



## *Transition Accountability Plans and the Importance of Prison In-Reach*

The lynchpin of the MPRI Model is the development and use of Transition Accountability Plans (TAPs) at four critical points in the prisoner transition process. Each of the TAPs succinctly describe for the prisoner or former prisoner, the corrections and/or field staff and the community exactly what is expected for a successful re-entry process. Under the Michigan Prisoner ReEntry Initiative (MPRI) Model, the TAPs, which consist of summaries of the offender's Case Management Plan at critical junctures in the transition process, are prepared with each prisoner at reception as part of the prison intake process (Phase I), as part of the parole decision process when the prisoner is approaching his Earliest Release Date or ERD<sup>1</sup> (Phase II), when the prisoner re-enters the community, and when the former prisoner is to be discharged from parole supervision. So, TAPs serve as concise guides for prisoners, former prisoners, corrections and field staff and community service providers:

- **TAP1:** The expectations for the prison term that will help prisoners prepare for release.
- **TAP2:** The terms and conditions of prisoner release to communities.
- **TAP3:** The supervision and services former prisoners will experience in the community.
- **TAP4:** The elements of the Case Management Plan for eventual discharge from parole.

The TAP integrates offenders' transition from prisons to communities by spanning phases in the transition process and agency boundaries. The TAP is a collaborative product that at any given time may involve prison staff, the prisoner, the parole board, parole field agents, human services providers (public and/or private), victims, and neighborhood and community organizations. The TAP describes actions that must occur to prepare individual prisoners for release to the community, defines terms and conditions of their parole supervision, specifies both the type and degree of supervision and the array of services they will experience in the community, and describes their eventual discharge to aftercare upon successful completion of supervision from parole. The objective of the TAP process is to increase both overall community protection by lowering risk to persons and property and by increasing individual offender's prospects for successful return to and self-sufficiency in the community.

The TAP process begins soon after offenders enter prison and continues during their terms of confinement, through their release from prison, and continues after their discharge from supervision as an evolving framework for aftercare provided by human service agencies or other means of self-help and support. The TAP1 is developed by prison and academic and education staff in the prisons that form the TAP1 Transition Team. Beginning with the TAP2, the TAPs are developed by a Transition Team that

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<sup>1</sup> The first model Michigan used to develop the MPRI, NIC's "Transition from Prison to Community Initiative" model, referred to the prisoner's "Targeted Release Date" as an important factor for re-entry process. In Michigan, the release date is subject to parole board approval and the earliest a prisoner can be released from prison is the ERD. Therefore, the ERD is the Targeted Release Date.

includes prison staff, parole supervision staff, and community agencies and service providers. Thus, the membership of the Transition Team and their respective roles and responsibilities change over time as the prisoner moves through the re-entry process. During the institutional phase (Phase I) prison staff lead the team. During the re-entry and community supervision phases (Phase II and III) field supervision staff lead the team with both prison staff and community services providers as partners in the collaborative process. After former prisoners have successfully completed community supervision, their TAP will continue as needed and be managed by staff of human services agencies as the former prisoner continues to receive services and support. At each stage in the process Transition Team members will use a case management model to monitor progress in implementing the TAP.

The TAP reduces uncertainty in terms of release dates and actions (and timing of actions) that need to be taken by prisoners, prison staff, the parole board, field agents, and partnering community agencies. Increased certainty will motivate prisoners and former prisoners to fully participate in the TAP process and to become engaged in fulfilling their responsibilities and will ensure that all parties are held accountable for timely performance of their respective responsibilities.

### **Principles that Guide the Transition Accountability Plan Development Process**

1. The TAP process starts during an offender's classification soon after their admission to prison and continues through their ultimate discharge from community supervision.
2. TAPs define programs or interventions to modify individual offender's dynamic risk factors that were identified in a systematic assessment process; address the prisoner or former prisoner's needs and build on the identified strength of each individual. Thus, the prisoner is at the center of the TAP process.
3. TAPs are sensitive to the requirements of public safety, and to the rational timing and availability of services. In an ideal system, every prisoner would have access to programs and services to modify dynamic risk factors. In a system constrained by finite resources, officials need to rationally allocate access to services and resources, using risk management strategies as the basis for that allocation.
4. Appropriate partners should participate in the planning and implementation of individual offender's TAPs. These include the prisoner or former prisoner, prison staff, releasing authorities, supervision authorities, victims, offenders' families and significant others, human service agencies, and volunteer and faith-based organizations. While corrections staff lead the Transition Team, community representatives are vital partners in the process. The design of the TAP is a collaborative process.
5. Individual TAPs delineate the specific responsibilities of prisoners and former prisoners, correctional agencies and system partners in the creation, modification, and effective application of the plans. The TAPs hold both prisoners and service agencies accountable for performance of those responsibilities.
6. While all four TAPs should include the types of services that are needed to address identified needs, reduce identified risks and build on identified strengths, beginning with the TAP2, they should encompass the enrollment of the prisoner in the agencies responsible for the services. The TAP2 is the first TAP that is developed as a "prison in-reach" process that brings community representatives into the prisons to interact with the prisoners. **Prison In-Reach is a major distinction between the way business has been done in the past and the way it is improved and is one of the most important innovations of the MPRI Model.**

7. TAPs provide a long-term road map to achieve continuity in the delivery of treatments and services, and in the sharing of requisite information, both over time and across and between agencies. This is particularly essential during the re-entry phase (Phase II) when the boundaries between agencies are literally fences and brick walls. The TAP2 must serve as more than a plan – it must serve as a highly specific schedule of events beginning with the prisoner’s Orientation Session with the field agent on the day of release, and must include the expectations of how the former prisoner will spend his or her time during at least the first month of release. Perhaps the most vulnerable time for former prisoners is their first month in the community.
8. A case management process is used to arrange, advocate, coordinate, and monitor the delivery of a package of services needed to meet the specific offender’s needs. During the prison portion of the TAP process, prison staff will function as case managers who will engage in preparing prisoners for their eventual release through pre-release programming and Prison In-Reach services facilitated with experts from the community. Upon release, and as they adjust to community supervision, their field agent will become the case manager and work with the prisoner and community representatives on transition teams. When they are successfully discharged from supervision, a staff member from a human service agency may assume case management responsibilities for former prisoners who continue to need services and support.

