanors, arrests that did not lead to convictions, or convictions from more than seven years ago. But, if you are going to have to work around appointments with your parole officer, or other requirements of parole, keep in mind that you will have to work this out with your employer, which means telling him or her that you are on parole, even if you are not asked.

### **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**

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

### **ACP Construction Trades Apprenticeship Program**

866-876-4527 or 866-TRN4JBS



### **Passaic County One-Stop**

52 Church St., Paterson

973-340-3400 ext.7200

877-995-2600 (info line)

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

The one-stop is a series of workshops designed to meet the needs of today's job seekers. Workshops are presented on Self Management Skills, Labor Market Information, Effective Job Search, Marketing/Resume and interviewing.

### **(CASA) Passaic Community Action for Social Affairs, Inc.**

284 Passaic St., Passaic

973-773-4100

Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30am-4:30pm

### **The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation**

370 Broadway 3<sup>rd</sup> floor Room 305, Paterson

973-977-4285(voice) or 973-253-1474 (TTY)

### **Greater Paterson OIC**

52 Church St., Paterson

973-881-0540

Hours: Monday-Friday 9am-5pm

### **Paterson Adult & Continuing Education Center**

151 Ellison St., Paterson

973-881-6017

Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30am-4:30pm

### **Hispanic Multi-Purpose Service Center**

911 East 23<sup>rd</sup>, Paterson

973-684-3320

Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30am-4:30pm

## **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 “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.

**WORK OPPORTUNITY TAX CREDIT**

An employer who hires people with criminal records is eligible to receive a Work Opportunity Tax Credit, a small rebate on their federal taxes. For more information you or the employer can call 1-800-792-8881 or 609-292-8112, or go to the internet at [http://www.state.nj.us/njbiz/s\\_wotc.shtml](http://www.state.nj.us/njbiz/s_wotc.shtml).

**FEDERAL BONDING PROGRAM**

The Federal Bonding program provides bonding or “insurance coverage” for employers who hire individuals with criminal histories who are otherwise qualified but cannot get jobs due to their backgrounds. You can get information about this program for the New Jersey Department of Labor, Workforce Division or One-stop Career Center, 370 Broadway, Paterson, NJ 07501.



### **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**

##### **Paterson Free Public Library-First Ward**

56 N Main St., Paterson

973-357-3021

Hours: Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday 10:00a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday 12:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.; Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

##### **Danforth Paterson Main Library**

250 Broadway, Paterson

Paterson, NJ 07501

Tel: 973-321-1223 Fax: 973-321-1205

Hours: Monday - Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 8:00p.m.

Friday and Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.;

Sunday 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Except December 24, December 31, and Easter.

##### **Southside**

930 Main St., Paterson, NJ 07503

973-357-3020

Monday 12:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.; Tuesday -Friday 9:00 a.m. - 5:00p.m.

Call for Saturday visits

**Alfred Baumann Free Public Library**

7 Brophy Lane, Woodland Park, NJ  
973-345-8120  
Hours: Monday-Thursday 10:00 a.m. - 9:00p.m.;  
Friday 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.;  
Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.; & Sunday  
12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

**City of Paterson**

405 Union Ave., Paterson  
973-357-3022  
Monday, Wednesday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 5:00p.m.  
Tuesday 12:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

**Paterson Museum**

2 Market St  
973-321-1260  
Hour: Tuesday - Friday 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Saturday & Sunday 12:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

**Clifton Main Public Library**

292 Piaget Avenue, Clifton, NJ  
973-772-5500  
Hours: Monday - Thursday 10:00 a.m. - 8:45p.m.  
Friday 10:00 a.m. - 5:45 p.m. & Saturday 10:00a.m. - 4:45 p.m.

**Allwood Branch Clifton Public Library**

44 Lyall Road, Clifton  
973-471-0555  
Hours: Monday, Tuesday, & Wednesday 10:00a.m. - 8:45 p.m.  
Thursday & Friday 10:00 a.m. - 5:45 p.m.  
During summer closed on Saturdays  
Saturdays (Sept-June) 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

**Dwight D. Eisenhower Library**

537 Totowa Rd., Totowa  
973-790-3265  
Hours: Monday, Wednesday & Thursday 10:00a.m. - 8:00 p.m.  
Tuesday & Friday 12:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.;  
Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

**Haledon Public Library**

404 Morrissee Ave., Haledon  
973-790-3808  
Hours: Monday, Tuesday & Friday 9:00 a.m. -  
5:00 p.m.  
Wednesday 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.; Thursday 12:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.  
Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

