

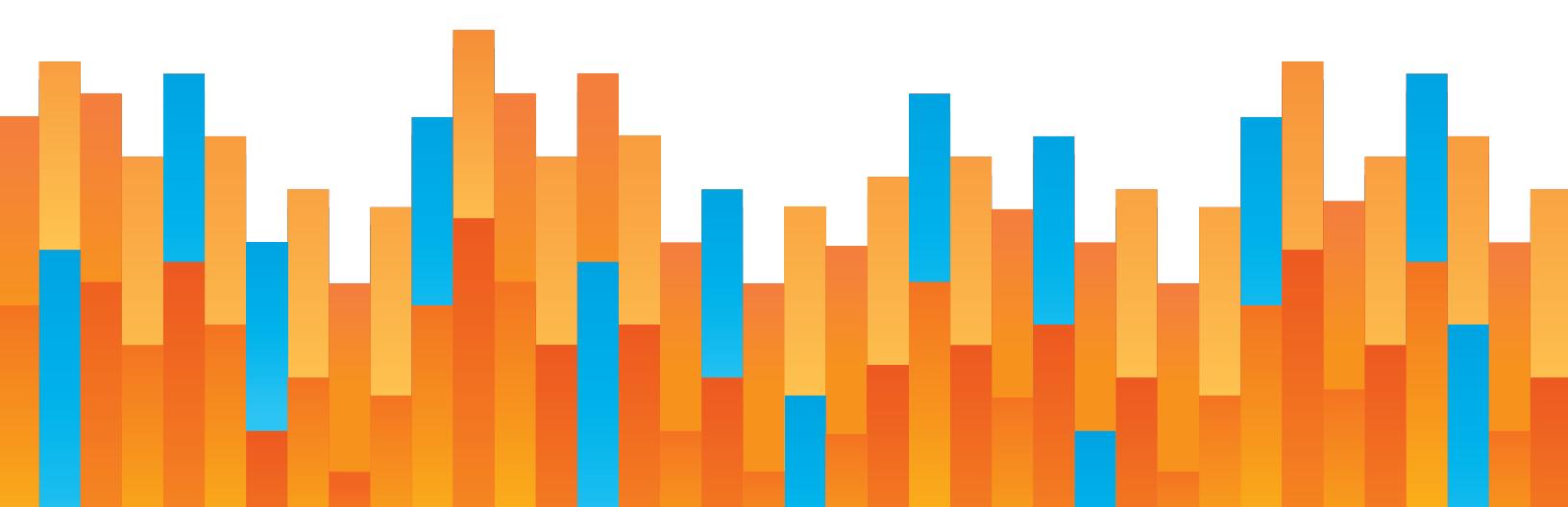


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FROM PRISON TO PAPERWORK: A 50-STATE SURVEY OF POLICIES ON REENTRY IDENTIFICATION DOCUMENTS

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PART 1

INTRODUCTION

Among the first challenges people face upon release from prison is obtaining identification documents required to obtain a job, rent an apartment, or open a bank account. Without a photo ID, birth certificate, or Social Security card, formerly incarcerated individuals cannot access the employment, housing, and financial services that facilitate successful reentry.

Reintegrating people released from incarceration into society poses a significant policy challenge in the United States. There are approximately 1.3 million people currently incarcerated in state and federal prisons.¹ The vast majority of them will eventually return to their communities, joining the 5 million Americans who have previously served time in prison.^{2,3} Upon release, the formerly incarcerated continue to face a wide array of restrictions on their legal rights, civic participation, and employment. These challenges contribute to high recidivism rates, with approximately half of those released from state

¹ Wendy Sawyer and Peter Wagner, "Mass Incarceration: The Whole Pie 2025," Prison Policy Initiative, 11 March 2025. [prisonpolicy.org/reports/pie2025.html](https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/pie2025.html) (7 July 2025).

² Nathan James, "Offender Reentry: Correctional Statistics, Reintegration into the Community, and Recidivism," Congressional Research Service, Jan. 2015. sgp.fas.org/crs/misc/RL34287.pdf (7 July 2025).

³ Sarah K. Shannon, Christopher Uggen, Jason Schnittker, Melissa Thompson, Sara Wakefield, and Michael Massoglia, "The Growth, Scope, and Spatial Distribution of People With Felony Records in the United States, 1948-2010," *Demography* 54 (2017) Duke University Press Online. 1795-1818 doi.org/10.1007/s13524-017-0611-1 (7 July 2025).

prison returning within three years.⁴ This cycle of reoffending and reincarceration not only imperils public safety but also diminishes economic productivity, separates families, erodes civic culture, and siphons more taxpayer dollars into incarceration year after year.

Academic research has long sought to understand the causes of criminal behavior and, relatedly, the factors that lead people to stop engaging in criminal behavior. The relationship between employment and crime has received particular attention, in part because employment is one factor which may be readily influenced by public policy interventions. There is strong evidence that people who find stable and gainful employment are less likely to reoffend.⁵ However, simply providing people released from prison with employment does not consistently reduce long-term unemployment or reoffending.⁶

States have pursued a wide variety of programs to prepare inmates for reentry and the workforce, including basic, secondary, post-secondary education, vocational training, prison labor, and work release programs. Research indicates that these programs can improve post-release employment outcomes, especially among people who enter prison with minimal education or professional experience. However, the impact of policies and programs intended to prepare prisoners for reentry and employment may suffer due to a variety of other legal and social barriers that the formerly incarcerated experience upon their return to the community. Public policy should broadly aim to minimize unnecessary

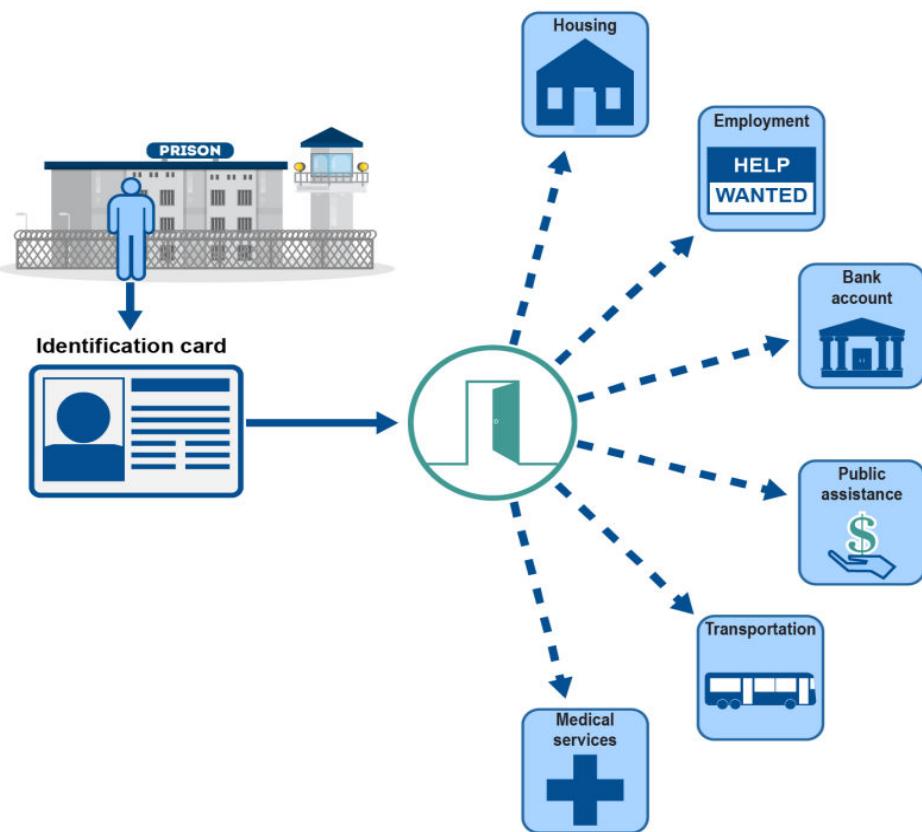
⁴ Leonardo Antenangeli and Matthew R. Durose, "Recidivism of Prisoners Released in 24 States in 2008: A 10-Year Follow-Up Period (2008–2018)," U.S. Department of Justice, [bjs.ojp.gov/library/publications/recidivism-prisoners-released-24-states-2008-10-year-follow-period-2008-2018](https://www.bjs.gov/library/publications/recidivism-prisoners-released-24-states-2008-10-year-follow-period-2008-2018) (7 July 2025).

⁵ Simon Kolbeck, Steven Lopez, and Paul Bellair, "Does stable employment after prison reduce recidivism irrespective of prior employment and offending?," *Justice Quarterly* 41 (2021) Taylor & Francis Online. doi.org/10.1080/07418825.2023.2201330 (7 July 2025); Mark T. Berg and Beth M. Huebner, "Reentry and the ties that bind: An examination of social ties, employment, and recidivism," *Justice Quarterly* 28 (2011) Taylor & Francis Online. 382–410. doi.org/10.1080/07418825.2010.498383 (7 July 2025); Susan Lockwood, John M. Nally, Taiping Ho, and Katie Knutson, "The effect of correctional education on postrelease employment and recidivism: A 5-year follow-up study in the state of Indiana," *Crime & Delinquency* 58 (2012) Sage Journals Online. 380–396. doi.org/10.1177/001128712441695 (7 July 2025).

⁶ Eric Valentine and Cindy Redcross, "Transitional jobs after release from prison: effects on employment and recidivism," *IZA Journal of Labor Policy* 4 (2015) Springer Nature Link. doi.org/10.1186/s40173-015-0043-8 (7 July 2025); Philip Cook, Songman Kang, Anthony Braga, Jens Ludwig, and Mallory O'Brien, "An Experimental Evaluation of a Comprehensive Employment-Oriented Prisoner Re-entry Program," *IZA Journal of Labor Policy* 31 (2015) Springer Nature Link. 355–382. doi.org/10.1007/s10940-014-9242-5 (7 July 2025); Christopher Uggen, "Work as a Turning Point in the Life Course of Criminals: A Duration Model of Age, Employment, and Recidivism," *American Sociological Review* 65 (2000) JSTOR Online. 529–546. doi.org/10.2307/2657381 (7 July 2025).

legal and administrative barriers faced by former criminal offenders who actively pursue reintegrative goals like securing gainful employment, making stable housing arrangements, and establishing community ties. Identification documents are one such critical barrier (Figure 1).

FIGURE 1. IDENTIFICATION DOCUMENTS ARE REQUIRED TO OBTAIN HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT, BANKING, AND OTHER SERVICES UPON RELEASE FROM INCARCERATION.



Source: Bureau of Prisons and other research entities; artinspiring/stock.adobe.com; GAO-23-105302

Note: The types of identification documents required to access these benefits and services may vary.

Obtaining a state-issued photo identification card typically requires multiple documents to verify an applicant's identity. A birth certificate and Social Security number are among the most common forms of documentation used for this purpose. If a person does not have a certified copy of their birth certificate or know their Social Security number, they may need to obtain those documents before applying for a photo identification card. Yet, obtaining a copy of one's birth certificate or a replacement social security card also requires identity verification through supporting documents, like a photo identification card or passport. These circular requirements can be very challenging to fulfill, especially for people recently

released from prison. State correctional agencies can facilitate the reentry process by assisting inmates with obtaining these essential documents prior to release.

This report examines state laws that require correctional agencies to help inmates obtain state-issued photo identification cards, Social Security cards, and certified copies of their birth certificates. Reason Foundation also reviewed published administrative rules and procedures and contacted correctional agencies in states without relevant statutes to determine whether such assistance is provided in practice.

PART 2

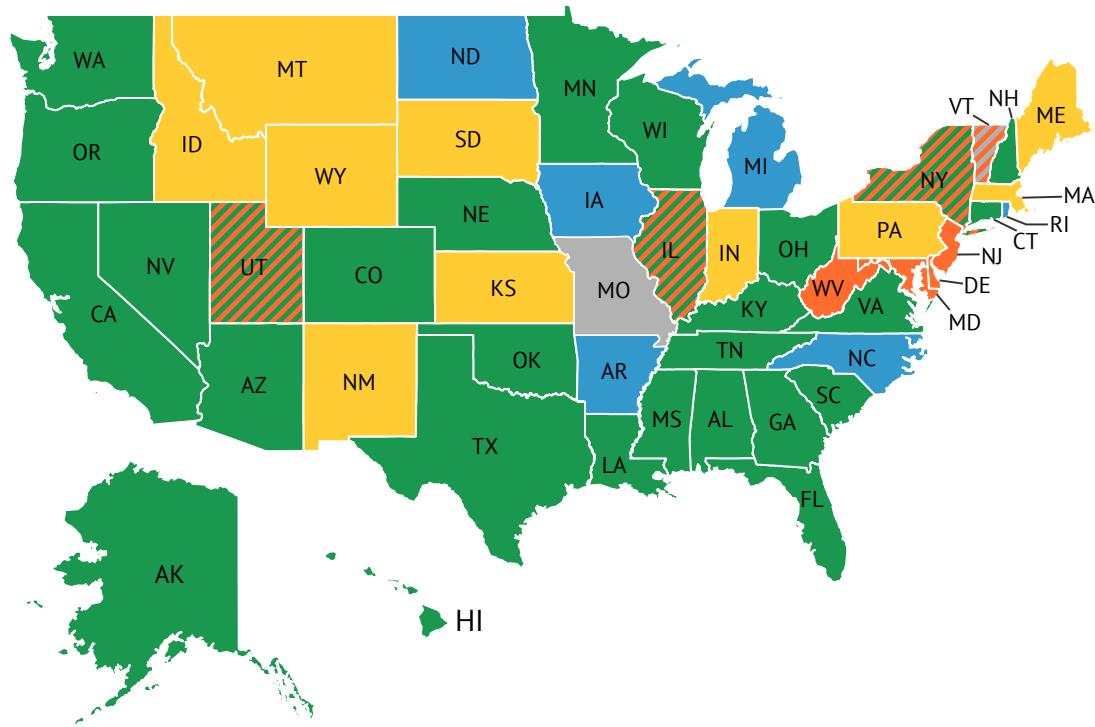
OVERVIEW OF CURRENT STATE POLICY

IDENTIFICATION CARDS

Twenty-eight states have enacted laws that explicitly direct the state corrections agency to provide or assist incarcerated individuals in obtaining a photo identification card prior to release. Corrections agencies in 16 additional states operate such programs without a statutory mandate. In 10 of these states, we identified published, written policies or procedures governing the provision of photo IDs.

