

TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT NOTICE	<b>NO.</b> 8-11
	<b>DATE</b> August 30, 2011

**TO:** STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES  
 STATE WORKFORCE ADMINISTRATORS  
 STATE WORKFORCE LIAISONS  
 STATE AND LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARD CHAIRS AND DIRECTORS  
 STATE LABOR COMMISSIONERS  
 STATE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE DIRECTORS  
 COMPREHENSIVE ONE-STOP OFFICE MANAGERS  
 AFFILIATE ONE-STOP MANAGERS

**FROM:** JANE OATES /s/  
 Assistant Secretary

**SUBJECT:** Federal Interagency Reentry Council “Reentry MythBuster” Series

1. **Purpose.** To share the publication of the Federal Interagency Reentry Council “Reentry MythBuster” series, which is aimed at dispelling commonly held misunderstandings about Federal policies that affect ex-offenders and their reentry into society.

2. **Background.** The Federal Interagency Reentry Council (Council) includes the Departments of Justice, Interior, Agriculture, Labor, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Education, Veterans Affairs, and the offices of National Drug Control Policy, Social Security Administration, Domestic Policy Council, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships. The mission of the Council is to support the Administration’s efforts in advancing public safety and well-being through enhanced communication, coordination, and collaboration across Federal agency initiatives that:

- make communities safer by reducing recidivism and victimization,
- assist those returning from prison and jail in becoming productive citizens, and
- save taxpayer dollars by lowering the direct and collateral costs of incarceration.

In an effort to clarify Federal policies that are commonly misinterpreted or cited incorrectly as rationale for prohibitions against ex-offenders, the Federal Interagency Reentry Council has released a set of “Reentry MythBusters,” which cover a variety of areas critical to ex-offender reentry. Some of the areas include residence in public housing, access to Federal benefits, parental rights, and employer incentives. States and localities often have broad discretion in determining how Federal policies are applied and/or have various opt-out provisions for states. In some cases, Federal statutory barriers do not exist at all or are very limited.

The MythBusters provide information on what rules and conditions actually apply from the Federal perspective.

3. **Use of the MythBuster Series.** The following are some suggested uses for the MythBusters by the public workforce system:

- **One-Stop Career Centers** – Provide a ready reference for intake and case management personnel and as take-away information for clients and other One-Stop visitors.
- **Reentering Individuals, their Families, Reentry Coordinators and Advocates** – Provide easy access to the laws and policies around access to public housing, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, Federal student financial aid, and Veterans, Social Security, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits. The Reentry MythBusters also help describe child support options, parental rights, while incarcerated, and the appropriate use of criminal histories in hiring decisions.
- **In Response to Employers** – Provide information on incentives and protections offered to employers hiring ex-offenders. The Reentry MythBusters are also helpful to employers (including Federal agencies) who want to better understand the appropriate use of a criminal record in making hiring decisions.
- **States** – Provide information that will assist them in understanding, modifying, or eliminating certain bans on benefits (TANF, SNAP) for people who have been convicted of drug felonies.
- **Prisons and Jail Officials** – Assists them to ensure that individuals can access Federal benefits, as appropriate, immediately upon release to help stabilize the critical first days and weeks after incarceration. Pre-release applications and procedures are available for certain Federal benefits (Veterans, Social Security, food assistance, and student financial aid).

4. **Action Requested.** The Employment and Training Administration requests that recipients distribute this notice and related MythBuster materials to affiliated entities and individuals, and all other interested parties. To download the entire set of Reentry MythBusters please go to:

[http://www.nationalreentryresourcecenter.org/documents/0000/1090/REENTRY\\_MYTHBUSTERS.pdf](http://www.nationalreentryresourcecenter.org/documents/0000/1090/REENTRY_MYTHBUSTERS.pdf).

5. **Inquiries.** For more information about the Federal Interagency Reentry Council Reentry MythBusters series please send an email to [morris.richard@dol.gov](mailto:morris.richard@dol.gov) or call (202) 693-3603.