As can be seen from these principles, perhaps the most pivotal activity that distinguishes the old way of doing business from the new way is the Prison In-Reach process that is the centerpiece of MPRI Phase II, the Re-Entry Phase. When reviewing the Policy Statements and Recommendations that comprise the MPRI Model, the importance of the Prison In-Reach process becomes more focused.

### **The MPRI Model: Policy Statements Affecting Prison In-Reach**

There are a series of Policy Statements in the MPRI Model that require an aggressive and productive Prison In-Reach process followed by an equally aggressive supervision strategy – especially during the pivotal first month of release. There are nine (9) Policy Statements that affect the manner in which the Prison In-Reach process is utilized to create strong Transition Accountability Plans during what is the most important phase of the MPRI Model (both TAP2 and TAP3). Each of these Policy Statements is discussed below in terms of how MPRI Phase II and specifically, the Prison In-Reach process should be utilized to meet the expectations of the Model. References to the information that should be included in the TAP2 are underlined for emphasis. When applicable, other actions that should be considered by the Steering Team are also mentioned.

#### ***Policy Statement 19 regarding Housing: Facilitate prisoner’s access to stable housing upon re-entry.***

Affordable and sustainable shelter is fundamental to the re-entry process. Many prisoners have a place to stay upon release but few have a place to live. It is critical, therefore, that during Phase II and the Prison In-Reach process that the Transition Team, as representatives of the local community-based organizations to which the prisoner will return, are familiar with the full range of housing options available in each community and maintain lists or inventories of available housing. This information must be matched to the specific needs of the prisoner as the Transition Team determines - on an individualized basis - the particular housing needs for each prisoner, taking into account the feasibility, safety, and appropriateness of an individual living with family members after his or her release. The linkage here with Family Reunification activities are critical as they can help identify and address family violence risks of any prisoner whose return to the community may pose a risk to the individual or to his or her family or

partner. The TAP2 must clearly identify the appropriate housing option for each prisoner well in advance of release and complete the paperwork needed to ensure enrollment or placement.

As part of the education program during Phase II, efforts should be made to educate prisoners about strategies for finding and maintaining housing in the community, and teach them about their legal rights as tenants in the private rental market. Funding is available to each Pilot Site to provide former prisoners who are entering the private rental market—and who demonstrate that they are without adequate resources to pay rent—with small stipends and/or housing assistance for the period immediately after release. To the extent that a Pilot Site community is in need of it, local Steering Team should develop “re-entry housing,” to meet the specific and unique needs of persons released from prison. Steering Teams need to encourage private sector or nonprofit housing developers or community-based organizations to develop housing accessible to former prisoners. Most of the Pilot Site communities have or are developing Community Plans to End Homelessness and local Steering Teams need to be involved in these efforts so former prisoners who have histories of homelessness as part of the homeless priority population, to facilitate their access to supportive housing made available under the McKinney-Vento Act.

***Policy Statement 20 regarding Planning Continuity of Care: Prepare community-based health and treatment providers, prior to the release of an individual, to receive that person and to ensure that he or she receives uninterrupted services and supports upon his or her return community.***

While this policy statement refers specifically to health care, it provides a guiding principle for the seamless delivery of all services, consistent with the Mission of MPRI. While specific action on the issue is still pending, the notion that prior to release prison staff prepare a summary health record containing information about important medical problems, prior diagnostic studies, allergies, and medications for each prisoner prior to his or her release is a significant recommendation within the MPRI Model. Connecting prisoners to treatment and health care providers in the community prior to their release from prison in order to prevent gaps in treatment and services is an essential component of the TAP2 and must be very specific including appointments with community health care professionals as soon as is appropriate. Pre-qualifications for Medicaid are now possible as a result of the Department of Community Health participating as a partner in the MPRI and this must be completed during Phase II. At the very least, the Transition Team must ensure that prisoners who are receiving medications are provided with a sufficient interim supply of essential medications upon their discharge into the community. As part of the education programming during Phase II, prison staff should educate prisoners about the continuity of care that is available in their community and provide them with the summary health record and other medical records prior to discharge.

***Policy Statement 21 regarding the Creation of Employment Opportunities: Promote, where appropriate, the employment of people released from prison and facilitate the creation of job opportunities for this population that will benefit communities.***

While many of the recommendations needed to meet this policy statement are about community development, others are quite germane to the Phase II and Prison In-Reach process. To set the stage for developing the TAP2, local Steering Teams and their community coordinators need to be aggressive and clear about their plans to “soften” the labor market for returning prisoners. As the recommendations suggest, these four activities are critical:

- Educate employers about financial incentives, such as the Federal Bonding Program, Work Opportunity Tax Credit, Welfare-to-Work programs, and first-source agreements, which make a person who was released from prison a more appealing prospective employee.

- Determine which industries and employers are willing to hire people with criminal records and encourage job development and placement in those sectors.
- Review employment laws that affect the employment of people based on criminal history, and eliminate those provisions that are not directly linked to improving public safety.
- Promote individualized decisions about hiring instead of blanket bans and provide documented means for people with convictions to demonstrate rehabilitation.