Five states (Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Vermont, and West Virginia) issue temporary identification cards that can be used to obtain permanent documentation post-release. In Illinois, New York, and Utah, inmates may receive a permanent ID if they are able to obtain the necessary supporting documentation; otherwise, they may be issued a temporary identification card. We were unable to identify any statutory or regulatory basis for providing photo IDs to incarcerated individuals in Missouri (Figure 2).

FIGURE 2: STATE POLICIES TO PROVIDE INMATES WITH PHOTO IDENTIFICATION UPON RELEASE



Statutorily Mandated ID Assistance:

State law explicitly requires the Department of Corrections to provide or assist incarcerated individuals in obtaining a government-issued photo identification card prior to release.

Formal Administrative Program Without Statutory Mandate:

The Department of Corrections operates a formal, systemwide program or has written policies and procedures in place to provide or assist with obtaining photo ID prior to release, but there is no statutory requirement.

Informal or Limited Practice:

The Department of Corrections provides assistance or access to photo ID through informal practices or limited programs, but there is no statutory mandate or publicly available written department policy.

Temporary or DOC-Issued ID:

In lieu of a government-issued photo ID, the Department of Corrections provides a temporary identification card that may serve as proof of identity for obtaining a permanent photo ID after release.

No Documented ID Assistance or Requirement:

There is no statutory, regulatory, or documented administrative basis requiring or indicating that the Department of Corrections provides photo ID or related assistance to individuals prior to release.

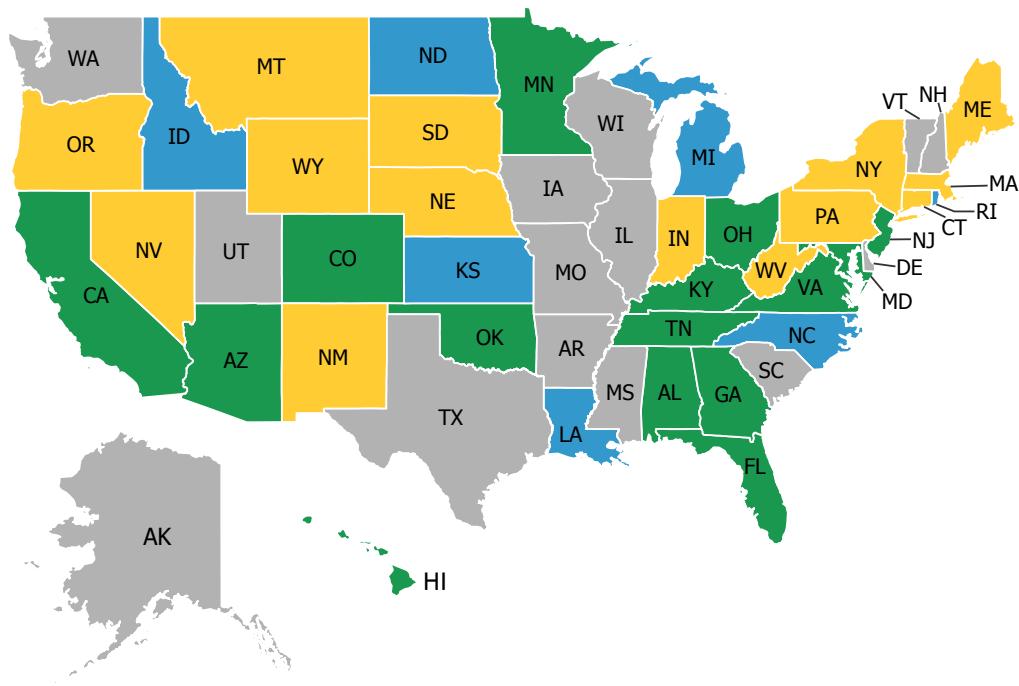
BIRTH CERTIFICATES

Fifteen states have enacted laws explicitly requiring correctional agencies to assist eligible inmates in obtaining a certified copy of their birth certificate. In 21 additional states,

agencies operate such programs absent a statutory requirement. Of these, 14 states have published policies or procedures outlining their approach.

We found no clear statutory, regulatory, or publicly available policy basis for assisting inmates with birth certificate access in 14 states (Figure 3).

FIGURE 3: STATE POLICIES TO PROVIDE INMATES WITH BIRTH CERTIFICATES UPON RELEASE



Statutorily Mandated Birth Certificate Assistance:

State law explicitly requires the Department of Corrections to provide or assist incarcerated individuals with obtaining a copy of their birth certificate prior to release.

Formal Administrative Program Without Statutory Mandate:

The Department of Corrections has written policies and procedures in place to provide or assist inmates with obtaining a copy of their birth certificate prior to release, but there is no statutory requirement.

Informal or Limited Practice:

The Department of Corrections provides assistance through informal practices or limited programs, but there is no statutory mandate or publicly available written policies or procedures.

No Documented Birth Certificate Assistance or Requirement:

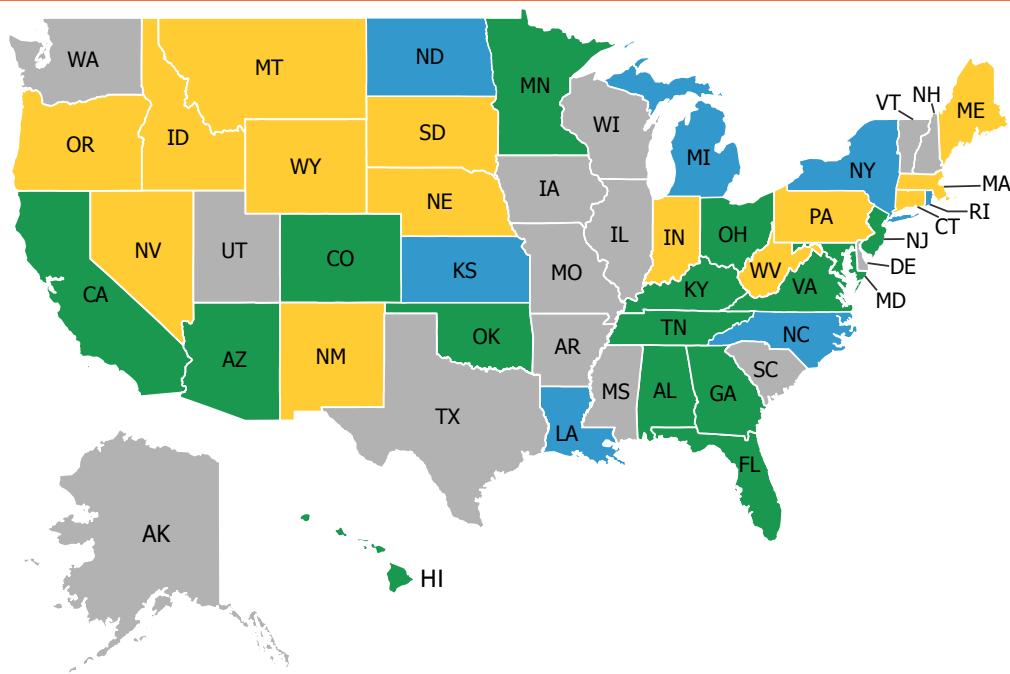
There is no statutory, regulatory, or documented administrative basis requiring or indicating that the Department of Corrections assists inmates with obtaining a copy of their birth certificate prior to release.

SOCIAL SECURITY CARDS

Fifteen states have adopted laws mandating that correctional agencies assist eligible individuals with obtaining a Social Security card. In 21 other states, agencies provide this assistance through programs or partnerships despite the absence of statutory direction. Fourteen of those states have published procedures or written policies governing the process.

We found no clear statutory or regulatory basis for providing assistance with Social Security card replacement in 14 states (Figure 4).

FIGURE 4: STATE POLICIES TO PROVIDE INMATES WITH SOCIAL SECURITY CARDS UPON RELEASE



Statutorily Mandated Social Security Card Assistance:

State law explicitly requires the Department of Corrections to provide or assist incarcerated individuals with obtaining a replacement Social Security card prior to release.

Formal Administrative Program Without Statutory Mandate:

The Department of Corrections has written policies and procedures in place to provide or assist inmates with obtaining a replacement Social Security card prior to release, but there is no statutory requirement.

Informal or Limited Practice:

The Department of Corrections provides assistance through informal practices or limited programs, but there is no statutory mandate or publicly available written policies or procedures.

No Documented Social Security Card Assistance or Requirement:

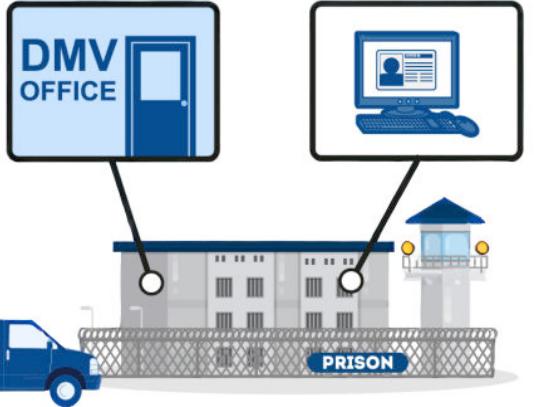
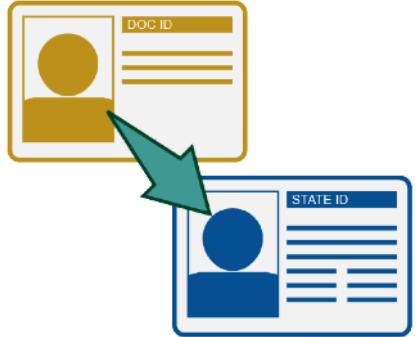
There is no statutory, regulatory, or documented administrative basis requiring or indicating that the Department of Corrections assists inmates with obtaining a replacement Social Security card prior to release.

PART 3

OVERVIEW OF STATE IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

States have pursued a variety of approaches to assisting inmates with obtaining a photo-identification card (Figure 5). Assisting inmates with obtaining a Social Security card and certified copy of their birth certificate generally involves establishing memoranda of understanding between the state corrections agency, the federal Social Security Administration, and state offices of vital statistics. Corrections agencies have also generally adopted standard procedures for compiling necessary information and coordinating with relevant agencies as part of the reentry planning process.

FIGURE 5: STATES HAVE PURSUED A VARIETY OF APPROACHES TO ASSISTING INMATES WITH OBTAINING A PHOTO IDENTIFICATION CARD.

During Incarceration	Post Incarceration
 <p>Embedded Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV Office) DMV operates one or more full service offices in correctional facilities to process state-issued photo ID cards</p> <p>DMV Equipment Onsite (Prison) DMV agencies train and equip correctional staff to process state-issued ID cards at correctional facilities</p> <p>Mobile Licensing (DMV Van) DMV sends a mobile van to correctional facility to process state-issued photo ID cards</p>	 <p>Postrelease ID Exchange Released people exchange correctional department ID for state-issued photo ID cards after release from prison.</p>

Source: GAO analysis of information provided by selected states; artinspiring/stock.adobe.com; GAO-23-105302

Note: These are the general approaches taken by the six states in our case study. Other states may take different approaches to assisting incarcerated people with obtaining ID documents.

Across the U.S., three primary models of ID assistance programs have emerged: mobile units, embedded facilities operated by the state's transportation agency, and embedded facilities operated by correctional agencies.⁷ Each of these models has advantages and disadvantages. States should weigh these tradeoffs carefully and design their programs to align with their operational capacities, agency partnerships, and logistical realities. However, all three models require some degree of work by correctional agencies and their staff to help inmates prepare required documentation including birth certificates and Social Security cards before an ID can be issued.

⁷ “Opportunities Exist to Better Assist Incarcerated People with Obtaining ID Documents Prior to Release,” United States Government Accountability Office (GAO), Bureau of Prisons, Government Accountability Office, Dec. 2022. [gao.gov/assets/gao-23-105302.pdf](https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-23-105302.pdf) (1 July 2025).

MOBILE UNITS

In some states like Florida, Virginia, Colorado, and Kansas, correctional agencies partner with the transportation agencies to deploy a mobile Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) unit.⁸

These mobile units consist of a bus or van fitted with photography and ID-printing equipment and staffed by DMV employees. Mobile DMV units travel to correctional facilities to assist soon-to-be released inmates to obtain their IDs. Because they are mobile, these units can serve multiple facilities across the state without the need to build new embedded facilities or train correctional personnel.

Mobile units are a highly flexible option. States can deploy a single unit to serve many locations or use them to supplement existing embedded facilities. This model is especially useful for reaching rural areas and filling service gaps. Additionally, these mobile units can serve the non-incarcerated population; many units go to community centers to assist people trying to obtain their first ID or renew their old ones.⁹

EMBEDDED FACILITIES OPERATED BY TRANSPORTATION AGENCIES

States like Colorado and Hawaii have implemented permanent ID facilities within prisons that are operated by the state's transportation agency.¹⁰ In this model, the transportation agency provides both the staff and equipment needed to issue IDs on-site. These embedded facilities enable correctional institutions to issue IDs on demand without requiring correctional staff to manage the process or operate new technology.

This arrangement requires strong partnership between correctional and transportation agencies. States may adopt hybrid models where a few embedded facilities are

⁸ Ibid; "Colorado DMV2GO," Colorado Department of Motor Vehicles, Colorado Department of Revenue, 2021. dmv.colorado.gov/DMV2GO (1 July 2025).; Gayle Culberth, 17 May 2025. Email interview.

⁹ "Florida Licensing on Wheels (FLOW)," Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, Florida State Government, 2021. flhsmv.gov/locations/florida-licensing-wheels-flow/ (7 July 2025); "Colorado DMV2GO," Colorado Department of Motor Vehicles, Colorado Department of Revenue, 2021. dmv.colorado.gov/DMV2GO (1 July 2025).

¹⁰ "Opportunities Exist to Better Assist Incarcerated People with Obtaining ID Documents Prior to Release," United States Government Accountability Office (GAO), Bureau of Prisons, Government Accountability Office, Dec. 2022. gao.gov/assets/gao-23-105302.pdf (1 July 2025).

supplemented by mobile units that provide coverage to correctional facilities without an embedded unit.

EMBEDDED FACILITIES OPERATED BY CORRECTIONAL AGENCIES

Minnesota and Montana offer examples of embedded ID facilities operated by correctional agencies themselves.¹¹ Under this model, the transportation agency provides ID equipment and trains a correctional staff to assist inmates. This model gives correctional agencies greater control and responsibility for day-to-day operations.