**Lambert Castle**

3 Valley Road, Paterson  
973-247-0085

Hours: Wednesday - Friday 1:00 p.m. - 4:00p.m.;  
2nd & 4th Saturday & Sunday of every month 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

**Little Falls Free Public Library**

8 Warren Street, Little Falls, NJ  
973-256-2784

Hours: Monday - Thursday 10:00 a.m. - 9:00p.m.;  
Friday 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.; Saturday 10:00a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

**Louis Bay 2nd Library**

345 Lafayette Ave., Hawthorne  
973-427-5745

Hours: Monday - Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 9:00p.m.; Friday 9:00 a.m.

**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 they may be glad to see you home, but your return can be stressful for you and for them. 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.

**A. Family Counseling Resources**

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

**Eastside High School**

150 Park Ave., Paterson  
973-569-0018

**Catholic Charities**

24 Degrasse Street, Paterson  
973-279-7100  
Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30am-4:30pm

**Catholic Family & Community Services Adoption & Counseling Services**

476 17<sup>th</sup> Ave., Paterson  
973-523-9595  
Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30am-4:30pm

**Center for Family Services - Wayne**

1022 Hamburg Turnpike, Wayne  
973-694-1234

Hours: Monday & Friday 10am-3pm  
Tuesday-Thursday 10am-9pm

Offers substance abuse assessment, parenting education, individual, marital and family therapy, psychiatric evaluation, life skills education, support groups as well as in-home therapy for the elderly and disabled.

**Christian Counseling Center**

352 Clifton Ave, Clifton  
973-365-2125

Hours: Mon-Fri 9am-5pm

Offers a wide range of counseling services and programs; offers individual, group and family counseling for all ages. Services include alcohol and drug addictions testing, attention deficit disorder, marriage counseling, eating disorders, smoking cessation, parent support and education groups, mental health and psychological testing, depression, grief and loss, stress and loneliness.

**Capital Support Services**

150 Passaic Ave., Passaic  
973-779-0011

Hours: Monday-Friday 9am-6pm  
Individual and family social services.

**Passaic Pal**

40 4<sup>th</sup> St., Passaic  
973-777-7811

**YMCA**

45 Drive, Passaic  
973-777-0123  
Hours: Monday-Friday 12:30pm-6pm



**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 973-742-0063 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.



- Call DYFS and ask to speak to your child's case manager. For example "Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I have recently been released from prison. My child \_\_\_\_\_ has been under foster care while I have been incarcerated. I would like to speak to the case manager so that I can make an appointment with him or her." Make an appointment.
- Make sure to make it to the appointment on time, and call if you are running late or need to reschedule. Bring paper and pencil to write down any information the case manager gives you. This is your chance to ask questions so take advantage of it!!
- Be prepared to talk about your criminal background, and any problems that you may have such as alcohol or drugs. The case manager can ask you if you have a place to live and other personal questions in order to assess whether you are eligible to establish visitation with your child. If you can, ask a friend or relative to help you practice answering these kinds of questions. Make sure to pay attention to what the case manager says and ask about anything that you do not understand. The impression you make in the interview is important. If you feel yourself getting angry, ask for a cup of water, and take an extra breath to cool down. Answer questions honestly, even about things like substance abuse, because the case manager may be able to assist with getting into treatment or with other help you may need.

The best way to help your child is to help yourself first.

- Make sure you leave the office with any or all documents that the case manager gave you regarding your child, and remember to ask for a business card from the case manager, in case you have questions later on.

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 ("noncustodial") 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 Passaic County Bar Association Lawyer Referral Service at 973-345-4585. You can also contact Passaic County Legal Services, at 100 Hamilton St, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Paterson, 973-345-4585. 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, Hall of Justice, 63 Hamilton Ave., Paterson, 973-247-8700. There is a onetime \$6 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 100 Hamilton Street, 2nd Floor, Paterson which helps enforce child support orders. The phone number there is 973-247-8632.

### **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 “arrears.” 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 only if there is a warrant. If the warrant is cleared the client must pay \$100 restoration fee to DMV unless waived by court order. 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 may be available in your prison law library and at the state judiciary website, [www.judiciary.state.nj.us/prose/infmpjm.pdf](http://www.judiciary.state.nj.us/prose/infmpjm.pdf).

**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, 63-65 Hamilton Street, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, Paterson 07505. 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: 973-247-8459. 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.