More specific to the TAP2, this policy statement pushed communities to consider the use of mentors as third-party intermediaries to assist employers with the supervision and management of former prisoners is an idea that is on the front burner for many of the MPRI Pilot Sites. The development of “social enterprise” businesses is also being considered by the Office of Offender ReEntry (See the Concept Paper, *Project REHAB – Former Prisoners Housing and Building Project*). This concept includes the approach of developing temporary employment – especially through Michigan Works! Employment Readiness Programs for prisoners and former prisoners - who cannot find work so that they can acquire real work experience and on-the-job training. If “job mentors” are part of the supervision strategy, then the connection of the prisoner with the mentor prior to release is essential. If Michigan Works! agencies, their subcontractors or social enterprises are to be part of the TAP2, they must be identified and specified TAP2 with the necessary paperwork for enrollment and/or pre-qualification completed prior to release.

***Policy Statement 22 regarding Workforce Development and the Transition Plan: Connect prisoners to employment, including supportive employment and employment services, before their release to the community.***

If housing is one of the most essential ingredients of successful re-entry, employment is the most important. As stated above, the MPRI envisions prisoners having jobs waiting for them upon release as a result of a wide variety of activities but regardless of this capability, Transition Teams must initiate job searches before prisoners are released using community-based workforce development resources and indicate the results of these efforts in the TAP2. During Phase II and as part of the Prison In-Reach process, Transition Teams – with the fully engaged support from their Steering Teams – must encourage employers to visit the correctional facility to meet with prospective employees before release. In one sense, perhaps the most important aspect of the MPRI Phase II Prison In-Reach process is to engage community members and community-based services to act as intermediaries between employers and job-seeking prisoners. The transfer of prisoners to prisons closer to their community of release is intended to facilitate this process. As part of the TAP2, the Transition Team should work with prisoners to maintain written information in their “re-entry portfolio” about their prospective employers or community employment service providers and official documentation of their skills and experience, including widely accepted credentials and/or letters of recommendation.

***Policy Statement 23 regarding Victims, Families, and Communities: Prepare family members, victims, and relevant community members for the released individual’s return to the community, and provide them with protection, counseling, services and support, as needed and appropriate.***

Many of the recommendations for implementation of this critical policy statement have to do with improved functioning with state and local criminal justice agencies and are the subject of implementation strategies being considered by the Executive Management and State Policy Teams as well as the department-based, Resource Implementation Teams (See Issue Brief on MPRI Organizational Structure). These recommendations form the backdrop for the more specific work that needs to be done as part of the TAP2 development process and should be on the “to do” list of every Pilot Site when the recommendations are under their control:

- Provide notification and information to victims concerning the prisoner's release and re-entry process.
- Offer counseling and support to crime victims preparing for the return of an individual to the community.
- Create policies for victim restitution and child-support debt management, including collection processes, that encourage payment and family stability, and engage family members in creating a viable support strategy.
- Ensure timely and appropriate notification of key community representatives of the prisoner's release.

As part of the Prison In-Reach process, the Transition Teams should be working with family members so that they not only receive adequate notification and information regarding the prisoner's impending release, but are engaged in family reunification activities. To the extent family reunification efforts must continue upon release, they need to be fully specified in the TAP2. These types of services, as part of the community supervision strategy must consider the needs and strengths of the prisoner's family and then build community networks to provide counseling, safety planning, and other services to help the family cope with the emotional, financial, and interpersonal issues surrounding the individual's return. These activities can be paid for using the MPRI funding from the MDOC.

***Policy Statement 24 regarding Identification and Benefits: Ensure that prisoners re-enter their communities with appropriate forms of identification and that those eligible for public benefits receive those benefits immediately upon their release.***

This policy statement is going to require a great degree of improved collaboration among agencies that are committed to the MPRI. To begin with, the Transition Teams will need to ensure that the process of applying for proper and fully acceptable forms of identification, including funding sources where prisoners lack adequate funds for obtaining identification, are put into motion at the earliest possible time during Phase II. Eventually, this process will begin during Phase I – as early as when the prisoner is admitted at the reception center – but until then, the process must take place during Phase II. The degree to which issuance of identification documents have been obtained or still need to be obtained – with specific steps in the process (phone calls, appointments and the individuals to whom the former prisoner will need to speak) must be documented in the TAP2 and contained in the prisoner's ReEntry Portfolio.

At the same time, the State Policy Team will be asked to work with the Michigan Secretary of State and other state agencies to allow prisoner's MDOC identification to be accepted as valid identification by other agencies. Having the chief deputies or directors of state agencies engaged in the MPRI through the State Policy Team is expected to pave the way for "system change". For example, timely access to Medicaid benefits has been greatly improved upon since the agreement from the Department of Community Health to suspend, instead of terminate, Medicaid benefits during incarceration. Other recommendations that support this policy statement need to be addressed at the state level by the Executive Management and State Policy Teams, at the local level by the Steering Teams and on a case-by-case basis with each prisoner as part of the Prison In-Reach and TAP2 development process. Helping prisoners identify and apply for appropriate benefits and identification as part of their TAP2 by directly engaging with the appropriate agencies is one of the many reasons that prisoners are being housed in facilities closer to their homes. The Prison In-Reach and TAP2 process should include a series of activities that need to be documented in the TAP2 and/or the prisoner ReEntry Portfolio:

- Ensure interagency collaboration to effectively screen prisoners for eligibility for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid, supplemental security income, food stamps, and other benefits, and to facilitate successful pre-release application for these benefits.