While this model requires an initial investment in training and installation, it provides a sustainable in-house solution with on-demand availability for inmates. Similar to embedded facilities operated by transportation agencies, facilities operated by correctional agencies could be combined with mobile units to ensure access across statewide correctional systems.

¹¹ Ibid.

PART 4

STATE PROFILES

ALABAMA

In 2022, 8,978 people were released from Alabama Department of Corrections (ADOC) jurisdiction.¹² Approximately 30% of people released from ADOC jurisdiction in 2018 returned to ADOC jurisdiction within 3 years.¹³

Alabama code section 41-27-3.2 directs the Alabama State Law Enforcement Agency to coordinate with ADOC to issue a non-driver identification card upon release from ADOC.¹⁴ Additionally, Alabama Code Section 41-10-1 directs ADOC to provide inmates being released with identification necessary to obtain employment including a Social Security card and a birth certificate.¹⁵

¹² E. Ann Carson and Rich Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables," U.S. Department of Justice, [bjs.ojp.gov, 15 Oct. 2024. bjs.ojp.gov/document/p22st.pdf](https://bjs.ojp.gov/15-Oct-2024/bjs.ojp.gov/document/p22st.pdf) (10 July 2025).

¹³ "ADOC Annual Report Fiscal Year 2021," Alabama Department of Corrections, [alabama.gov, 2022. doc.alabama.gov/docs/AnnualRpts/2021%20Annual%20Report.pdf](https://alabama.gov/doc.alabama.gov/docs/AnnualRpts/2021%20Annual%20Report.pdf) (1 July 2025).

¹⁴ Alabama State Legislature, Alabama Code Section 41-27-3.2. [legislature.state.al.us, 2024. alison.legislature.state.al.us/files/pdf/SearchableInstruments/2021FS/PrintFiles/215250-2.pdf](https://legislature.state.al.us/2024/alison.legislature.state.al.us/files/pdf/SearchableInstruments/2021FS/PrintFiles/215250-2.pdf) (3 Dec. 2025).

¹⁵ Alabama State Legislature, Alabama Code Section 14-10-1. [legislature.state.al.us, 2024. alison.legislature.state.al.us/code-of-alabama?section=14-10-1](https://legislature.state.al.us/2024/alison.legislature.state.al.us/code-of-alabama?section=14-10-1) (3 Dec. 2025).

As of December 2023, ADOC developed a memorandum of understanding with the United States Social Security Administration.¹⁶ However, there have been challenges implementing the other portions of the law, and there is no available data indicating the number of people who have been provided documents upon release.¹⁷ The legislature did not specify how implementation would be funded, so inmates may be required to pay \$15 to the Alabama Department of Health for a copy of their birth certificate and \$31.50 to the Alabama State Law Enforcement Agency for a non-driver photo identification card.

ALASKA

In 2022, 1,810 people were released from Alaska Department of Corrections custody.¹⁸ Recidivism is defined by the Alaska Department of Corrections as convicted defendants who are returned to a correctional facility within three years of release or date of conviction. This definition includes misdemeanors as well as probation and parole violations. The recidivism rate for fiscal year 2020 was 62%, according to the Alaska Criminal Justice Commission's annual report.¹⁹

In 2023, Alaska Gov. Mike Dunleavy signed Senate Bill 119 into law. The legislation directs the Alaska Department of Corrections to ensure that inmates have a valid state identification card prior to release.²⁰ A provision in the law requires that the Alaska Department of Corrections will pay the applicable fees for an identification card.

There is no statutory basis for assisting released inmates to obtain birth certificates or Social Security cards. However, Alaska Statutes section 33.30.095 directs the DOC

¹⁶ Mary Sell, "After 2021 law, ADOC still working to get IDs for people leaving prison," *Alabama Daily News*, 17 Dec. 2023. Aldailynews.com.aldailynews.com/after-2021-law-adoc-still-working-to-get-ids-for-people-leaving-prison/ (1 July 2025).

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 19.

¹⁹ "Alaska Criminal Justice Commission, 2021 Annual Report," Alaska Criminal Justice Commission, alaska.gov, 1 Nov. 2021. ajc.alaska.gov/acjc/docs/ar/2021.pdf (1 July 2025).

²⁰ The Alaska State Legislature, Senate Bill 119. Akleg.gov, 2024. Akleg.gov/basis/Bill/Text/33?Hsid=SB0119Z (7 Nov. 2025); The Alaska State Legislature. Alaska Statutes Sec. 33.30.011.(a)(11). law.justia.com, 2024. law.justia.com/codes/alaska/title-33/chapter-30/article-1/section-33-30-011/ (7 Nov. 2025).

commissioner to establish a program to prepare inmates for discharge.²¹ The program must include “a partnership with one or more nonprofit organizations” to assist the prisoner with applications for Medicaid, Social Security benefits, and public assistance programs which may involve obtaining a Social Security card and a copy of the prisoner’s birth certificate.²² However, the program is not specifically tasked with ensuring that inmates obtain these documents prior to release.

ARIZONA

In 2022, the Arizona Department of Corrections released 11,832 inmates from custody.²³ Arizona defines recidivism as reincarceration within three years of release. The recidivism rate for fiscal year 2020 release cohort, according to the Arizona Judicial Branch, was 44%.²⁴

Arizona Revised Statutes section 41-1610.03 directs the Arizona Department of Corrections to provide inmates upon release with either a driver’s license or photo ID, a copy of their vocational training record, a copy of their work record, a certified copy of their birth certificate, a Social Security card, a résumé including the person’s proficiency level in any trade they learned while incarcerated, and documentation that they have completed a mock job interview.²⁵ This provision only applies to those released from custody after conviction of a felony offense.

ARKANSAS

In 2022, the Arkansas Department of Corrections released 7,048 inmates from custody.²⁶ Arkansas defines recidivism as a criminal act that results in rearrest, reconviction, or return to incarceration of a person with or without a new sentence during a three-year period following the person’s release from Department custody. According to the 2022 Arkansas

²¹ The Alaska State Legislature, Alaska Statutes section 33.30.095. akleg.gov/basis/Bill/Text/29?Hsid=HB0205A#:~:text=33.30.,prerelease%20furlough%20under%20AS%203.30 (7 Nov. 2025).

²² Ibid.

²³ Carson and Kluckow, “Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables.” 19.

²⁴ “Recidivism,” azcourts.gov, Arizona Judicial Branch, 2023. azcourts.gov/apsd/Data-and-Research/Recidivism (1 July 2025).

²⁵ The Arizona State Legislature, Arizona Revised Statutes section 41-1610.03, [azleg.gov](http://azleg.gov/ars/41/01610-03.htm), 2024. www.azleg.gov/ars/41/01610-03.htm (2 Dec. 2025).

²⁶ Carson and Kluckow, “Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables.” 19.

Department of Corrections' annual report, the recidivism rate for the 2018 release cohort was 49.6%.²⁷

Arkansas has no statutory requirement for issuing identification to individuals released from Department of Corrections (DOC) custody, nor is there a documented DOC policy to assist with obtaining photo-IDs, birth certificates or Social Security cards. However, the DOC does operate a program in partnership with the Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration to issue a state driver's license or identification card to individuals within 180 days of their release.²⁸

CALIFORNIA

In 2022, 32,055 people were released from prison in California.²⁹ California defines recidivism as a conviction within three years of release from custody. The three-year recidivism rate in California was 41.9%, according to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's recidivism report on offenders released in fiscal year 2018-2019.³⁰

California Penal Code section 3007.05 directs the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to ensure that inmates released from state prison have a valid identification card.³¹ The statute further directs the Department to facilitate coordination between inmates and other government agencies to obtain documentation necessary for an identification card including a Social Security card and copy of their birth certificate.³²

²⁷ "Annual Report FY2022," Arkansas Department of Corrections, arkansas.gov, 2023. doc.arkansas.gov/wp-content/uploads/DOC-Secretarys-FY22-Annual-Report_12-20-2022_FINAL_spread.pdf (1 July 2025).

²⁸ "Arkansas Department of Corrections' Inmate Handbook," Arkansas Department of Corrections, Arkansas.gov, November 2022. 36. doc.arkansas.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Arkansas-Division-of-Correction-Inmate-Handbook-Revised-November-1-2022-Director-approved.pdf (1 July 2025).

²⁹ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 19.

³⁰ "Recidivism Report for Individuals Released from the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation in Fiscal Year 2018-19," California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, cdcr.ca.gov, Feb. 2024. cdcr.ca.gov/research/wp-content/uploads/sites/174/2024/02/Statewide-Recidivism-Report-for-Individuals-Released-in-Fiscal-Year-2018-19.pdf (1 July 2025).

³¹ California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Code, California Penal Code section 3007.05. leginfo.legislature.ca.gov, 2022.

leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=3007.05.&lawCode=PEN (1 July 2025).

³² Ibid.

COLORADO

In 2022, 5,260 people were released from prison in Colorado.³³ Colorado defines recidivism as reincarceration within three years or imposition of offender status within three years. The recidivism rate as of 2023, according to a Colorado Department of Corrections report, was 28%.³⁴

Colorado Code section 17-33-102 directs the Department of Corrections to establish a program to assist inmates close to their release date in obtaining a state issued identification card if the inmates elect to participate in the program and they do not already have a valid state issued ID.³⁵ This assistance includes obtaining a Social Security card and birth certificate because those are required documents to get a state ID.³⁶

In 2022, the Colorado Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) collaborated with Colorado's Department of Corrections to create the "DMV2GO" program. Through this program, the DMV brings ID photography equipment to prisons on a mobile unit that travels around the state.³⁷

CONNECTICUT

In 2022, 2,768 inmates were released from prison in Connecticut.³⁸ Recidivism is defined in Connecticut as rearrest within three years from release. The recidivism rate for the 2019 release cohort, according to the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management's "2023 Recidivism Study 2019 Release Cohort" report, was 57%.³⁹

³³ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 19.

³⁴ "General Statistics Recidivism (3-year, 2-year, and 1-year Return Rates)," Colorado Department of Corrections, cdoc.colorado.gov, 2024. cdoc.colorado.gov/about/data-and-reports/statistics (1 July 2025).

³⁵ The Colorado State Legislature, Colorado Revised Statutes section 17-33-102. law.justia.com, 2024. law.justia.com/codes/colorado/title-17/correctional-facilities-and-programs/programs/article-33/section-17-33-102/ (2 Dec. 2025); "Opportunities Exist to Better Assist Incarcerated People with Obtaining ID Documents Prior to Release," United States Government of Accountability Office (GAO), Bureau of Prisons, GAO.gov, Dec. 2022, www.gao.gov/assets/gao-23-105302.pdf (1 July 2025).

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ "Colorado DMV2GO," Colorado Department of Motor Vehicles, Colorado Department of Revenue, 2021. dmv.colorado.gov/DMV2GO (1 July 2025).

³⁸ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 19.

³⁹ "Brief: 2023 Recidivism Study 2019 Release Cohort," Connecticut Office of Policy and Management, ct.gov, Feb. 2023. [portal.ct.gov/-](http://portal.ct.gov/)

Connecticut General Statute section 18-81ff directs the commissioners of the Department of Corrections (DOC) and the Department of Motor Vehicles to ensure that an inmate at the time of his or her release has either a state issued ID or driver's license.⁴⁰ The inmate must pay the required fee of \$28. There is no statutory basis for assisting released inmates to obtain birth certificates or Social Security cards. However, Connecticut Department of Correction directive number 10.15 outlines a procedure for providing inmates with identification cards, Social Security cards, and certified birth certificate copies.⁴¹

The Connecticut Department of Correction's Offender Reentry Services Unit provides reentry support to inmates preparing for release. Every correctional facility in Connecticut has a full-time reentry counselor who assists inmates to obtain birth certificates, Social Security cards, driver's licenses, and non-driver IDs.⁴² If inmates are unable to cover the costs of obtaining required documents, DOC will pay through the inmate welfare fund.⁴³ Despite these efforts, workers at an incarceration transition clinic in Connecticut reported that as many as two-thirds of their clients still could not obtain IDs as of January 2025.⁴⁴

DELAWARE

In 2022, 2,774 people were released from prison in Delaware.⁴⁵ Delaware defines recidivism as a return to a Department of Corrections facility within three years of release. The 2019

/media/opm/cjppd/cjresearch/recidivismstudy/2023/2023_opm_recidivism_brief.pdf?rev=9b9a66f2a5fc48e8a0427d5cdf1d12ff&hash=AA41378BCA5FEBBF56EAB2CB5CEC183E (1 July 2025).

⁴⁰ The Connecticut State Legislature, Connecticut General Statutes section 18-81ff. cga.ct.gov, 2024. cga.ct.gov/2024/sup/chap_325.htm (5 Dec. 2025).

⁴¹ State of Connecticut Department of Correction. Directive Number 10.15, Inmate Personal Identification Procurement and Storage, 10 May 2017. portal.ct.gov-/media/doc/pdf/ad/ad1015pdf.pdf?rev=5a357b63addd4c10a3b5b438fa62c413&hash=B6413AE288FED401BC2C04927B40C38A (14 July 2025).

⁴² "Offender Reentry Services," ct.gov, Connecticut State Department of Correction. 2021. portal.ct.gov/doc/org/offender-re-entry-services (1 July 2025).

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Maia Nehme, "Roadblocks remain in state ID rollout for incarcerated people," *Yale News*, 15 Jan. 2025. YaleDailyNews.com. yaledailynews.com/blog/2025/01/15/roadblocks-remain-in-state-id-rollout-for-incarcerated-people/ (1 July 2025).

⁴⁵ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 19.

release cohort recidivism rate, according to Delaware Statistical Analysis Center's "Recidivism in Delaware" report, was 52%.⁴⁶

Title 29 of the Delaware Code section 8915 directs the Department of Correction to issue a temporary "personal credential" that contains the following information:

- The individual's name, date of birth, sex, height, weight, and eye color.
- A photograph of the individual.
- An expiration date that is one year from the date the personal credential is issued.
- A bar code.
- A statement regarding the validity of the card.⁴⁷

An individual who presents a valid personal credential is exempt from the applicable fees to receive a certified copy of their birth certificate (if the individual was born in Delaware) and an identification card or driver's license issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles.⁴⁸ Inmates receive written instructions for how to obtain a birth certificate and photo-ID using the personal credential, but the Department of Corrections is not directed to assist inmates in obtaining those documents prior to release.