For more information on Child Support, please visit their website at <http://www.njchildsupport.org/Home.asp>

#### **D. Domestic Violence Resources**

The following places provide counseling, support and shelter or referrals to shelter in domestic violence situations. You can also call the 24 hour hotline from the New Jersey Coalition for Battered Women: 1-800-572-SAFE.

##### **Passaic County Women's Center Domestic Violence Program**

P.O Box 244  
Paterson, NJ 07513  
973-881-1450 (hotline)



Offers domestic violence crisis intervention, group and individual counseling for victims and their children. It also provides emergency shelter, food, clothing, court assistance accompaniment and case management services.

##### **Strengthen our Sisters Outreach**

198 Lincoln Ave., West Milford  
973-728-7835  
Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday 9am-5pm;  
Wednesday & Friday 9am-8pm; Sunday 10am-4pm

##### **Project S.A.R.A.H**

199 Scoles Ave., Clifton  
973-777-7638  
Hours: Monday & Tuesday 9am-9pm;  
Wednesday 9am-8pm; Thursday 9am-7pm &  
Friday 9am-1pm



## 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. 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.

### **A. GED Classes**

The places in Passaic 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**

#### **American Training Center Inc.**

625 Main Avenue, Passaic  
973-471-9058  
Hours: Monday- Friday 8am-8:30pm

#### **Clifton Adult Evening School**

333 Colfax Avenue, Clifton  
973-470-2438  
Hours: Monday & Thursday 6pm-10pm

#### **Clifton Memorial Library**

292 Piaget Avenue, Clifton  
973-772-5500  
Hours: Saturday 10:30am-12pm

#### **Passaic County Community College**

1 College Blvd., Paterson  
973-470-5230  
Hours: Monday-Saturday 7am-10:00pm  
Cost varies

#### **Passaic County One-Stop**

52 Church St., Paterson  
973-340-3400  
Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30am-4:30pm  
Services 18+ years old free.

#### **St. Luke's CDC**

139-145 Carroll St., Paterson  
973-345-4309  
Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30am-4:30pm  
Services GA recipients.

**Community Action for Social Affairs (CASA)**

284 Passaic Street, Passaic  
973-773-4100  
Hours: Monday- Friday 8:30am-4:30pm

**Paterson Free Public Library: Community Learning Center**

250 Broadway, Paterson  
973-321-1223  
16+years old  
Hours: Monday-Friday 9:30am-3pm

**St. Paul’s CDC**

451 Van Houten St., Paterson  
973-278-7900  
Hours: Monday- Friday 9am-3pm or by appointment only

**The Oasis-A Haven for Women & Children**

320 Main St., Paterson  
973-881-8307  
Women and children in need in Paterson area.  
Hours: Monday- Friday 9:30am-3pm

**Totowa Public Library**

537 Totowa Rd., Totowa  
973-790-3265  
Hours: Vary call for information

**Wayne Adult School**

1003 Hamburg turnpike, Wayne  
973-633-3124/973-633-302  
Hours: Vary call for information



**B. 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 Passaic County.

**LOCAL AREA COLLEGES**

**Passaic County Community College, Paterson**

1 College Blvd., Paterson  
973-684-6868

**Passaic County Community College, Haskell**

500 Union Ave., Haskell  
973-248-3000

**Montclair State University, Montclair**

1 Normal Ave., Montclair  
973-655-4000

**William Paterson University, Wayne**

15 Borzotta Blvd., Wayne  
973-595-2000

**Fairleigh Dickinson University, Teaneck**

1000 River Road, Teaneck  
201-692-2000

**Felician College**

262 South Main St., Lodi  
201-559-6000

**Felician College**

223 Montross Ave., Rutherford  
201-559-6000

**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 information and referrals, **888-576-5529**. You can also contact Passaic County Legal Services, at 175 Market St, Paterson, 07505**973-345-7171**. From prison, you can also contact the **Prisoner’s Self Help Legal Clinic**, P.O. Box 768, Newark, NJ 07101.

**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 that it is accurate. You should also be prepared to answer any questions about your background. You will have to go into your local police station and make an appointment to be fingerprinted on a State Applicant Fingerprint Card (SBI19). On that card you will have to include your full name, social security number, date of birth and purpose for the record check. You then 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:

State Section of Identification  
Records and Identification Bureau  
New Jersey State Police  
P.O. Box 7068  
West Trenton, NJ 08628  
1-609-882-2000 ext 6425  
1-609-530-4856 fax

**You must include a \$30 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 get a copy of the book, which costs **\$15**, call 1-888-576-5529, or go to the LSNJ website, where you can download it for free at: <http://www.lsnj.org/english/crime/municipalcourt/clearingyourrecord.cfm>.