- Assess prisoners for eligibility for veterans' benefits and services, and ensure access to those benefits.
- Facilitate access to "non-recurrent" TANF benefits for former prisoners.
- Adopt a narrow definition of "in violation of a condition of parole/probation" for the purposes of TANF, food stamps, SSI & public housing.
- Adopt balanced admission and eviction policies for public housing that consider individual circumstances.
- Ensure continued Medicaid coverage for TANF families with parents who are released from prison.

Policy Statement 25 regarding the Design of the Supervision Strategy: Review and prioritize what the releasing authority has established as terms and conditions of release and develop a supervision strategy that corresponds to the resources available to the supervising agency, reflects the likelihood of recidivism, and employs incentives to encourage compliance with the conditions of release.

Several of the recommendations that support this policy statement are already in place and represent several of the fundamental components of the MPRI Model. These recommendations and the status of each are as follows:

- Engage community members, including representatives from community corrections, law enforcement, and community-based organizations, to serve on a transition team with corrections staff, and charge the team with the development of a comprehensive supervision strategy. *To date, however, the focus has been more on the TAP2, rather than a "comprehensive supervision strategy" which is what the TAP3 – still under design - should accomplish.*
- Transfer prisoners as the release date approaches (and as appropriate and feasible) to correctional facilities nearest to the community to which the individual will return. *These transfers have taken place but are currently only about 4 months prior to release. In the next "wave" of prisoner transfers, it is expected that they will be at the Phase II Prison Facility site for up to six months. Eventually, this will extend to nine months to a year as the MPRI process matures.*
- Assign a supervision field agent to each prisoner before the date of his or her release and engage the field agent on the transition planning team. *A different agent from the one who will actually supervise the former prisoner may be assigned to work with the prisoners at the MPRI Prison Facility.*
- Provide each individual before release with a written copy of his or her terms and conditions of release and their TAP2. Explain both documents to them clearly, ensuring that he/she understands them. *This happens at the facility prior to release and during orientation session at the parole office immediately after release.*
- Seek information from, and promote cooperation with, law enforcement in the jurisdiction to which an individual will return before his or her release. *If Steering Teams have engaged local law enforcement officials in the MPRI process, this should be the subject of discussion and planning.*

Finally, once the MDOC has developed it, during Phase II, MDOC staff will apply the information from risk, needs, and strengths assessment instrument administered prior to the release decision, and re-assess

prisoners if necessary to determine appropriate supervision strategies. This is expected to be developed in the next six months to a year.

***Policy Statement 26 regarding the Implementation of the Supervision Strategy: Concentrate community supervision resources on the period immediately following the prisoners release and adjust supervision strategies as the needs of the former prisoner, the victim, the community, and the family change.***

The primary point of this policy statement is to focus supervision resources on the period directly following release and to ensure that contact between the field agent and former prisoner corresponds to the level of risk presented. To begin with, all re-entry former prisoners will be placed on maximum supervision to assure at least weekly contact for the first three months of release. The field agents assigned to MPRI cases will eventually move toward more “community supervision” that allows them to supervise probationers or parolees in the community – and the neighborhoods - where they live. As parole agents become more familiar with the MPRI process and engage in dedicated training on improved “case management” as opposed to “case supervision”, the agents will facilitate compliance by recognizing that people under supervision will require an adjustment period, and address the issues that this period poses.

One of the major “cultural changes” that needs to be managed within the parole supervision process is more effective leveraging of the community-based network to assist with the implementation of the supervision strategy, and the periodic consultation with family and community members to determine their assessment of the person’s adjustment to the home and/or neighborhood. This is critical as part of the process to assess periodically the extent to which the individual’s transition into the community is proceeding successfully and the extent to which it may be necessary to modify the supervision plan accordingly. Explicit discussion by the Transition Team of the community supervision strategy – and the degree to which these points will be considered – is an essential step in the Prison In-Reach and TAP2 process. Finally, as a result of the local comprehensive planning process, greater coordination of the activities of local law enforcement and field staff is expected.

***Policy Statement 27 regarding Maintaining Continuity of Care: Facilitate former prisoners’ sustained engagement in treatment, mental health and supportive health services, and stable housing.***

Special training is needed for field agents to understand—and respond effectively to—the special needs of former prisoners with mental illness. One of the recommendations under this policy statement that needs to be implemented is to ensure that all field agents know how to monitor people with substance abuse issues and how to engage former prisoners in treatment, where appropriate. In terms of health care, there needs to be improved coordination of physical health services for individuals with special health needs and these needs should be documented in the TAP2. At the state level, the State Policy Team will be determining the potential to implement policies and programs that prevent former prisoners from entering emergency shelters or otherwise becoming homeless upon release as they attempt to foster stability in housing.