FLORIDA

In 2022, 24,730 people were released from prison in Florida.⁴⁹ Florida defines recidivism as a return to prison within three years after being released. The recidivism rate for the 2017 release cohort was 24%, according to "Florida Recidivism Report: Releases from 2008 to 2020."⁵⁰

⁴⁶ "Recidivism in Delaware An Analysis of Offenders Released in 2017 Through 2019," Delaware Criminal Justice Council, Sac.Delaware.gov, Dec. 2023. sac.delaware.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/64/2023/12/2019-Recidivism-Report-final-122223.pdf (1 July 2025).

⁴⁷ Delaware State Legislature, 29 DE Code 8915, law.justia.com, 2024. law.justia.com/codes/delaware/title-29/chapter-89/subchapter-i/section-8915/ (Dec. 3 2025).

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 19.

⁵⁰ "Florida Prison Recidivism Report: Releases From 2008 to 2020," Florida Department of Corrections, fdc.myflorida.com, July 2022. prod.fdc-wpws001.fdc.myflorida.com/pub/recidivism/FDC%20Recidivism%20Report%202018%20Cohort.pdf (1 July 2025).

Florida Statute section 944.605 directs the Department of Corrections to assist inmates in obtaining a photo-ID, Social Security card, and birth certificate before release.⁵¹ The DOC provides birth certificates and identification cards for those born in Florida and assists inmates born outside of Florida to coordinate with the appropriate out-of-state entities.

GEORGIA

In 2022, 11,681 people were released from prison in Georgia.⁵² Georgia defines recidivism as a felony conviction within three years of release from Department of Corrections custody. The recidivism rate for 2020 was 25%, according to a Georgia Department of Correction report.⁵³

In May 2025, Gov. Brian Kemp signed Senate Bill 147 into law. The new law amends Georgia Code section 40-5-107 to direct the Department of Corrections (GDC) to coordinate with the Department of Driver Services to help individuals obtain a state-issued photo ID prior to release.⁵⁴

The law also requires GDC to provide individuals with key documents to support post-release employment, including a vocational training record, institutional work record, certified copy of their birth certificate, and a Social Security card, if obtainable.⁵⁵

HAWAII

In 2022, Hawaii released 1,095 people from prison.⁵⁶ Hawaii defines recidivism as rearrest or reincarceration of an individual released on parole within three years of release from

⁵¹ Florida State Legislature, FL Stat § 944.605, flsenate.gov, 2024. www.flsenate.gov/laws/statutes/2019/944.605 (3 Dec. 2025).

⁵² Carson and Kluckow. "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 19.

⁵³ “CY Recidivism Rates (Felony Reconviction),” Georgia Department of Corrections, 2021. CY%20Felony%20Reconviction%20Rates%20(5).pdf (8 July 2025).

⁵⁴ Georgia General Assembly Georgia Senate Bill 147. legiscan.com, 2025. legiscan.com/GA/text/SB147/2025 (4 Dec. 2025).

55 *Ibid*

⁵⁶ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables," 19.

custody. The recidivism rate for the fiscal year 2016 release cohort was 54%, according to the Interagency Council on Intermediate Sanctions' "2019 Recidivism Update."⁵⁷

Hawaii Revised Statute section 353H-32 directs the Department of Corrections to coordinate with relevant federal, state, and local agencies and assist inmates with obtaining photo identification cards, Social Security cards, and birth certificates prior to release.⁵⁸

However, the Hawaii Department of Corrections has struggled to implement the law. Between Nov. 30, 2019, and Sept. 30, 2020, 52% of people released from prison were released without an ID card.⁵⁹ Another 31% lacked a copy of their birth certificate, and 49% lacked a Social Security card.⁶⁰

In June 2022, the Department began a pilot program at Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF), through a partnership with the Hawaii Department of Transportation and the consolidated City and County of Honolulu.⁶¹ To implement the program, HCF acquired equipment required to photograph inmates and transmit documents to the Honolulu Department of Customer Service, Motor Vehicle, Licenses and Permits. The City and County of Honolulu

⁵⁷ "2019 Recidivism Update, Interagency Council on Intermediate Sanctions," State of Hawaii, icis.hawaii.gov, Mar. 2021. icis.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/2019-Hawaii-Recidivism-Update.pdf (8 July 2025).

⁵⁸ Hawai'i State Legislature, HB845 HD2 SD2 CD1. capitol.hawaii.gov, 2017. www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session/archives/measure_indiv_Archives.aspx?billtype=HB&billnumber=845&year=2017 (4 Dec. 2025); Hawaii State Legislature, Hawaii Revised Statute section 353H-32. capitol.hawaii.gov, 2025. data.capitol.hawaii.gov/sessions/session2025/bills/HB677_.pdf (4 Dec. 2025).

⁵⁹ "Department of Public Safety Report to the 2021 Legislature: Reentry Coordination Office Annual Report on Civil Identification Documents," State of Hawaii Department of Public Safety, dcr.hawaii.gov, Dec. 2020. dcr.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Reentry-Coordination-Report-on-ID-Documents-Act-56-SLH-2017-210421.pdf (1 July 2025).

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ "Department of Public Safety Report to the 2024 Legislature In Response to Senate Resolution 82, Senate Draft 1 (2023): 'Requesting the Department of Public Safety to Submit a Report to the Legislature Detailing the Department's Process in Assisting Inmates in Obtaining Identification Cards,'" State of Hawaii Department of Public Safety, dcr.hawaii.gov, Dec. 2023. dcr.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Report-to-2024-Legislature_SR0082-SD1_Report-detailing-PSDs-process-in-assisting-inmates-to-obtain-ID-cards.pdf (9 July 2025); Michael Tsai, "Inmates can now obtain Real state IDs upon release," Spectrum News 13, 28 July 2022. MyNews13.com. mynews13.com/fl/orlando/news/2022/07/27/state-id-cards-available-for-inmates (9 July 2025); "State ID cards available for inmates." *Maui News*, 29 July 2022. MauiNews.com. mauinews.com/news/local-news/2022/07/inmates-can-now-obtain-real-state-ids-upon-release/ (9 July 2025).

processes the information and issues a state photo-identification card that is provided to inmates upon their release from HCF.

IDAHO

In 2022, 3,326 people were released from prison in Idaho.⁶² Idaho defines recidivism as incarcerations or reincarcerations for those on probation, parole, or who completed their sentences within three years of release from Department of Corrections (DOC) custody. The recidivism rate for the 2019 release cohort was 37%, according to the Idaho Department of Corrections' "Justice Reinvestment in Idaho: Impact at Eight Years" report.⁶³

Idaho does not have a statutory basis for issuing inmates being released from custody identification cards, Social Security cards, or birth certificates. However, Department of Corrections Policy Control Number 607.26.01.007 directs reentry case managers to assist inmates with applying for a Social Security card 120 days prior to release and an Idaho identification card 90 days before release.⁶⁴ While the policy does not mention birth certificates, DOC staff report that they provide assistance to released individuals seeking these documents.⁶⁵

In February 2019, the DOC partnered with the Idaho Transportation Department to install photo ID equipment in four out of nine Idaho prisons.⁶⁶ Additionally, Idaho's Department of Corrections offers several required and optional programs for inmates such as employment programs, behavioral management programs, and résumé workshops.⁶⁷

⁶² Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 19.

⁶³ "Justice Reinvestment in Idaho: Impact at Eight Years," Idaho Department of Correction, idoc.idaho.gov, Feb 2023. idoc.idaho.gov/content/document/2023_jri_impact_final (8 July 2025).

⁶⁴ Idaho Department of Correction. Policy Control Number 607.26.01.007. Standard Operating Procedure. idoc.idaho.gov, 17 May 2021. forms-idoc.idaho.gov/WebLink/DocView.aspx?id=1005687&dbid=0&repo=LFICHE (4 Dec. 2025).

⁶⁵ Blake Lopez, 21 May 2025. Email interview.

⁶⁶ Morgan Boydston, "'I think it's going to be life-changing': Agencies team up to roll out ID machines in Idaho prisons," KTVB, 14 Feb. 2019. KTVB.com. www.ktvb.com/article/news/i-think-its-going-to-be-life-changing-agencies-team-up-to-roll-out-id-machines-in-idaho-prisons/277-54c6edc2-b83d-49b6-be11-8faa7ede1959 (8 July 2025).

⁶⁷ Ibid.

ILLINOIS

In 2022, Illinois released 16,422 people from prison.⁶⁸ Illinois defines recidivism as returning to prison within three years of release from Department of Corrections (DOC) custody. The recidivism rate for inmates released in fiscal year 2019 was 37%, according to an Illinois Department of Corrections' report.⁶⁹

Under Chapter 15, Section 335 of the Illinois Compiled Statutes, the Illinois Secretary of State is directed to issue a state ID card to inmates who provide a Social Security card, birth certificate, proof of residency, and a completed application. If an inmate cannot present a Social Security card or birth certificate, a temporary 90-day ID card is issued. In 2023, the Illinois DOC issued approximately 900 state ID cards to released inmates.⁷⁰ There is no statutory requirement or Department of Corrections policy to assist inmates in obtaining Social Security cards or birth certificates prior to release.

In 2024, Senate Bill 2803 expanded ID assistance to inmates released from county jails and federal prisons.⁷¹

INDIANA

In 2022, 9,703 people were released from prison in Indiana.⁷² Indiana defines recidivism as a reincarceration within three years of release from Indiana Department of Corrections'

⁶⁸ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables."

⁶⁹ "Adult Individuals in Custody on December 31, 2023," Illinois Department of Corrections, idoc.illinois.gov, 2024. idoc.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/idoc/reportsandstatistics/documents/factsheets/CY23-Fact-Sheet.pdf (1 July 2025).

⁷⁰ Hannah Meisel and Beth Hundsorfer, "Secretary of State helps launch first-of-its-kind state ID program for inmates exiting Cook County Jail," *Capitol News Illinois*, 12 Dec. 2023. capitolnewsillinois.com/news/secretary-of-state-helps-launch-first-of-its-kind-state-id-program-for-inmates-exiting-cook-county-jail/ (1 July 2025).

⁷¹ Illinois General Assembly, Illinois Identification Card Act, Illinois Senate Bill 2803. [ilga.gov/legislation/fulltext.asp?DocName=&SessionId=112&GA=103&DocTypeld=SB&DocNum=2803&G AID=17&LegID=151591&SpecSess=&Session="> \(4 Dec. 2025\).](https://ilga.gov/legislation/fulltext.asp?DocName=&SessionId=112&GA=103&DocTypeld=SB&DocNum=2803&G AID=17&LegID=151591&SpecSess=&Session=)

⁷² Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 19.

custody. The recidivism rate for the 2020 release cohort was 34.78%, according to the Indiana Department of Corrections “2023 Adult Recidivism Rates” report.⁷³

Indiana law does not require the issuance of identification cards, Social Security cards, or birth certificates to individuals upon release. However, Policy and Administrative Procedure 01-07-101 directs that inmates nearing release be referred to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles to obtain an ID card or driver’s license.⁷⁴ The Department of Corrections also assists inmates in obtaining birth certificates and Social Security cards prior to release.⁷⁵

IOWA

In 2022, 4,040 people were released from prison in Iowa.⁷⁶ Iowa defines recidivism as reincarceration within three years for an individual who left custody on parole, work release, or completion of sentence. The recidivism rate for the period of July 2023 to June 2024 was 36% according to the “Iowa Prison Recidivism” report from the Iowa Department of Corrections.⁷⁷

Iowa does not have statutory requirements to issue photo identification cards, Social Security cards, or birth certificates to people upon release. However, in 2020, the Iowa Department of Transportation partnered with the Department of Corrections to launch the “Mobility Manager” pilot program.⁷⁸ Operating in seven of the nine state prisons, the program assists released individuals in obtaining driver’s licenses and state identification cards. The Mobility Manager program produced over 650 credentials last year.⁷⁹

⁷³ “2023 Adult Recidivism Rates,” Indiana Department of Correction, in.gov/idoc/files/policy-and-procedure/statistical-data/recidivism-reports/adult-recidivism-rates/2023-Adult-Recidivism-Summary.pdf (1 July 2025).

⁷⁴ Indiana Department of Correction, Policy and Administrative Procedure No. 01-07-101, 11 Sep 2023. www.in.gov/idoc/files/policy-and-procedure/policies/01-07-101-case-mgmt/01-07-101-Case-Mgmt-9-11-2023.pdf (4 Dec. 2025).

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Carson and Kluckow, “Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables.” 19.

⁷⁷ “Iowa Prison Recidivism,” Iowa Department of Corrections, data.iowa.gov/stories/s/Iowa-Prison-Recidivism/mp89-ki4k (1 July 2025).

⁷⁸ “Mobility Partnership Helps Individuals Drive New Starts After Prison,” Iowa’s Department of Transportation, iowadot.gov/transportation-matters/2025-04-18/mobility-partnership-helps-individuals-drive-new-starts-after-prison (10 July 2025).

⁷⁹ Ibid.

There is no public Department of Corrections' policy for assisting inmates with obtaining birth certificates or Social Security cards.

KANSAS

In 2022, 3,205 people were released from prison in Kansas.⁸⁰ Kansas defines recidivism as a return to prison within three years of release. The recidivism rate for the 2019 release cohort was 27%, according to the Kansas Department of Corrections' "Annual Report Fiscal Year 2023."⁸¹

There is no statutory basis for inmates being released to obtain photo identification cards, social security cards, or birth certificates. However, DOC Internal Management Policy and Procedure section 14-160A directs parole officers to provide inmates without valid ID with a Certificate of Identification, which can be used as a supporting document to obtain a permanent photo-ID.⁸²

The Kansas Department of Corrections also collaborates with the Kansas Department of Motor Vehicles to bring a mobile ID unit to facilities across the state.⁸³ Inmates may receive assistance in applying for birth certificates or Social Security cards from facility counselors prior to release or from parole officers post-release.⁸⁴ The Kansas Department of Corrections also provides career readiness courses, vocational training, and résumé assistance to inmates.⁸⁵

KENTUCKY

In 2022, 13,645 people were released from prison in Kentucky.⁸⁶ Kentucky defines recidivism as a return to Department of Corrections custody within 24 months after release.

⁸⁰ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 19.