### **How to File for an Order to Expunge Your Criminal Record**

#### Step 1: Locate your records

In order to prepare your expungement petition and prove your eligibility, you will need to get the following information:

- a) The date of your arrest.
- b) The statute(s) and the offense(s) for which you were arrested or convicted. (Note that if the offenses were reduced from the original charges, these will be different.)
- c) The original indictment, accusation, state grand jury summons, warrant, or complaint/docket number. Include all, if more than one.
- d) The date of the disposition, which could be the date of the conviction, date of not guilty verdict or date of dismissal.
- e) The specific punishment or other disposition.

### Step 2: Request for State Police Records

- a) Form A is the state Police record (rap sheet) will reflect any arrests, charges and dispositions.
- b) The state will only have a record sheet if you were fingerprinted when you were arrested. If you were not fingerprinted, and only a complaint was signed against you when you were arrested, you will still have a record of your arrest to expunge at the police department, but you will not have a record within the Division of the State Police, State Bureau of Investigation.

### Step 3: Complete these Forms

- a) Form B is the Petition for Expungement-states that you are not requesting an Expungement Order and states why you qualify. You must then file the petition in the county where you were arrested. If you were arrested in more than one county, contact the Criminal Case Management Office in either county and ask whether they will allow you to file expungement of your entire record in that county.
- b) Next you must complete the verification page and sign it in the presence of a notary as this page must bear a notary seal.
- c) Form C is the Order for Hearing-this is used by the judge to schedule a hearing. The Superior Court judge assigned to your case will usually schedule a hearing between 35 and 60 days after he or she gets your petition.
- d) Form D which is the Expungement Order is the official document that will be signed by the judge if your petition for Expungement is granted.

### Step 4: File & Serve the Forms

- a) Make three copies of your notarized Petition for Expungement (Form B), Order for Hearing (Form C), and proposed Expungement Order (Form D)
- b) Form E is a Cover letter that describes to the county Criminal Case Management Office the contents of your package and the purpose of the enclosed forms. Fill in the blanks on the Cover letter (form E) and attach the cover letter to the originals and the two photocopies that you are filing (Keep one copy of each for your records). Include two large self-addressed envelopes with the appropriate postage stamped on each envelope. Mail this package to the Criminal Case Management Office in the county where the arrest and/or prosecution occurred. A list of the county offices where these forms should be mailed, along with telephone numbers, appears at the end of this guide. There is a filing fee of \$52.50. Most offices do not accept personal checks, so you should include a money order or certified check made out to the state of N.J Treasurer.



#### Step 5: Distributing the Filed Copies

- a) One copy of the Petition for Expungement, Order for Hearing, and the proposed final order (Expungement Order) will be mailed back to marked "Filed" and assigned a "Docket Number." The Order for Hearing will also state the time and date for your hearing.
- b) Immediately after receiving the filed copies from the court, make at least seven (7) copies of the Petition for Expungement, Order for Hearing, and the proposal final order (Expungement Order).
- c) Mail one copy of each, immediately, via certified mail, return receipt requested, to each of the following government agencies that were involved with your case(s):
  - 1) The attorney General
  - 2) The Superintendent of State Police, Expungement Unit
  - 3) The County Prosecutor
  - 4) The Magistrate or the court clerk of the municipal court if a municipal court heard the matter
  - 5) The Chief of Police or other head of the police department where the offense was committed or the arrest was made.
  - 6) The chief law enforcement officer of any other law enforcement agency of this state that participated in the arrest.
  - 7) The Warden of any institution in which you were incarcerated.
  - 8) For State Grand Jury Cases: Division of Criminal Justice  
Attention: Records and Identification; 25 Market Street;  
P.O. Box 085; Trenton, NJ 08625
  - 9) If your case involved a conditional discharge (CD) or pretrial intervention (PTI), the county probation department should also be served.
  - 10) You may use the cover letter (Form F) when mailing the copies to these agencies. Fill in the blanks on the Cover letter (Form F) and attach the Cover letter to each set of copies. You should mail the copies of these forms right away, as the statute mandates service or mailing within five (5) days from the date of order. Mail them at the post office, by certified mail, return receipt requested.
  - 11) Form G is the proof of Notice-after you received the certified mail return receipt cards back from the post office, contact the New Jersey Criminal Case Management Office, and ask the clerk whether the court requires that the proof of mailing be submitted at or prior to the hearing. If proof is required to be produced at the hearing, make sure that you bring the green certified mail return receipt cards and the Proof of Notice (Form G) to court with you on the day of the hearing.