### **Community Involvement in the MPRI Process and the Role of the Community Coordinator**

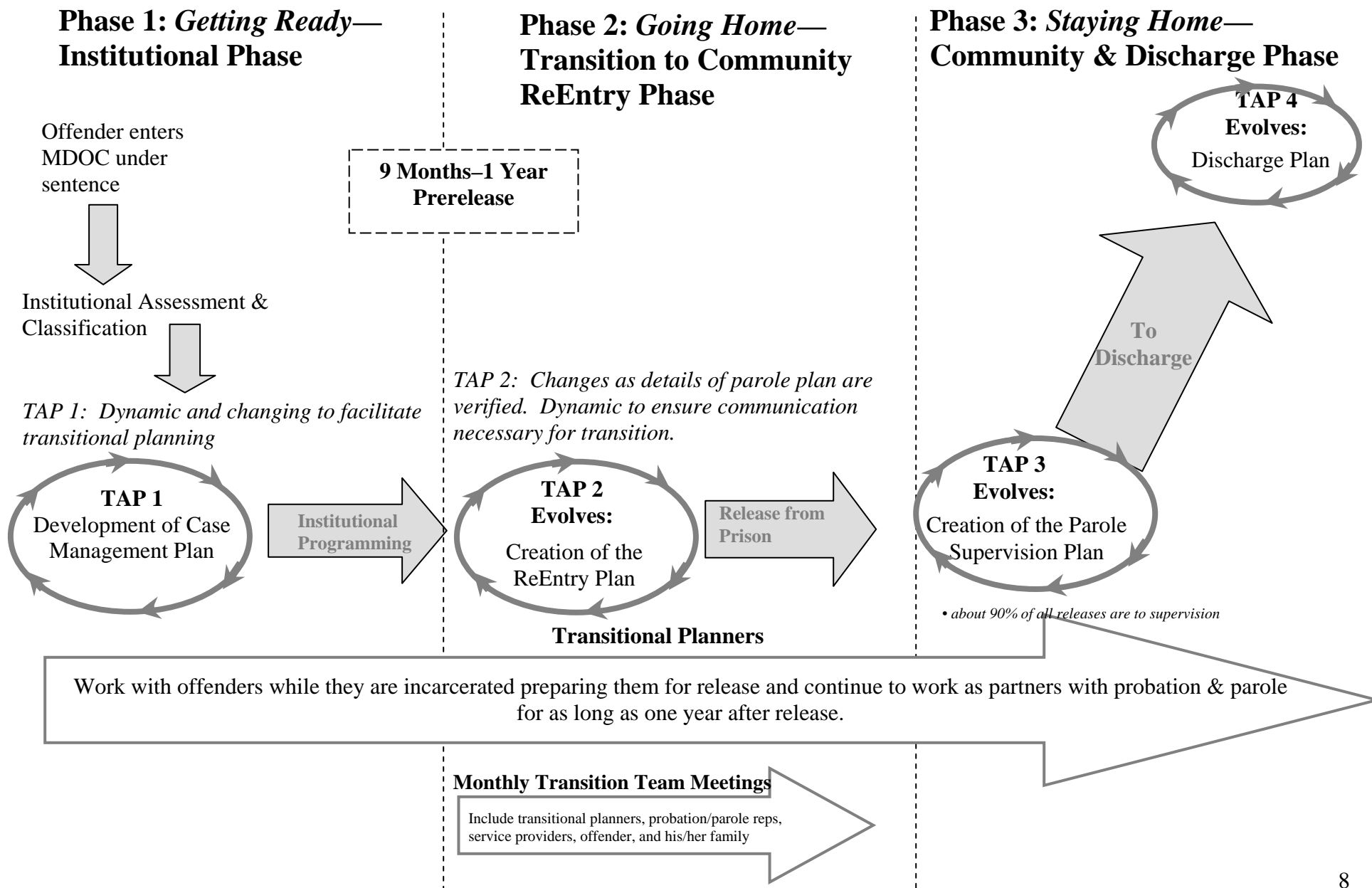
It is clear then, that each of the major decision points for improved prisoner re-entry under the MPRI Model must involve community input and collaboration. Without local community involvement, the process would be viewed as “top down” and undoubtedly miss the opportunities for local expertise and experience at the ground level where service delivery must be focused. The primary role of the MPRI Community Coordinator is to be the “point person” to coordinate the community’s input so that the key local stakeholders have enhanced capability to adjust their processes accordingly and have in place a

communications system to make certain everyone is clear about the process and has a voice in its development. The primary tasks of the Community Coordinator include:

- *Task 1.* The Community Coordinator will be responsible for making certain the information from the first Transition Accountability Plan (TAP1) is in the hands of the local MPRI Steering Team. (Pending implementation of Phase I)
- *Task 2.* The Community Coordinator will be responsible for making certain that the Targeted or Earliest Release Date and status of the offender's movement to the facility nearest his or her city of return is communicated to the local Steering Team and the local Transition Team.
- *Task 3.* The Community Coordinator will be responsible for ensuring that the local field agent coordinates the logistics for the interaction of the Transition Team and the local prison and for the convening and facilitation of local Team meetings to develop the TAPs.
- *Task 4.* Since the Community Coordinators will be acting as staff for the local Steering Teams and their ReEntry Councils, one of their many responsibilities will be to coordinate the planning and implementation of the fourth and final TAP (TAP4: The Discharge TAP) that will be the "hand off" of the parolee's case to responsible parties in the community who will continue providing services and guidance to the ex-offender.

# Transition Accountability Plan

## MPRI Process Flowchart



## **The MPRI Model Policy Statements and Recommendations** **Transition Accountability Plans and the Importance of Prison In-Reach**

***Policy Statement 19: Housing - Facilitate a person's access to stable housing upon his or her re-entry into the community.***

**Recommendations:**

- A.** Ensure that transition planners, working with community-based organizations, are familiar with the full range of housing options available in each community and maintain lists or inventories of available housing.
- B.** Determine on an individualized basis the particular housing needs for each person released from prison or jail.
- C.** Evaluate the feasibility, safety, and appropriateness of an individual living with family members after his or her release from prison or jail.
- D.** Ensure that family violence risks are recognized and addressed in the housing plan of any person whose return to the community may pose a risk to the individual or to his or her family or partner.
- E.** Identify the appropriate housing option for each incarcerated individual well in advance of release.
- F.** Educate prisoners about strategies for finding and maintaining housing in the community, and teach them about their legal rights as tenants in the private rental market.
- G.** Provide individuals who are entering the private rental market—and who demonstrate that they are without adequate resources to pay rent—with small stipends and/or housing assistance for the period immediately after release.
- H.** Develop “re-entry housing,” to meet the specific and unique needs of people released from prison or jail.
- I.** Encourage private sector or nonprofit housing developers or community-based organizations to develop housing accessible to people leaving prison or jail.
- J.** Consider individuals leaving prison or jail who have histories of homelessness as part of the homeless priority population, to facilitate their access to supportive housing made available under the McKinney-Vento Act.