⁸¹ Jeff Zmuda, Gloria Geither, and Megan Milner, "Annual Report Fiscal Year 2023," Kansas Department of Corrections, Ks.gov, 2023. doc.ks.gov/publications/Reports/fy2023-annual-report (1 July 2025).

⁸² Kansas Department of Corrections, Internal Management Policy and Procedure section 14-160A, 27 Jan 2016. public.powerdms.com/KansasDOC/tree/documents/1553360 (3 Dec. 2025).

⁸³ Gayle Culberth, 17 May 2025. Email interview.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 19.

The recidivism rate for the 2021 release cohort was 32% according to the “Kentucky Department of Corrections 2023 Annual Report.”⁸⁷

Kentucky Revised Statute section 186.417 directs the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet to issue inmates nearing release a photo identification card or driver’s license if they request it and present the required documentation of a birth certificate, Social Security card, photograph, and release letter.⁸⁸ The statute also directs the Cabinet to assist inmates in obtaining these required documents if they do not already possess them. As of April 3, 2023, 1,785 ID cards have been issued to former Kentucky inmates.⁸⁹

LOUISIANA

In 2022, Louisiana released 13,373 people from prison.⁹⁰ Louisiana defines recidivism as a return to Department of Public Safety and Corrections (DOPSC) custody within three years of release for a new felony or technical revocation of supervised release. The recidivism rate for the 2019 release cohort was 30%, according to the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections’ “Recidivism in Adult Corrections” June 19, 2023, report.⁹¹

Louisiana Revised Statute section 15:827.1 directs DOPSC to identify a transition specialist at each of its facilities to be responsible for ensuring the inmates have a photo identification card upon release.⁹² There is also a provision requiring the DOPSC to issue a card that lists all vocational training and certification programs completed by the offender while incarcerated.⁹³

⁸⁷ “Kentucky Department of Corrections 2023 Annual Report,” Kentucky Department of Corrections, Ky.gov. 2024. [corrections.ky.gov/public-information/researchandstats/Documents/Annual%20Reports/2023%20DOC%20Annual%20Report%20-%20final%20\(1\).pdf](https://corrections.ky.gov/public-information/researchandstats/Documents/Annual%20Reports/2023%20DOC%20Annual%20Report%20-%20final%20(1).pdf) (1 July 2025).

⁸⁸ Kentucky State Legislature, KY Rev Stat § 186.417, law.justia.com, 2024. law.justia.com/codes/kentucky/chapter-186/section-186-417/ (3 Dec. 2025).

⁸⁹ Katherine Williams, “Gov. Beshear, Department of Corrections Committed to Second Chances and Boosting Workforce Participation,” Kentucky.gov, 27 April 2023. kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=Corrections&prId=374 (1 July 2025).

⁹⁰ Carson and Kluckow, “Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables.”

⁹¹ “Recidivism in Adult Corrections (Percent Return),” Department of Public Safety and Corrections, doc.louisiana.gov. 19 June 2023, doc.louisiana.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/0c-Recidivism-Admission-and-Releases.pdf (1 July 2025).

⁹² Louisiana State Legislature, LA Rev Stat § 15:827.1, law.justia.com, 2024. law.justia.com/codes/louisiana/revised-statutes/title-15/rs-15-827-1/ (2 Dec. 2025).

⁹³ Ibid.

There is no statutory requirement for DOPSC to assist released inmates in obtaining birth certificates or Social Security cards. However, DOPSC's catalogue of rehabilitative programs includes "regional reentry programs" operated in conjunction with local sheriffs.⁹⁴ These programs may focus on providing inmates with identification documents including photo-IDs, birth certificates, and Social Security cards.⁹⁵

MAINE

In 2022, 870 people were released from prison in Maine.⁹⁶ Maine defines recidivism as a return to Department of Corrections custody within three years of release regardless of if there is a new criminal conviction. The recidivism rate for the 2021 release cohort was 21.4%, according to the Maine Department of Corrections' "Return to Custody Report Three Year Post Release 2012-2021."⁹⁷

Maine does not have a statutory requirement to provide photo identification, Social Security cards, or birth certificates upon release. However, Department of Corrections Policy Number 27.1 instructs reentry case managers to assist individuals in obtaining the documentation necessary for reintegration, including IDs, birth certificates, and Social Security cards.⁹⁸ Nine months prior to release, case managers are directed to verify that an inmate has two forms of identification "acceptable for employment purposes...and, if not, assist the resident in obtaining the necessary document(s)."⁹⁹

⁹⁴ "Catalog of Rehabilitative Programs," Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections, doc.louisiana.gov. June 2021. doc.louisiana.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Catalog-of-Rehabiltation-Program-2021.pdf (10 July 2025).

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables."

⁹⁷ "Return to Custody Report Three Year Post Release 2012-2021," Maine Department of Corrections, maine.gov. April 2021. (1 July 2025).

⁹⁸ Maine Department of Corrections, Maine Department of Corrections Policy Number 27.1 Release and Reentry Planning. <https://www.maine.gov/corrections/sites/maine.gov.corrections/files/inline-files/Return%20to%20Custody%202012-%202021%20Three%20Year%20RCR%20Report.pdf>. maine.gov, 21 Jun. 2022. www.maine.gov/corrections/sites/maine.gov.corrections/files/inline-files/48400652_0.pdf (5 Dec. 2025).

⁹⁹ Ibid.

MARYLAND

In 2022, 4,688 people were released from prison in Maryland.¹⁰⁰ Maryland defines recidivism as returning to state custody within three years. The recidivism rate for the 2019 release cohort was 32%, according to the 2022 Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services' (DPSCS) 2022 recidivism report.¹⁰¹

Under Maryland Correctional Services Code section 9-609.1, the commissioner of corrections is directed to issue a temporary photo identification card to inmates prior to release.¹⁰² This temporary ID card may be used as a supporting document to obtain a permanent photo-ID card issued by the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration. The commissioner is further directed to obtain a birth certificate and apply for a Social Security card on behalf of incarcerated individuals prior to release.¹⁰³ Additionally, the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) uploads copies of these personal documents to a secure online portal, allowing individuals to retrieve them in the event of loss or theft.¹⁰⁴

MASSACHUSETTS

In 2022, 1,628 people were released from prison in Massachusetts.¹⁰⁵ Massachusetts defines recidivism as reincarceration within three years of release. The recidivism rate for the 2019

¹⁰⁰ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 19.

¹⁰¹ "Department of Public Service and Correctional Services Recidivism Report," Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, dpscs.maryland.gov. (15 Nov. 2025). dpscs.maryland.gov/publicinfo/publications/pdfs/2022_p157_DPSCS_Recidivism%20Report.pdf (1 July 2025).

¹⁰² Maryland State Legislature, MD Correctional Services Code § 9-609.1, law.justia.com, 2024. [law.justia.com/codes/maryland/correctional-services/title-9/subtitle-6/section-9-609-1/#:~:text=\(a\)%20\(1\)%20The,in%20a%20State%20correctional%20facility.](https://law.justia.com/codes/maryland/correctional-services/title-9/subtitle-6/section-9-609-1/#:~:text=(a)%20(1)%20The,in%20a%20State%20correctional%20facility.) (3 Dec. 2025)

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Kaitlyn Levinson, "Digitized ID Eases Re-entry for Formerly Incarcerated," Route Fifty, 15 Feb. 2023. route-fifty.com/digital-government/2023/02/digitized-id-eases-re-entry-formerly-incarcerated/382929/ (1 July 2025).

¹⁰⁵ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 19.

release cohort was 26%, according to the “Massachusetts Department of Correction’s Prison Population Trends Report, Calendar Year 2023.”¹⁰⁶

Massachusetts has no statutory requirement to issue or assist inmates being released in obtaining photo identification cards, Social Security cards, or birth certificates. However, the Massachusetts Parole Board operates regional centers across the state that assist recently released inmates in obtaining state-issued photo-IDs.¹⁰⁷ Additionally, the Massachusetts Department of Correction assigns each inmate a Correction Program Officer who assists the inmate with obtaining credentials like birth certificates and Social Security cards.¹⁰⁸ The Massachusetts Department of Correction also has several reentry services such as educational, vocational, and behavior management programs.¹⁰⁹

On March 24, 2023, Massachusetts Gov. Maura Healey announced the Enhanced State ID Program to improve the process of inmates being released receiving ID cards; this program introduces a mobile unit to distribute IDs.¹¹⁰ In 2023, only 572 of the 3,500 inmates released managed to get state IDs through this program. As of April 23, 2025, more than 1,250 credentials have been provided through this program.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁶ “Massachusetts Department of Correction Prison Population Trends Report Calendar Year 2023,” Massachusetts Department of Correction, mass.gov, July 2024. mass.gov/doc/prison-population-trends-2023/download (1 July 2025).

¹⁰⁷ “Inmate Reentry Programs,” Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, Mass.gov, 2022. mass.gov/info-details/inmate-reentry-programs#:~:text=The%20Massachusetts%20Parole%20Board%20operates%20regional%20reentry%20centers,driver%27s%20license%20Open%20a%20bank%20account%20Find%20work (1 July 2025).

¹⁰⁸ Massachusetts Department of Correction. Massachusetts Department of Correction Policy, Policy Number 493.06. mass.gov. www.mass.gov/doc/doc-493-reentry-policy/download (3 July 2025).

¹⁰⁹ “Reentry planning,” Massachusetts Department of Correction, Mass.gov, 2022. mass.gov/info-details/reentry-planning (1 July 2025).

¹¹⁰ “Healey-Driscoll Administration Announces Enhanced State ID Program for Returning Citizens,” mass.gov, Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, 24 Mar. 2023, mass.gov/news/healey-driscoll-administration-announces-enhanced-state-id-program-for-returning-citizens (1 July 2025).

¹¹¹ “Enhanced State ID Program Promotes Successful Reentry for Formerly Incarcerated Individuals, Issuing Over 1,250 IDs Since Launch,” mass.gov, Massachusetts Department of Corrections, 23 April 2025, www.mass.gov/news/enhanced-state-id-program-promotes-successful-reentry-for-formerly-incarcerated-individuals-issuing-over-1250-ids-since-launch (1 July 2025).

MICHIGAN

In 2022, 7,886 people were released from prison in Michigan.¹¹² Michigan defines recidivism as reincarceration within three years of being paroled. The recidivism rate for the 2020 release cohort was 23%, according to the “Michigan Department of Corrections 2023 Statistical Report.”¹¹³

Michigan has no statutory requirement to issue or assist inmates being released in obtaining photo identification cards, Social Security cards, or birth certificates. However, the Michigan Department of State and Department of Corrections operate a “returning citizens initiative” that assists formerly incarcerated individuals in receiving state IDs.¹¹⁴ The Michigan Department of State issued 20,000 IDs and driver’s licenses to released inmates between 2020 and April 2024.¹¹⁵ Additionally, Michigan’s Department of Corrections’ Offender Success Model states that inmates have the opportunity to obtain IDs, birth certificates, and Social Security cards after release, but it does not lay out any specific directions.¹¹⁶

In 2024, the Michigan Legislature passed House Bill 4191, which would have required the Michigan Department of Corrections to automatically register incarcerated individuals for identification services prior to their release.¹¹⁷ However, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer vetoed the

¹¹² Carson and Kluckow, “Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables.” 19.

¹¹³ “Michigan Department of Corrections 2023 Statistical Report,” Michigan Department of Corrections, Michigan.gov, 17 June 2024. www.michigan.gov/corrections/-/media/Project/Websites/corrections/Files/Statistical-Reports/Statistical-Reports/2023-Statistical-Report.pdf?rev=c473ec492f1f4e12844eefc4529e1083&hash=B812BFBB54AA958CE00493EC13823860 (1 July 2025).

¹¹⁴ “Michigan Departments of State, Corrections, Partner on Returning Citizens Initiative,” Michigan Department of State, Michigan.gov, 23 June 2020. www.michigan.gov/sos/resources/news/2020/06/23/michigan-departments-of-state-corrections-partner-on-returning-citizens-initiative (1 July 2025).

¹¹⁵ “Department of State, partners help returning citizens restore driving privilege during Second Chance Month,” Michigan Secretary of State, Govdelivery.com. 30 April 2024, content.govdelivery.com/accounts/MISOS/bulletins/399b462 (1 July 2025).

¹¹⁶ “Offender Success, the Michigan Offender Success Model,” State of Michigan Department of Corrections, Michigan.gov, 2021. www.michigan.gov/corrections/-/media/Project/Websites/corrections/Files/Offender-Success/Michigan-Prisoner-Reentry-Model.pdf?rev=bcfd11ad5fdeb4bfca428ac953b3e748d&hash=F434523A3F271FF96DF42B908149D5A2 (11 July 2025).

¹¹⁷ Michigan General Assembly, Michigan House Bill 4191. legislature.mi.gov, 2023. www.legislature.mi.gov/Bills/Bill?ObjectName=2023-HB-4191 (3 July 2025).

bill, citing concerns that certain provisions conflicted with Michigan's existing automatic voter registration law, which she had previously signed.¹¹⁸ The governor expressed support for the underlying goal of the bill and indicated she would be willing to sign a revised version if the conflicting provisions were addressed.¹¹⁹

MINNESOTA

In 2022, 4,402 people were released from prison in Minnesota.¹²⁰ Minnesota defines recidivism as reincarceration with a new felony conviction for people released within three years. The recidivism rate in Minnesota for the 2019 release cohort was 19%.¹²¹

Minnesota Statute section 241.067 requires the commissioner of the Department of Corrections to assist inmates that request help in obtaining a birth certificate and a photo identification card.¹²² The statute further directs the commissioner to assist inmates in obtaining a Social Security card. The commissioner will pay any associated fees in obtaining these documents. This assistance is provided only to inmates who have sentences longer than six months.

MISSISSIPPI

In 2022, 4,560 people were released from prison in Mississippi.¹²³ Mississippi defines recidivism as reincarceration within three years of release. The recidivism rate for the 2020 release cohort was 35%, according to a 2023 report from the Mississippi Corrections and Criminal Justice Oversight Task Force.¹²⁴

¹¹⁸ Michael Kransz, "Whitmer vetoes bills on voter ID, ballot petitions passed by Democrats," Michigan Live, 22 Jan. 2025. www.mlive.com/politics/2025/01/whitmer-vetoes-bills-on-prisoner-id-ballot-petitions-passed-by-democrats.html (2 July 2025).

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 20.