#### Step 6: Go to the Hearing

- a) Arrive at the hearing 15 minutes early. (All counties do not require an appearance. If an appearance is required, you must mail the green return receipt cards to the place you filed your petition, at least one week before the scheduled hearing.) Take your copies of the filed Petition for Expungement, the Expungement Order, and the green return receipt cards to the hearing (unless you previously filed them with the court).
- b) When you arrive to court tell the county clerk that you are there. If there are any officers that object to the expungement, they will tell the judge the reason. The judge may ask you some questions and will decide whether to grant or deny you an expungement. If there is no opposition the judge will, in most cases, grant your expungement.
- c) If no law enforcement officers object to the expungement, the court may grant the order without a hearing. If this happens, you will receive a signed and filed Expungement Order in the mail. (It's always a good practice to call the court the day before the hearing to confirm that it is still on the court's calendar.)

#### Step 7: Distribute Your Finalized Expungement Order

- a) IMMEDIATELY after you receive a copy of the Expungement Order signed by the judge and stamped "Filed" by the court, mail one copy of the Expungement Order, by certified mail, return receipt requested, to each of the following.
  - 1) The Attorney General
  - 2) The Superintendent of State Police, Expungement Unit
  - 3) The Magistrate or the court clerk of the municipal court if the matter was heard by a municipal court
  - 4) The Chief of Police or other head of the police department where the offense was committed or the arrest was made
  - 5) The chief law enforcement officer of any other law enforcement agency of this state that participated in the arrest
  - 6) The Records Division of any institution in which you were incarcerated
  - 7) The identification Bureau in the county where the arrest was made or where you were incarcerated (see the list of County Identification Bureaus)
  - 8) The Warden of any institution in which you were incarcerated.
  - 9) For State Grand Jury cases: Division of Criminal Justice; Attention: Records and Identification; 25 Market Street ; P.O. Box 085 Trenton, N.J 08625. As a final reminder, make sure that you have completely followed all of the steps required in this guide. This is very important because even though you may be eligible, if you have missed any of the required steps, your Petition for Expungement may be denied. In that case, you will have to start over.

### **Contacts needed for Expungement Process County Prosecutors**

Passaic County  
Administration Building  
401 Grand street  
Paterson, N.J 07505  
973-881-4800  
FAX: 973-225-0155

#### **County Identification Bureau**

Passaic County Sheriff  
Criminal Identification Bureau  
11 Sheriff's Plaza  
Paterson, N.J 07501

#### **Criminal Case Management**

Superior Court  
Criminal Division, 2nd Floor  
77 Hamilton Street  
Paterson, N.J  
973-247-8402  
Filing Fee: \$52.50  
Payee: State N.J. Treasurer

#### **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. That 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 SERVICES, 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. You can also visit their website:

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

**TRANSUNION PERSONAL CREDIT REPORT:**

PO Box 1000, Chester PA 19022  
Call 800-888-4213 or [www.transunion.com](http://www.transunion.com)

**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 the Division of Elections, the Commissioners of Registration office in the County where you live or from your Municipal Clerk. Registration forms are also available in various State agencies and at Motor Vehicle Commission 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.

## The Game Plan

Your first weeks out after leaving prison can be overwhelming. This section is set up to help you get organized and keep yourself on track towards your goals. First, think about what those goals are; what do you want or need to get done in your first week out? In your first month out? Where do you want to be in six months? There are lots of things that other people need you to do — your parole officer, for example, and your family — but you also need to think about what you expect from yourself.

### Places to stay

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### Appointments to make? Doctors? Job help? Employers? Applying for Benefits?

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### People I need to see or call:

Who? \_\_\_\_\_  
Who? \_\_\_\_\_  
Who? \_\_\_\_\_

### NOTES:

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## 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.

<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.):**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_

### **I.D. Checklist**

<b><u>Documents</u></b>	<b>Have?</b>	<b>Need?</b>
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	_____	_____

## My Contacts

### Important Names and Phone Numbers

Parole Officer: \_\_\_\_\_

Parole Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Parole Office: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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# Smart Book Topics



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



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



**Taking Care of Yourself:  
Getting Support**



**Taking Care of Yourself:  
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**