***Policy Statement 20: Planning Continuity of Care - Prepare community-based health and treatment providers, prior to the release of an individual, to receive that person and to ensure that he or she receives uninterrupted services and supports upon his or her return community.***

**Recommendations:**

- A.** Prepare a summary health record containing information about important medical problems, prior diagnostic studies, allergies, and medications for each person released from prison or jail prior to his or her release. **PENDING**
- B.** Connect prisoners to treatment and health care providers in the community prior to their release to prevent gaps in treatment and services.
- C.** Provide prisoners receiving medications with a sufficient interim supply of essential medications upon their discharge into the community.
- D.** Educate people in prison and jail about continuity of care and provide them with the summary health record and other important medical records prior to discharge.

***Policy Statement 21: Creation of Employment Opportunities - Promote, where appropriate, the employment of people released from prison and jail, and facilitate the creation of job opportunities for this population that will benefit communities.***

**Recommendations:**

- A. Educate employers about financial incentives, such as the Federal Bonding Program, Work Opportunity Tax Credit, Welfare-to-Work programs, and first-source agreements, which make a person who was released from prison a more appealing prospective employee.
- B. Determine which industries and employers are willing to hire people with criminal records and encourage job development and placement in those sectors.
- C. Review employment laws that affect the employment of people based on criminal history, and eliminate those provisions that are not directly linked to improving public safety.
- D. Promote individualized decisions about hiring instead of blanket bans and provide documented means for people with convictions to demonstrate rehabilitation.
- E. Use community corrections officers and third-party intermediaries to assist employers with the supervision and management of people released from prison or jail.
- F. Identify community service opportunities and internships for people released from prison or jail who cannot find work so that they can acquire real work experience and on-the-job training.

***Policy Statement 22: Workforce development and the transition plan - Connect inmates to employment, including supportive employment and employment services, before their release the community.***

**Recommendations:**

- A. Initiate job searches before people in prison or jail are released using community-based workforce development resources.
- B. Encourage employers to visit the correctional facility to meet with prospective employees before release.
- C. Engage community members and community-based services to act as intermediaries between employers and job-seeking individuals.
- D. Provide individuals, upon their release from prison or jail, with written information about their prospective employers or community employment service providers and official documentation of their skills and experience, including widely accepted credentials and/or letters of recommendation.

***Policy Statement 23: Victims, Families, and Communities - Prepare family members, victims, and relevant community members for the released individual's return to the community, and provide them with protection, counseling, services and support, as needed and appropriate.***

**Recommendations:**

- A. Provide notification and appropriate information to victims concerning the prisoner's release and re-entry process.
- B. Offer counseling and support to crime victims preparing for the return of an individual to the community.
- C. Ensure that family members receive adequate notification and information regarding the prisoner's impending release.
- D. Consider the needs and strengths of the individual's family and then build community networks to provide counseling, safety planning, and other services to help the family cope with the emotional, financial, and interpersonal issues surrounding the individual's return.
- E. Create policies for child-support debt management and collection that encourage payment and family stability, and engage family members in creating a viable support strategy.
- F. Ensure timely and appropriate notification of key representatives of the community.

***Policy Statement 24: Identification and Benefits - Ensure that individuals exit prison or jail with appropriate forms of identification and that those eligible for public benefits receive those benefits immediately upon their release from prison or jail.***

**Recommendations:**

- A. Ensure interagency collaboration to effectively screen inmates for eligibility for TANF, Medicaid, supplemental security income, food stamps, and other benefits, and to facilitate successful pre-release application for these benefits.
- B. Assess individuals in prison or jail for eligibility for veterans' benefits and services, and ensure access to those benefits for eligible individuals.
- C. Help inmates identify and apply for appropriate benefits and identification as part of their transition plan.
- D. Ensure that documents issued by departments of corrections are accepted as valid identification by other agencies.
- E. Improve collaboration among agencies serving individuals reentering the community.
- F. Ensure timely access to Medicaid after release for eligible individuals by suspending, instead of terminating, Medicaid benefits during incarceration.
- G. Facilitate access to "nonrecurrent" TANF benefits by individuals with criminal records who are re-entering the community.
- H. Adopt a narrow definition of "in violation of a condition of parole/probation" for the purposes of TANF, food stamps, SSI & public housing.
- I. Adopt balanced admission and eviction policies for public housing that consider individual circumstances.
- J. Ensure continued Medicaid coverage for TANF families with parents who are released from prison or jail.

***Policy Statement 25: Design of Supervision Strategy - Review and prioritize what the releasing authority has established as terms and conditions of release and develop a supervision strategy that corresponds to the resources available to the supervising agency, reflects the likelihood of recidivism, and employs incentives to encourage compliance with the conditions of release.***

**Recommendations:**

- A. Engage community members, including representatives from community corrections, law enforcement, and community-based organizations, to serve on a transition team with corrections staff, and charge the team with the development of a comprehensive supervision strategy.
- B. Apply the information from risk- and needs-assessment instruments administered prior to the release decision, and re-assess inmates if necessary to determine appropriate supervision strategies.
- C. Assign a supervision officer to each individual well before the date of his or her release and engage the officer on the transition planning team.
- D. Seek information from, and promote cooperation with, law enforcement in the jurisdiction to which an individual will return before his or her release.
- E. Transfer state prison inmates as the release date approaches (and as appropriate and feasible) to correctional facilities nearest to the community to which the individual will return.
- F. Provide each individual before release with a written copy of his or her terms and conditions of release and transition plan and explain them clearly, ensuring that he or she understands them.