¹²¹ "Minnesota Department of Corrections Performance Report 2023," Minnesota Department of Corrections. mn.gov/doc/assets/2023%20DOC%20Performance%20Report_Accessibility_Final_v2_tcm1089-608441.pdf (2 July 2025).

¹²² Minnesota State Legislature, MN Stat § 241.067, law.justia.com, 2024.

law.justia.com/codes/minnesota/chapters-241-244/chapter-241/section-241-067/ (3 Dec. 2025).

¹²³ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 20.

¹²⁴ "2023 Final Report, Corrections and Criminal Justice Oversight Task Force," Mississippi Corrections and Criminal Justice Oversight Task Force, mdoc.ms.gov, Jan. 2024.

Mississippi Code section 47-5-157 directs the Department of Corrections to issue an inmate a driver's license or a state identification card at least 15 days prior to his or her release.¹²⁵ There is no statutory provision to provide for an inmate being released obtaining a birth certificate or Social Security card.

MISSOURI

In 2022, 12,207 people were released from prison in Missouri.¹²⁶ Missouri defines recidivism as reincarceration within three years from release. The recidivism rate for the release cohort of 2020 was 30% according to the Missouri Department of Corrections' "Recidivism of the Institutional and Supervised Offender Population" June 30, 2023, report.¹²⁷

There is no statutory basis for issuing inmates close to release with photo identification cards, birth certificates, or Social Security cards in Missouri. The Department of Corrections provides reentry services that may assist released inmates with obtaining documents necessary for employment.¹²⁸ However, there is not an explicit policy related to providing inmates with identification cards, Social Security cards, or birth certificates.

MONTANA

In 2022, 1,694 people were released from prison in Montana.¹²⁹ Montana defines recidivism as reincarceration for any reason within three years. The recidivism rate for the fiscal year 2019 release cohort was 37% according to the Montana Department of Corrections' "Prison Reincarceration Recidivism FY2019-Present" report.¹³⁰

¹²⁵ www.mdoc.ms.gov/sites/default/files/2024-01/Jan%202024%20Final%20Report_Task%20Force.pdf (2 July 2025).¹²⁶

Mississippi State Legislature, Mississippi Code, 47-5-157. law.justia.com, 2024.

law.justia.com/codes/mississippi/title-47/chapter-5/offenders/section-47-5-157/ (3 Dec. 2025).

¹²⁷ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 20.

¹²⁸ "Recidivism of the Institutional and Supervised Offender Population," Missouri Department of Corrections, doc.mo.gov, 30 June 2023.

ia601205.us.archive.org/2/items/2023MoDOCRecidivismRpt/2023MoDOCRecidivismRpt.pdf (2 July 2025).

¹²⁹ "Missouri Reentry Process," doc.mo.gov, Missouri Department of Corrections. 2019 doc.mo.gov/programs/missouri-reentry-process (2 July 2025).

¹³⁰ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 20.

"Prison Reincarceration Recidivism by Fiscal Year of Release FY 2019-Present," Montana Department of Corrections, dataportal.mt.gov. 2022. dataportal.mt.gov/t/COR/views/PrisonRecidivismFY2019-

There is no statutory basis in Montana law for providing inmates close to release with state identification cards, Social Security cards, or birth certificates. However, Montana Department of Corrections MSP 3.1.101 outlines procedures for providing inmates with state photo identification cards, replacement Social Security cards, and copies of their birth certificates prior to release.¹³¹ If a state ID cannot be issued before release, the Department of Corrections will issue the former inmate with a temporary ID card that can be used to obtain a permanent state ID.

NEBRASKA

In 2022, 1,974 people were released from prison in Nebraska.¹³² Nebraska defines recidivism as returning to Department of Correctional Services custody within three years of release. The recidivism rate for the 2020 release cohort was 28% according to the “Nebraska Department of Correctional Services’ NDCS Quarterly Data Sheet October-December 2023.”¹³³

Nebraska Code section 83-903.01 directs the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services to provide inmates with an opportunity to obtain a state identification card or driver’s license prior to release.¹³⁴ There is no statutory provision requiring NDCS to assist inmates with obtaining Social Security cards or birth certificates. However, NDCS policy number 209.01 outlines procedures for assisting inmates with obtaining “critical documents” including a Social Security card and a certified copy of their birth certificate.¹³⁵ In February 2024, Nebraska signed a “Reentry 2030” initiative which, among other goals, aims to assist

PresentwithReincarcerationReconvictionandRearrest/PrisonReincarcerationRecidivismFY2019-Present?%3AshowAppBanner=false&%3Adisplay_count=n&%3AshowVizHome=n&%3Aorigin=viz_share_link&%3Aembed=y (2 July 2025).

¹³¹ Montana Department of Corrections, Montana Department of Corrections policy MSP 3.1.101. [cor.mt.gov/DataStatsContractsPoliciesProcedures/Procedures/MSP-Procedures/3.1.101-IM--Driving-Licenses-and--IDs.pdf](http://cor.mt.gov, 2021. cor.mt.gov/DataStatsContractsPoliciesProcedures/Procedures/MSP-Procedures/3.1.101-IM--Driving-Licenses-and--IDs.pdf) (4 Dec. 2025).

¹³² Carson and Kluckow, “Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables.” 20.

¹³³ “Nebraska Department of Correctional Services, NDCS Quarterly Population Summary October - December 2023 (FY24 Quarter 2),” corrections.nebraska.gov, 2023. www.corrections.nebraska.gov/sites/default/files/wysiwyg/cy24_q3_quarterly_data_sheet.pdf (2 July 2025).

¹³⁴ Nebraska State Legislature, NE Code § 83-903.01, law.justia.com, 2024. law.justia.com/codes/nebraska/chapter-83/statute-83-903-01/ (4 Dec. 2025).

¹³⁵ Nebraska Department of Corrections, NDCS Policy Number 209.01 Reentry Planning and Release. [corrections.nebraska.gov, 2024. corrections.nebraska.gov/sites/default/files/209.01%20\(2024\)%20-%20REENTRY%20PLANNING%20AND%20RELEASE.pdf](http://corrections.nebraska.gov, 2024. corrections.nebraska.gov/sites/default/files/209.01%20(2024)%20-%20REENTRY%20PLANNING%20AND%20RELEASE.pdf) (4 Dec. 2025).

“100 percent of individuals who are incarcerated with obtaining state identification and birth certificates prior to release.”¹³⁶

NEVADA

In 2022, 4,565 people were released from prison in Nevada.¹³⁷ Nevada defines recidivism as a return to Department of Corrections custody within three years of an offender’s release date. The recidivism rate for the 2019 release cohort was 24% according to the Nevada Department of Corrections’ “Recidivism in 2019 Release Cohort” report.¹³⁸

Nevada Revised Statute section 209.511 directs the Nevada Department of Corrections (NDOC) to issue a driver’s license or identification card to an inmate who requests one and does not already possess a valid one.¹³⁹ The NDOC is also directed to provide “information and reasonable assistance relating to acquiring a valid driver’s license or identification card to enable the offender to obtain employment” if a person “[r]equests such information and assistance and is eligible to acquire a valid driver’s license or identification card from the Department of Motor Vehicles.”¹⁴⁰ NDOC Administrative Regulation 817 outlines procedures for reentry programming that includes assistance to inmates in applying for birth certificates and Social Security cards.¹⁴¹

Nevada offers to waive ID fees for released inmates. The fee waiver, however, requires for released inmates to provide proof of a residential address within 90 days of being released

¹³⁶ “Nebraska introduces national reentry partnership,” Nebraska Department of Correctional Services, corrections.nebraska.gov, 1 Feb. 2024. www.corrections.nebraska.gov/nebraska-introduces-national-reentry-partnership (2 July 2025).

¹³⁷ Carson and Kluckow, “Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables.” 20.

¹³⁸ “Recidivism in the 2019 Release Cohort,” Nevada Department of Corrections, sentencing.nv.gov. 2021 [sentencing.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/sentencingnvgov/content/Meetings/2023/2019%20Recidivism%20Presentation\(1\).pdf](http://sentencing.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/sentencingnvgov/content/Meetings/2023/2019%20Recidivism%20Presentation(1).pdf) (2 July 2025).

¹³⁹ Nevada State Legislature, NV Rev Stat § 209.511, law.justia.com, 2024. law.justia.com/codes/nevada/chapter-209/statute-209-511/ (4 Dec. 2025).

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Nevada Department of Corrections, Administrative Regulation 817 – Re-entry Program. doc.nv.gov, 25 May 2023. doc.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/docnvgov/content/About/Administrative_Regulations/AR%20817%20-%20Re-Entry%20Program%20-%20Final%2005.25.23.pdf (4 Dec. 2025).

from incarceration. If proof of address cannot be provided, applicants must pay between \$11.00 and \$45.00 in fees.¹⁴²

NEW HAMPSHIRE

In 2022, 916 people were released from prison in New Hampshire.¹⁴³ New Hampshire defines recidivism as reincarceration within three years of release. The recidivism rate for the 2020 release cohort was 41% according to New Hampshire Department of Corrections' 2020 recidivism study.¹⁴⁴

New Hampshire Revised Statute section 651-A:6 directs the New Hampshire Department of Corrections to provide a non-driver photo identification card to individuals being released who do not already possess a valid ID or driver's license.¹⁴⁵

There is no statutory requirement or Department of Corrections policy to provide assistance with obtaining a Social Security card or birth certificate prior to release.

NEW JERSEY

In 2022, 5,259 people were released from prison in New Jersey.¹⁴⁶ New Jersey defines recidivism as reincarceration within three years from release. The recidivism rate for the 2018 release cohort was 29% according to New Jersey Department of Corrections State Parole Board's "2018 Release Cohort Outcome Report: A Three-Year Follow-up."¹⁴⁷

¹⁴² "Released Prisoner or Inmate Driver's License and Identification Card Information Sheet," Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles, dmv.nv.gov, Feb. 2025. dmv.nv.gov/pdfforms/dmv013.pdf (2 July 2025).

¹⁴³ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 20.

¹⁴⁴ "New Hampshire Recidivism Study 2020," New Hampshire Department of Corrections, corrections.nh.gov. 2021. www.corrections.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt536/files/inline-documents/sonh/nhdoc-2020-recidivism-report_0.pdf (2 July 2025).

¹⁴⁵ New Hampshire Legislature, NH Rev Stat § 651-A:6, law.justia.com, 2024. law.justia.com/codes/new-hampshire/title-lxii/chapter-651-a/section-651-a-6/ (4 Dec. 2025).

¹⁴⁶ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 20.

¹⁴⁷ "2018 Release Cohort Outcome Report: A Three-Year Follow-Up," State of New Jersey Department of Corrections, nj.gov. 2019. www.nj.gov/corrections/pdf/offender_statistics/2018_Release_Recidivism_Report.pdf (2 July 2025).

Under New Jersey Administrative Code section 10A:14-3.2 the DOC must issue a temporary photo identification card to individuals upon release.¹⁴⁸ This temporary ID can be used as a supporting document to obtain a permanent state-issued ID card.

Additionally, New Jersey Revised Statute section 30:1B-6.2 directs the Commissioner of Corrections to provide individuals with a copy of their birth certificate (if born in New Jersey) and to assist in obtaining a Social Security card within ten days of their release from custody.¹⁴⁹

NEW MEXICO

In 2022, 2,378 people were released from prison in New Mexico.¹⁵⁰ New Mexico defines recidivism as reincarceration within three years after release. The recidivism rate for the 2014 release cohort was 49% according to the New Mexico Sentencing Commission’s “Understanding Recidivism: Definitions and Return to Prison Rates for Individuals Released from New Mexico Prison FY 2007-FY 2014 Cohorts” report.¹⁵¹

There is no statutory basis for providing inmates being released in New Mexico with photo identification cards, Social Security cards, or birth certificates. However, the New Mexico Corrections Department policy CD-083000 outlines procedures for assisting inmates with obtaining a photo identification card, Social Security card, and certified copy of their birth certificate.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁸ New Jersey Administrative Code 10A:14-3.2, law.justia.com, 2025. regulations.justia.com/states/new-jersey/title-10a/chapter-14/subchapter-3/section-10a-14-3-2/ (4 Dec. 2025).

¹⁴⁹ New Jersey Legislature, NJ Rev Stat § 30:1B-6.2, njstatelib.org, 2024. repo.njstatelib.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/1b578de5-3b05-4d4c-bf57-24fa804c8877/content (5 Dec. 2025).

¹⁵⁰ Carson and Kluckow, “Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables.” 20.

¹⁵¹ “Updated: Understanding Recidivism: Definitions and Return to Prison Rates for Individuals Released from New Mexico Prison FY 2007-FY 2014 Cohorts,” New Mexico Sentencing Commission, NMSC.unm.edu, July 2018. nmsc.unm.edu/reports/2018/recidivism-for-new-mexico-prisons-fy-2007fy-2014-cohorts.pdf (2 July 2025).

¹⁵² New Mexico Corrections Department, CD-083000 Reentry Planning and Transition Process for Inmates Releasing to the Community from Incarceration, 14 Sep. 2024. www.cd.nm.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/CD-083000.pdf (5 Dec. 2025).

NEW YORK

In 2022, 9,239 people were released from prison in New York.¹⁵³ New York defines recidivism as reincarceration within three years of release. The recidivism rate for the 2018 release cohort was 32% according to the New York Department of Corrections and Community Supervision's (DOCCS) "2018 Releases from Custody: Three Year Post-Release Follow-Up."¹⁵⁴

Chapter 42 Article 2 Sec. 11 of the Consolidated Laws of New York directs the Commissioner of New York State DOCCS to, in consultation with the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, develop a program to allow incarcerated individuals to obtain an identification card prior to or upon release from prison.¹⁵⁵ DOCCS Directive No. 4035 outlines procedures to assist individuals in gathering the necessary documents, including birth certificates, for a photo ID or driver's license.¹⁵⁶ As of February 2024, the program operates in all 43 state-run correctional facilities.¹⁵⁷

DOCCS may also issue a temporary 120-day identification card before or after release, which can be used alongside a birth certificate and Social Security card to obtain a permanent state ID.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵³ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 20.

¹⁵⁴ "2018 Releases from Custody Three Year Post-Release Follow-Up," New York State Corrections and Community Supervision, [doccs.ny.gov](https://doccs.ny.gov/2018-releases-three-year-post-release-follow-up.pdf), 2019. doccs.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2023/01/final-2018-releases_three-year-post-release-follow-up.pdf (2 July 2025).

¹⁵⁵ New York State Assembly, NY Corr L § 11, [law.justia.com](https://law.justia.com/codes/new-york/cor/article-2/11/), 2024. law.justia.com/codes/new-york/cor/article-2/11/ (5 Dec. 2025).

¹⁵⁶ New York State Corrections and Community Supervision, Directive No. 4035, Incarcerated Individual Identification Cards. [docs.ny.gov](https://docs.ny.gov/2024/06/4035.pdf), 8 May 2024. [doccs.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2024/06/4035.pdf](https://docs.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2024/06/4035.pdf) (5 Dec. 2025).

¹⁵⁷ George Stockburger, "Governor Hochul Announces 'Jails to Jobs' – A New Initiative for Previously Incarcerated Individuals," Twin Tiers, 5 Jan. 2022. MyTwinTiers.com. www.mytwintiers.com/kathy-hochul/hochul-announces-jails-to-jobs-initiative-for-previously-incarcerated-individuals/ (21 Nov. 2025); Paul Liotta, "N.Y. to provide more inmates with these credentials after release from incarceration," Silive, 6 Feb. 2024. Silive.com. www.silive.com/news/2024/01/ny-to-provide-more-inmates-with-these-credentials-after-release-from-incarceration.html (9 July 2025).

¹⁵⁸ "Obtaining a DMV Photo ID," [doccs.ny.gov](https://doccs.ny.gov/2021-steps-obtain-dmv-photo-id), Department of Corrections and Community Supervision. 2021 [doccs.ny.gov/steps-obtain-dmv-photo-id](https://doccs.ny.gov/2021-steps-obtain-dmv-photo-id) (2 July 2025); New York State Corrections and Community Supervision, Directive No. 4035, Incarcerated Individual Identification Cards. [docs.ny.gov](https://docs.ny.gov/2024/06/4035.pdf), 8 May 2024. [doccs.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2024/06/4035.pdf](https://docs.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2024/06/4035.pdf) (4 Dec. 2025).

New York Corrections Law section 601 authorizes DOCCS to use sentencing or conviction documents to request a certified birth certificate on an individual's behalf.¹⁵⁹ There is no statutory or regulatory requirement for DOCCS to assist in obtaining Social Security cards, but the agency does so in practice. In the first quarter of 2025, DOCCS reported that 94% of native-born New Yorkers released for the first time either requested or received their birth certificates, and 79% requested or received Social Security cards.¹⁶⁰

NORTH CAROLINA

In 2022, 13,644 people were released from prison in North Carolina.¹⁶¹ North Carolina defines recidivism as reincarceration within two years of release. The recidivism rate for the fiscal year 2019 release cohort was 36% according to the “Correctional Program Evaluation, Offenders Placed on Probation or Release from Prison Fiscal Year 2019” report.¹⁶²

There is no statutory requirement in North Carolina for the Department of Corrections to provide or assist individuals in obtaining photo identification cards, Social Security cards, or birth certificates upon release. However, the Department has partnered with the North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to offer a program that allows eligible inmates to obtain a non-driver identification card prior to release. The program is currently limited to individuals serving sentences of eight years or less.¹⁶³

As of January 2024, the Department is working to establish a data-sharing agreement with the Social Security Administration to streamline the issuance of identification documents by automatically verifying Social Security numbers.¹⁶⁴ Additionally, according to North

¹⁵⁹ New York State Assembly, NY Corr L § 601, law.justia.com, 2024. law.justia.com/codes/new-york/cor/article-22/601/ (5 Dec. 2025).

¹⁶⁰ Nicole March, 22 May 2025. Email interview.

¹⁶¹ Carson and Kluckow, “Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables.” 20.

¹⁶² “Correctional Program Evaluation Offenders Placed on Probation or Release from Prison Fiscal Year 2019,” North Carolina Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, nccourts.gov, 15 April 2022. www.nccourts.gov/assets/documents/publications/SPAC-2022-Adult-Recidivism-Report-FY-2019_0.pdf?VersionId=Fp4ApqrSG52bRd8xKurf_f9crgXnk8q (21 Nov. 2025).

¹⁶³ Brad Deen, “DMV partner to provide IDs to offenders leaving prison,” dac.nc.gov, North Carolina Department of Adult Corrections. 14 Aug. 2023. www.dac.nc.gov/news/press-releases/2023/08/14/dac-dmv-partner-provide-ids-offenders-leaving-prison (2 July 2025).

¹⁶⁴ “Reentry 2030 Strategic Plan,” North Carolina Department of Adult Correction, dac.nc.gov. www.dac.nc.gov/divisions-and-sections/rehabilitation-and-reentry/reentry-2030 (2 July 2025).

Carolina Department of Correction personnel, the department provides assistance to inmates attempting to obtain their Social Security cards and birth certificates.¹⁶⁵

NORTH DAKOTA

In 2022, 1,209 people were released from prison in North Dakota.¹⁶⁶ North Dakota defines recidivism as those reincarcerated sometime after their release. The three-year recidivism rate for the 2020 release cohort was 40% according to the North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's "Prison Dashboard."¹⁶⁷

There are no statutory provisions in North Dakota for providing or assisting an inmate in obtaining a photo identification card, a Social Security card, or a birth certificate.¹⁶⁸ In 2025, the governor of North Dakota appointed a new cabinet position, "Commissioner of Recovery & Reentry."¹⁶⁹ Part of this role is assisting inmates in getting IDs.¹⁷⁰ There is no data available on the impact of this position.

According to North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation personnel, the department aids inmates trying to obtain their credentials by assisting them with Social Security paperwork 120 days before their release, providing assistance to inmates attempting to obtain their birth certificates, providing multiple reentry program options for inmates, and partnering with North Dakota's Department of Transportation to bring mobile ID equipment to incarceration facilities around the state.¹⁷¹ Approximately 80% of North Dakota's released inmates leave with at least one form of ID.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁵ Jerry Higgins, 9 June 2025. Email interview.

¹⁶⁶ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 20.

¹⁶⁷ "Prison Dashboard," North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, dashboard.docr.nd.gov, dashboard.docr.nd.gov/us-nd/narratives/prison/3 (3 July 2025).

¹⁶⁸ "Re-entry Outcomes for Incarcerated Individuals - Background Memorandum," North Dakota Legislative Council, ndlegis.gov, Nov. 2023. ndlegis.gov/sites/default/files/resource/committee-memorandum/25.9028.01000.pdf (3 July 2025).

¹⁶⁹ "Commissioner of Recovery & Reentry, Jonathan Holth," North Dakota, Office of the Governor, Jan. 2025. www.governor.nd.gov/cabinet-members/jonathan-holth (3 July 2025).

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Rick Hochhalter, 15 May 2025. Phone interview.

¹⁷² Ibid.

OHIO

In 2022, 17,444 people were released from prison in Ohio.¹⁷³ Ohio defines recidivism as returning to prison within three years of release. The recidivism rate for the 2016 release cohort was 33% according to Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections' (DRC) 2021 recidivism report.¹⁷⁴

In December 2024, Ohio House Bill 315 was signed into law. The new law directs the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections to provide released juvenile offenders and felons with birth certificates, Social Security cards, either temporary or permanent IDs, a copy of their vocational training experience, and a copy of their work experience.¹⁷⁵

The Ohio DRC is currently working alongside the Social Security administration to establish a program for released inmates to receive their social security cards. Additionally, the Ohio DRC has multiple reentry programs for education and employment; the Ohio DRC is working to combine all these programs into one policy.¹⁷⁶

OKLAHOMA

In 2022, 5,282 people were released from prison in Oklahoma.¹⁷⁷ Oklahoma defines recidivism as reincarceration within three years of release. The recidivism rate for the 2011 release cohort was 22% according to the Oklahoma State Statistics' "Offender Recidivism Dataset."¹⁷⁸

Title 57 Oklahoma Statute section 513.3 directs the Department of Corrections (DOC) to determine whether an inmate has a valid photo identification card nine months prior to

¹⁷³ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 20.

¹⁷⁴ "Recidivism Report," Ohio Department of Rehabilitation & Correction, drc.ohio.gov, 2021, drc.ohio.gov/wps/wcm/connect/gov/cf8624c6-b4c6-49b2-a029-9aef61b4aa15/2021+Final+Report.pdf?MOD=AJPERES (3 July 2025).

¹⁷⁵ Ohio General Assembly, Ohio House Bill 315, Sec. 5145.1611 (A)(1). search-prod.lis.state.oh.us, 2024. search-prod.lis.state.oh.us/api/v2/general_assembly_135/legislation/hb315/08_EN/pdf/ (5 Dec. 2025).

¹⁷⁶ Roxanne Coey, 27 May 2025. Email interview.

¹⁷⁷ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 20.

¹⁷⁸ "Offender Recidivism Dataset," Oklahoma State Statistics, data.ok.gov, data.ok.gov/dataset/offender-recidivism/resource/a8f994bc-59a0-40f1-8df2-20ae5321e101 (3 July 2025).

release.¹⁷⁹ If the inmate does not, then the DOC assists in the process of gathering the necessary documentation to obtain an ID. The Oklahoma DOC also provides inmates a birth certificate, a Social Security card, a vocation training record, a work record, a résumé including trades learned and the inmate's proficiency level, and documentation that the inmate has completed a practice job interview.¹⁸⁰

OREGON

In 2022, 6,358 people were released from prison in Oregon.¹⁸¹ Oregon defines recidivism as the percentage of people released to parole who were sentenced to prison or jail for a new felony within three years of release. The recidivism rate for the 2020 release cohort was 35% according to Oregon Criminal Justice Commission's recidivism report.¹⁸²

Oregon Revised Statute section 802.087 directs the Oregon Department of Corrections and Department of Transportation to adopt regulations assisting inmates in obtaining driver's licenses and identification cards.¹⁸³ There is no statutory basis for inmates obtaining Social Security cards or birth certificates. However, Oregon Department of Corrections Policy 90.3.1 outlines procedures for assisting inmates to obtain a state photo identification card, a replacement Social Security card, and a certified copy of their birth certificate.¹⁸⁴

PENNSYLVANIA

In 2022, 11,870 people were released from prison in Pennsylvania.¹⁸⁵ Pennsylvania defines recidivism as re-arrest or reincarceration after being released from custody either through parole or the completion of a sentence within three years of release. The recidivism rate for

¹⁷⁹ Oklahoma legislature, 57 OK Stat § 513.3, law.justia.com, 2024. law.justia.com/codes/oklahoma/title-57/section-57-513-3/ (5 Dec. 2025).

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 20.

¹⁸² "Recidivism," Oregon Criminal Justice Commission, public.tableau.com, 13 Aug. 2024. public.tableau.com/app/profile/cjcdashboards/viz/RecidivismV3/Story1 (9 July 2025).

¹⁸³ Oregon State Legislature, OR Rev Stat § 802.087, law.justia.com, 2023. law.justia.com/codes/oregon/volume-19/chapter-802/section-802-087/ (5 Dec. 2025).

¹⁸⁴ Oregon Department of Corrections, DOC Policy: 90.3.1 Identification Documents for Adults in Custody, 4 Dec 2019. www.oregon.gov/doc/rules-and-policies/Documents/90-3-1.pdf (5 Dec. 2025).

¹⁸⁵ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 20.

the 2016 release cohort was 65% according to the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections' 2022 recidivism report.¹⁸⁶

Pennsylvania has no statutory basis for providing or assisting inmates with obtaining a photo identification card upon release. However, Pennsylvania Department of Corrections policy 07.03.01 provides guidance for assisting inmates to obtain a photo identification card, a replacement Social Security card, and a certified copy of their birth certificate.¹⁸⁷

RHODE ISLAND

In 2022, 418 people were released from prison in Rhode Island.¹⁸⁸ Rhode Island defines recidivism as returning to custody as a convict or awaiting a new trial within three years of release. The recidivism rate for the 2019 release cohort was 45%, according to Rhode Island Department of Corrections' "Annual Recidivism Brief" from March 2023.¹⁸⁹

There is no statutory basis in Rhode Island for issuing or assisting inmates in obtaining a photo identification card upon or prior to release. However, the Rhode Island Department of Corrections provides transitional and discharge planning services that may include assistance obtaining a photo identification card, birth certificate, and Social Security card.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁶ "Recidivism 2022 Report," Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, pa.gov, 2023, www.pa.gov/content/dam/copapwp-pagov/en/cor/documents/resources/statistics/reports-and-dashboards/Recidivism%202022%20Report.pdf (3 July 2025).

¹⁸⁷ Pennsylvania Department of Corrections. Policy Number 7.3.1, Inmate Reentry and Transition. pa.gov, 18 Aug. 2017. www.pa.gov/content/dam/copapwp-pagov/en/cor/documents/about-us/doc-policies/07.03.01%20Inmate%20Reentry%20and%20Transition.pdf (5 Dec. 2025).

¹⁸⁸ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 20.

¹⁸⁹ "Annual Recidivism Brief," Rhode Island Department of Corrections, ri.gov, March 2023, ck/a?!&p=e21e4157e788cf4d7277a5688037e5b6938873fb1ed0bf13de3fd603ca820768JmltdHM9MTcyOTcyODAwMA&ptn=3&ver=2&hsh=4&fclid=1171f9aa-ec48-64f4-3454-ed4eed5a65f3&psq=Rhode+Island+Department+of+Corrections+Annual+Recidivism+Brief+March+2023&u=a1aHR0cHM6Ly9kb2MucmkuZ292L21lZGlhLzMxNDYvZG93bmxvYWQ_bGFuZ3VhZ2U9ZW4&ntb=1 (9 July 2025).

¹⁹⁰ "Transitional Services & Discharge Planning," State of Rhode Island Department of Corrections, doc.ri.gov, doc.ri.gov/programs-services/transitional-services-discharge-planning (3 July 2025).

SOUTH CAROLINA

In 2022, 4,285 people were released from prison in South Carolina.¹⁹¹ South Carolina defines recidivism as reincarceration within three years of release. The recidivism rate for the fiscal year 2020 release cohort was 17%, according to the South Carolina Department of Corrections' "Recidivism Rates of Inmates Released during FY2016 - FY2020" report.¹⁹²

South Carolina Code section 24-13-2130 directs the Department of Corrections to "work with the Department of Motor Vehicles to develop and implement a plan for providing inmates who are being released from a correctional facility with a valid photo identification card."¹⁹³ There is no statutory basis or Department of Corrections policy for assisting inmates to obtain Social Security cards or birth certificates.