***Policy Statement 26: Implementation of Supervision Strategy - Concentrate community supervision resources on the period immediately following the person's release from prison or jail, and adjust supervision strategies as the needs of the person released, the victim, the community, and the family change.***

**Recommendations:**

- A. Focus supervision resources on the period directly following release.
- B. Ensure contact between the supervision officer and probationer/parolee corresponds to level of risk presented.
- C. Supervise probationers or parolees in the community where they live.
- D. Coordinate the activities of local law enforcement and probation and parole agencies.
- E. Leverage community-based networks to assist with the implementation of the supervision strategy, and consult family and community members regularly to determine their assessment of the person's adjustment to the home and/or neighborhood.
- F. Assess periodically the extent to which the individual's transition into the community is proceeding successfully and modify the supervision plan accordingly.
- G. Facilitate compliance by recognizing that people under supervision will require an adjustment period, and address the issues that this period poses.

***Policy Statement 27: Maintaining Continuity of Care - Facilitate releasees' sustained engagement in treatment, mental health and supportive health services, and stable housing.***

**Recommendations:**

- A. Train community corrections officers to understand—and respond effectively to—the special needs of individuals with mental illness on probation or parole.
- B. Ensure that all community supervision officers know how to monitor people with substance abuse issues and how to engage probationers and parolees in treatment, where appropriate.
- C. Coordinate physical health services for individuals with special health needs.
- D. Implement policies and programs that prevent people leaving prison or jail from entering emergency shelters or otherwise becoming homeless.
- E. Foster stability in housing for individuals released to the community.

**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS**  
**MPRI Prison In-Reach and Phase I and Phase II TAP Development**

**Procedures for the Prison In-Reach Process**

**References/Appendices:**

The MPRI Model – Policy Statements and Recommendations  
PD 06.06.115 Intensive Parole Reentry Program  
PD 03.02.100 Michigan Prisoner Reentry Initiative  
FOA 2005-11 Prison Reentry Programs  
FOA 20051-15 IRI Pre-parole Investigation for Reunification Session  
OP FOA 06.04.100 Orientation for Probationers and Parolees  
OP 06.05.130 Offender Referral to Community Resource Programs  
PD 06.04.130 Supervision of Probationers and Parolees

1. The offender is selected to participate in the MPRI process and transferred to an MPRI designated correctional facility. This facility may be an Intensive Reentry Unit (IRU) at either the Jackson Cooper Street Facility for males, or Huron Valley Women's Facility for females, or at an MPRI designated Pilot Site correctional facility nearest the prisoner's community of release.
2. The RUM/ARUS at the receiving CFA facility meets with the offender to review and complete a MPRI Pre-Interview Packet. This is a 4-page packet that an information cover sheet that explains the Transitional Accountability Plan (TAP2) to the prisoner, a second page that requires the prisoner to indicated updated parole placement residence information, and two additional pages containing questions to be answered by the prisoner relating to; Essential Documents, Financial and Support Services, and Health. The RUM / ARUS may give this document to the offender for completion, but it is to be returned to the RUM / ARUS for sharing with the Reentry Agent and inclusion in the TAP2.
3. At both the IRU locations (Cooper St. / Huron Valley Women's), and the MPRI CFA Pilot Site facilities the assigned Reentry Agent conducts an interview with the offender to compile current information regarding the home placement plan and completes the CFJ-457 Parole Placement form. The IRU/Pilot Site Reentry Agent ensures that all required Release of Information forms are reviewed with and signed by the offender
4. The IRU/Pilot Site Reentry Agent sends an email to the Parole Release Unit (PRU) notifying the PRU of the parole placement plan information.
5. Within approximately 30 days after the offender's arrival at the IRU or the MPRI Pilot Site Facility, the IRU/Pilot Site Reentry Agent in conjunction with the RUM, ARUS, or other designated CFA staff, interviews the offender to begin development of the Transition Accountability Plan (TAP2) CSJ-391.

6. PRU generates a request for the PPI and makes the assignment to the Field Agent.
7. The IRU/Pilot Site Reentry Agent enters appropriate notation within OMNI [CONTRACT MANAGEMENT], that the offender has been enrolled into the MPRI program. The preliminary TAP2 information is entered into OMNI by the IRU/Pilot Site Reentry Agent in accordance with lead/case management responsibilities during the institutional phase as noted in the MPRI Model. This preliminary information is derived from the prisoner's file on hand at the facility. The completion of the TAP2 with full participation by the ARUM/ARUS, the IRU/Pilot Site Reentry Agent, and the Pilot Site Transition Team is a multi-faceted process that takes place over the full time that the prisoner is engaged in the MPRI Phase II activities while in prison.
8. The IRU/Pilot Site Reentry Agent sends an e-mail notification to the assigned Field Agent, Supervisor, Program Manager, FOA Steering Team Co-chair, and MPRI Wayne County Community Coordinator, that the preliminary TAP2 information is available in OMNI for review requesting review and input as part of the on-going Prison In-Reach and TAP2 development process.
9. The Field Agent receives e-mail notification from the Reentry Agent, reviews the information contained in the preliminary TAP2 and consults with his/her Supervisor. The Field Agent communicates with the IRU/Pilot Site Reentry Agent and/or CFA staff for clarification as needed, regarding any information contained on the preliminary TAP2.
10. The Field Agent contacts the MPRI Pilot Site Community Coordinator to identify existing Transition Team community resources to arrange services based on the identifiable need areas as indicated in the offender's preliminary TAP2, to fully develop the TAP2 and to assist the prisoner with successful reentry as part of the Prison In-Reach process. The field agent will work in conjunction with the MPRI Pilot Site Community Coordinator to identify community agencies and service providers that will be added to the prisoner's Transition Team. Information contained in the TAP2 will be shared by the Field Agent with the MPRI Pilot Site Community Coordinator and all identified Transition Team community agencies and service providers. The sharing of TAP2 information is important to allow for continuous review and input from all members of the Transition Team.
11. The Field Agent will make appropriate OMNI entries to update the TAP2 identifying the Transition Team community agencies and service providers under each identifiable offender need area as contained on the TAP2. If the offender is not from a pilot site county the IRU/Pilot Site Reentry Agent will assist the Field Agent in making appropriate referrals and both agents will document the referral information in OMNI on the TAP2 as it is developed. Currently only the Reentry Agent and/or the Field Agent will make modifications to the TAP2 that is contained in OMNI. Therefore, it is important for all members of the offender's Transition Team to communicate with the IRU/Pilot Site Reentry Agent, or the Field Agent regarding any OMNI related TAP2 updates.
12. The Field Agent consults with his/her Supervisor, Program Manager, and the MPRI Pilot Site Community Coordinator to assemble the Transition Team and schedule a Prison In-Reach meeting with the prisoner. The MPRI Pilot Site Community Coordinator consults with the Steering Team Co-Chairs as needed, and schedules the Transition Team meeting with the