SOUTH DAKOTA

In 2022, 3,391 people were released from prison in South Dakota.¹⁹⁴ South Dakota defines recidivism as reincarceration within three years of release. The recidivism rate for the 2019 release cohort was 40%, according to the South Dakota Department of Corrections' "External Data Brief: Adult Recidivism" report of March 2023.¹⁹⁵

South Dakota does not have a statutory basis for providing inmates being released with photo identification cards, Social Security cards, or birth certificates. However, Department of Corrections Policy 500-01 states that transitional case managers will ensure that inmates have two forms of ID upon release.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹¹ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 20.

¹⁹² "Recidivism Rates of Inmates Released during FY2016 - FY2020," South Carolina Department of Corrections doc.sc.gov, 2021.

doc.sc.gov/sites/doc/files/Documents/research/SpecialReports/Recidivism_Rates_of_Inmates_Released_during_FY2016-FY2020.pdf (3 July 2025).

¹⁹³ South Carolina Legislature, SC Code § 24-13-2130. scstatehouse.gov, 2024.
www.scstatehouse.gov/code/t24c013.php (5 Dec. 2025).

¹⁹⁴ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 20.

¹⁹⁵ "External Data Brief: Adult Recidivism," South Dakota Department of Corrections. doc.sd.gov, March 2023.
www.doc.sd.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/500/638572595429600000 (9 July 2025).

¹⁹⁶ "South Dakota Department of Correction Policies and Procedures," South Dakota Department of Corrections. doc.sd.gov, 2024.
www.doc.sd.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/684/638572733543100000 (9 July 2025).

TENNESSEE

In 2022, 10,480 people were released from prison in Tennessee.¹⁹⁷ Tennessee defines recidivism as being held in jail or in prison on a felony within three years of release. The recidivism rate for the 2020 release cohort is 46%, according to the Tennessee Department of Corrections’ “2023 Statistical Abstract” report.¹⁹⁸

Tennessee Code section 41-51-301 directs the Department of Correction to begin coordinating with the Department of Safety nine months prior to an individual’s release to issue a photo identification card, provided the individual does not already have a valid ID or driver’s license.¹⁹⁹ The Tennessee Department of Correction must also provide inmates being released with a birth certificate, a Social Security card, a copy of their vocational training record, a copy of their work record, and a notification indicating whether the inmate is eligible for an occupational license.²⁰⁰

TEXAS

In 2022, 58,670 people were released from prison in Texas.²⁰¹ Texas defines recidivism as reincarceration within three years of release. The recidivism rate for the fiscal year 2019 release cohort was 15%, according to Texas Legislative Budget Board’s “Statewide Criminal and Juvenile Justice Recidivism and Revocation Rates.”²⁰²

Texas Government Code section 501.015 directs the Department of Corrections to provide inmates with a personal identification certificate issued by the Texas Department of Public Safety “when an inmate is discharged or released on parole, mandatory supervision, or

¹⁹⁷ Carson and Kluckow, “Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables.” 20.

¹⁹⁸ “2023 Statistical Abstract,” Tennessee Department of Correction, digitaltennessee.tnsos.gov, Feb. 2024. digitaltennessee.tnsos.gov/cgi/vi/ewcontent.cgi?article=1015&context=correction_annual_statistical_reports (3 July 2025).

¹⁹⁹ Tennessee General Assembly, TN Code § 41-51-301, [law.justia.com](https://law.justia.com/codes/tennessee/title-41/chapter-51/part-3/section-41-51-301/), 2024. <https://law.justia.com/codes/tennessee/title-41/chapter-51/part-3/section-41-51-301/> (5 Dec. 2025).

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Carson and Kluckow, “Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables.” 20.

²⁰² “Statewide Criminal and Juvenile Justice Recidivism and Revocation Rates,” Texas Legislative Budget Board, lbb.texas.gov. Feb. 2023. www.lbb.texas.gov/Documents/Publications/Policy_Report/7689_Recidivism-Revocation_Feb2023.pdf (3 July 2025).

conditional pardon.”²⁰³ There is no statutory basis or Department of Corrections policy for assisting inmates to obtain Social Security cards or birth certificates.

UTAH

In 2022, 3,509 people were released from prison in Utah.²⁰⁴ Utah defines recidivism as returning to prison for a new conviction within three years from release. The recidivism rate for the fiscal year 2020 release cohort only includes parolees and was 21%, according to the Utah Commission on Criminal & Juvenile Justice’s “Justice Reinvestment Initiative Update Annual Report to the Legislature - November 2023.”²⁰⁵

Utah Code section 64-13-10.6 directs the Utah Department of Corrections to provide assistance to inmates in obtaining a photo-identification prior to their release from prison.²⁰⁶ Utah Code section 53-3-805 further allows the Utah Department of Public Safety’s Driver License Division to issue a temporary ID if an inmate being released does not have documents required to get a permanent ID.²⁰⁷ There is no statutory basis or Department of Corrections policy for assisting inmates to obtain Social Security cards or birth certificates.

VERMONT

In 2022, 872 people were released from prison in Vermont.²⁰⁸ Vermont defines recidivism as reincarceration within 3 years of release. The recidivism rate for the 2019 release cohort was 42%, according to the Vermont Department of Corrections’ “Recidivism Rate by Calendar Year” report for 2009-2019.²⁰⁹

²⁰³ Texas Legislature, TX Govt Code § 501.015, capitol.texas.gov, 2024. statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/GV/htm/GV.501.htm (3 Dec. 2025); Texas Legislature, TX Govt Code § 501.0165, capitol.texas.gov, 2024. statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/GV/htm/GV.501.htm (5 Dec. 2025).

²⁰⁴ Carson and Kluckow, “Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables.” 20.

²⁰⁵ “Justice Reinvestment Initiative Update Annual Report to the Legislature - November 2023,” Utah Commission on Criminal & Juvenile Justice, justice.utah.gov. Nov. 2023. justice.utah.gov/wp-content/uploads/JRI-2023-Annual-Update-for-Legislature-Final-Complete-Draft.pdf (3 July 2025).

²⁰⁶ Utah State Legislature, Utah Code, Section 53-3-805. le.utah.gov, 2025. <https://le.utah.gov/xcode/Title53/Chapter3/53-3-S207.html>.

²⁰⁷ Utah State Legislature, Utah Code, Section 53-3-805. le.utah.gov, 2025. <https://le.utah.gov/xcode/Title53/Chapter3/53-3-S805.html> (3 Dec. 2025).

²⁰⁸ Carson and Kluckow, “Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables.” 20.

²⁰⁹ “Recidivism Rate by Calendar Year,” Vermont Department of Corrections, doc.vermont.gov. doc.vermont.gov/sites/correct/files/documents/VTDOC_RecidivismRate_2009-2019.pdf (3 July 2025).

There is no statutory basis or public Department of Corrections policy in Vermont for inmates being released receiving or being assisted in obtaining photo identification cards, Social Security cards or birth certificates. Vermont Department of Corrections Directive 371.05 states each individual correctional facility is responsible for issuing temporary ID cards to inmates prior to release. The temporary ID cards expire three months after they are issued. However, this directive was rescinded in February 2023.²¹⁰ The rescission memo notes that an updated procedure related to reentry identification documents is forthcoming, but has not yet been published as of July 2025.²¹¹

VIRGINIA

In 2022, 12,535 people were released from prison in Virginia.²¹² Virginia defines recidivism as reincarceration within three years of release. The recidivism rate for the fiscal year 2018 release cohort was 21%, according to the Department of Corrections’ “State Recidivism Comparison” from January 2023.²¹³

In 2025, the Virginia General Assembly enacted House Bill 2221. The law requires the Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC), in coordination with the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), State Registrar of Vital Records, and other relevant agencies, to provide any prisoner confined for at least 90 days who lacks a government-issued ID, birth certificate, or Social Security card with those documents prior to release.²¹⁴ Unless the individual is determined indigent, the costs of obtaining these documents must be paid by the individual. The law explicitly excludes REAL ID credentials from the definition of “government-issued identification card.”²¹⁵

If a government-issued ID cannot be secured, VADOC must issue a Department of Corrections Offender Identification form, which will serve as temporary identification for

²¹⁰ “Vermont Department of Corrections, Rescinding Memo - Outdated Department of Corrections Policies,” February 2023, doc.vermont.gov.outside.vermont.gov/dept/DOC/Policies/Rescinding%20Memo%20-%20Outdated%20Department%20of%20Corrections%20Policies%20-%20February%202023.pdf (3 Dec. 2025).

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² Carson and Kluckow, “Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables.” 20.

²¹³ “State Recidivism Comparison,” Virginia Department of Corrections, vadoc.virginia.gov, Jan. 2023, vadoc.virginia.gov/media/1818/vadoc-state-recidivism-comparison-report-2023-01.pdf (7 July 2025).

²¹⁴ Virginia State Legislature, Virginia House Bill 2221. lis.virginia.gov, 2025. lis.virginia.gov/bill-details/20251/HB2221 (3 Dec. 2025).

²¹⁵ Ibid.

120 days after release and can be used to obtain a permanent DMV-issued ID.²¹⁶ The Offender Identification form must include personal information such as the individual's name, date of birth, facility and release address, photograph, and, if available, Social Security number and legal presence.

Additionally, in 2024, Governor Glenn Youngkin issued Executive Order 36, which created the Stand Tall – Stay Strong – Succeed Together Team and directed Virginia executive agencies to coordinate with this team to assess and improve DMV's partnerships with VADOC and local jails to ensure returning citizens are equipped with valid identification upon reentry.²¹⁷

WASHINGTON

In 2022, 11,439 people were released from prison in Washington.²¹⁸ Washington defines recidivism as reincarceration within three years of release. The recidivism rate for the fiscal year 2020 release cohort was 24.9%, according to the Washington Department of Corrections' "Fact Card" from June 30, 2025.²¹⁹

Washington Revised Code section 46.20.117 directs the Department of Corrections to issue inmates who apply for IDs an "identicard," which is an official state-issued, non-driver photo ID.²²⁰ The inmate must pay a \$72 fee unless he or she receives public assistance grants, is under 25, has no permanent address, is being released from a community facility, juvenile rehabilitation facility, or is released within 30 days before application. There is no statutory basis or Department of Corrections policy for assisting inmates to obtain Social Security cards or birth certificates.

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ Commonwealth of Virginia, Office of the Governor, E.O. 36. governor.virginia.gov, 2024. www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/governor-of-virginia/pdf/eo/EO-36-Establishing-The-Stand-Tall---Stay-Strong---Succeed-Together-Reentry-Initiative---FINAL.pdf (3 Dec. 2025).

²¹⁸ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 20.

²¹⁹ "Fact Card," Washington State Department of Corrections, doc.wa.gov, 30 June 2025, <https://doc.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2025-02/100-RE004.pdf>. (7 July 2025).

²²⁰ Washington State Legislature, Washington Revised Code section 46.29.117. app.leg.wa.gov, 2024. app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=46.20.117 (3 Dec. 2025).

WEST VIRGINIA

In 2022, 2,763 people were released from prison in West Virginia.²²¹ West Virginia defines recidivism as reincarceration within three years of release. The recidivism rate for the 2018 release cohort was 35%, according to the Justice & Community Services' "2018 West Virginia Recidivism Report."²²²

West Virginia Code section 17B-2-1c authorizes the West Virginia Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to issue a temporary photo identification card valid for six months after issuance. DCR Policy Directive number 454.00 states that reentry preparation services include providing inmates with a state identification card, a copy of their birth certificate, and a replacement Social Security card.²²³

WISCONSIN

In 2022, 4,496 people were released from prison in Wisconsin.²²⁴ Wisconsin defines recidivism as reincarceration within three years of release. The recidivism rate for the 2019 release cohort was 32%, according to the Wisconsin Department of Corrections' "Release from Prison Recidivism Dashboards."²²⁵

Wisconsin Statute section 301.286 directs the Department of Corrections to determine whether an individual nearing release possesses a driver's license or state identification card.²²⁶ If not, the Department must assist the individual in applying for a state ID card.²²⁷

²²¹ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 20.

²²² "2018 West Virginia Recidivism Report," West Virginia Justice & Community Services, das.wv.gov. July 2024, das.wv.gov/JCS/ORSP/SAC/Publications/Documents/2018%20Recidivism%20Report_Final.pdf (7 July 2025).

²²³ West Virginia Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Policy Directive number 454.00, dcr.wv.gov, 21 Dec. 2022.

dcr.wv.gov/aboutus/SiteAssets/Pages/Policies/WVDCR%20PD%20454.00%20Reentry%20and%20Transition.pdf (3 Dec. 2025).

²²⁴ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 20.

²²⁵ "Release from Prison Recidivism Dashboards," Wisconsin Department of Corrections, doc.wi.gov/Pages/DataResearch/RecidivismDashboard.aspx (7 July 2025).

²²⁶ Wisconsin State Legislature, Wisconsin Statute section 301.286. docs.legis.wisconsin.gov, 2007. docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/301/286 (3 Dec. 2025).

²²⁷ Ibid.

There is no statutory basis or Department of Corrections policy for assisting inmates to obtain a Social Security card or birth certificate prior to release.

WYOMING

In 2022, 808 people were released from prison in Wyoming.²²⁸ Wyoming defines recidivism as reincarceration within three years of release. The recidivism rate for the 2004 release cohort was 25%, according to the Pew's report "State of Recidivism: The Revolving Door of America's Prisons."²²⁹

There is no statutory basis in Wyoming for inmates being released receiving or being assisted in obtaining photo identification cards, Social Security cards, or birth certificates. However, WYDOC Policy and Procedures #4.102 requires inmates be provided with an opportunity to obtain a state ID or driver's license, a birth certificate, and a Social Security card.²³⁰

²²⁸ Carson and Kluckow, "Prisoners in 2022 - Statistical Tables." 20.

²²⁹ "State of Recidivism The Revolving Door of America's Prisons," Pew Research Center on the States, pewtrusts.org, April 2011, www.pewtrusts.org/%7E/media/legacy/uploadedfiles/pcs_assets/2011/pewstateofrecidivism.pdf (7 July 2025).

²³⁰ Wyoming Department of Corrections, Policy and Procedures #4.102. corrections.wyo.gov, 2024. drive.google.com/file/d/1zDvVft-TJdbu3oVAYvdClufsTVFSXeOU/view (3 Dec. 2025).

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