MPRI CFA Facility Coordinator. (It is recommended that a standing date(s) be established by CFA facility staff for weekly in-reach meetings.) An e-mail notification indicating the date, time and / location of the Prison In-Reach meeting is sent by the MPRI Pilot Site Community Coordinator to; CFA staff (RUM/ARUS), Reentry Agent, Field Agent, and all community agencies/service providers that are members of the Transition Team who have been identified on the preliminary TAP2 and will help finalize the TAP2 to facilitate the reintegration of the offender into the community.

NOTE: The prison in-reach process may also be successfully achieved through the use of video-conferencing when available.

13. The IRU/Pilot Site Reentry Agent will facilitate the prison in-reach Transition Team meeting with the offender. Recommendations, referrals and service provider placement/enrollment plans, developed by the Transition Team resulting from prison in-reach Transition Team meeting with the offender will be entered in OMNI by the Reentry Agent and provide the basis for the updated TAP2.
14. If a “Reunification Session” is requested and agreed to for the identified offender during the PPI process, a reunification meeting will be scheduled by contacting the CFA MPRI Facility Contact Person, or the IRU/Pilot Site Reentry Agent. The IRU / Pilot Site Reentry Agent will facilitate the reunification meeting in accordance with FOA 2005-15 IRU Pre-parole Investigation for Reunification Session.
15. At any time while the offender is still incarcerated, if additional offender needs are identified after the TAP2 is updated, the IRU / Pilot Site Reentry Agent will contact the Field Agent, and/or the MPRI Pilot Site Community Coordinator to help identify community resources and service providers to address the additional need(s). The MPRI Pilot Site Community Coordinator, Field Agent, and community agency/service provider members of the offender’s Transition Team will determine the best method for addressing changes to the updated TAP2 after the initial prison in-reach session with the offender has occurred. Options may include: 1) re-scheduling another Prison In-Reach meeting with the offender, and/or 2) direct referral by the Field Agent to an existing community service provider with the ability/capacity to address the newly discovered need area.
16. The Reentry Agent will enter specific information on the updated TAP2 into OMNI.
17. The Reentry Agent reviews the content of the TAP2 with the offender up to 30 days prior to his/her actual parole release date release in order to finalize the TAP2 and to reaffirm the offender’s commitment to the reentry strategy as outlined in the final TAP2. The Reentry Agent sends an e-mail notification the Field Agent and the MPRI Pilot Site Community Coordinator indicating the TAP2 is finalized and ready to be shared with identified members of the Transition Team.
18. The CFA staff (RUM/ARUS) review the TAP2 Parole Plan, Parole Order and any special instructions with the offender prior to institutional release.

19. The offender is released from the institution on a Monday – Thursday with instructions to immediately report to the Field Agent at the local parole office. Arrangements must be made for transportation of the prisoner to the local parole office.
20. Upon arrival of the offender at the local parole office, the Parole Field Agent conducts an Initial Orientation with the offender in accordance with OP FOA 06.04.100 Orientation for Probationers and Parolees. This orientation will also include a complete review of the offender’s Transition Accountability Plan -TAP2 and the confirming of all appointments, scheduled treatment and community placements. Members of the Transition Team – and/or mentors of the former prisoner - may also be invited to the initial orientation meeting with offender, or any future meetings during the course of community supervision, as a means to support/motivate the offender, discuss areas of concern and to make adjustments to the TAP. This orientation and review creates the framework to begin development of the TAP3. The TAP3 provides an outline of the supervision and services the former prisoner will experience in the community. At this point the Field Agent continues to lead the Transition Team during the reentry and supervision phase.
21. All MPRI and IRU cases placed under parole supervision shall be initially placed under maximum supervision as a “special supervision project” in accordance with PD 06.04.130 Supervision of Probationers and Parolees for a period of up to 90 days.
22. While under supervision in the community regular and timely written updates are provided by community agencies and service provider members of the Transition Team to the Field Agent. The Field Agent documents activities in OMNI case notes and continues to refine the TAP3 as needed.

NOTE: An Internet based case note system is being planned that will allow for a communal exchange of the case note history among all members of the Transition Team. Until such a system is operational, community agencies and service providers are encouraged to use e-mail to exchange information and provide written reports to the Field Agent as required.

(12/29/2005 DRAFT)