

THE CLEARINGHOUSE FOR EX-OFFENDERS

OF

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

EXEMPLARY PROJECT VALIDATION REPORT

Submitted to:

Mrs. Mary Ann Beck  
Technology Transfer Division  
National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice  
Law Enforcement Assistance Administration  
U. S. Department of Justice  
Washington, DC 20530

Submitted by:

Urban and Rural Systems Associates  
Pier 1 1/2  
San Francisco, California 94111

April 1974

## C O N T E N T S .

1.0	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Background	1
1.2	Source of Information	1
1.3	Project Summary	3
1.3.1	Program Concept	3
1.3.2	The Clearinghouse's Structure	4
1.3.3	The Clearinghouse's Location	8
1.3.4	The Clearinghouse's Funding	8
1.3.5	The Clearinghouse's Operational Approach	9
1.3.5.1	Job Identification and Development	9
1.3.5.2	Referral and Intake	10
1.3.5.3	Matching Ex-Offenders with Jobs or Training	12
1.3.6	The Clearinghouse's Developmental History	17
2.0	FINDINGS ON THE VALIDATION STUDY	19
2.1	Goal Achievement and Effectiveness	19
2.1.1	Effectiveness in Reaching the Target Population	20
2.1.2	Effectiveness of the Clearinghouse's Services	21
2.1.3	Effectiveness in Achieving Desired Impact on Ex-Offenders	27
2.2	Measurability	27
2.3	Efficiency	28
2.4	Replicability	30
2.4.1	Extent of Need	31
2.4.2	The Clearinghouse's Organizational Structure	32
2.4.3	The Clearinghouse's Location and Facility	33
2.4.4	The Clearinghouse's Staff	33
2.4.5	The Clearinghouse's Methods	33
2.5	Accessibility	34
3.0	STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES	35
3.1	Strengths	35
3.2	Weaknesses	36
3.3	General Comments	
4.0	RECOMMENDED DOCUMENTATION	38

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Exemplary Projects Program of the National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice is designed to identify and document outstanding criminal justice programs across the country which are suitable for replication. The Clearinghouse for Ex-Offenders in Louisville, Kentucky has been nominated for designation as an Exemplary Project.

At the request of NILECJ, Urban and Rural Systems Associates (URSA) conducted a validation study of the Clearinghouse. This report presents the findings resulting from that visit and is intended to provide the Exemplary Projects Advisory Board with information designed to help the Board assess the extent to which the Clearinghouse meets the Exemplary Project Screening criteria. Findings are discussed in Section 2.0 of this report.

1.2 Sources of Information

The information on which this report is based was secured through a review and analysis of all available documentation on the Clearinghouse and through a series of interviews and observations conducted on-site between 1 April and 3 April 1974. Prior to the site visit, URSA staff contacted the Commonwealth of Kentucky's Department of Justice by telephone to discuss the Clearinghouse and to schedule the on-site visit. The Secretary of the Department of Justice requested that URSA coordinate the on-site visit through the Kentucky Crime Commission--the state planning agency for Kentucky.

At the request of NILECJ, URSA also contacted the American Bar Association's National Clearinghouse on Offender Employment Restrictions before the site visit to obtain information about the Clearinghouse for Ex-Offenders and other employment programs for ex-offenders.

The URSA site visit team was composed of Mr. David Boorkman and Mr. Noel Day, two of URSA's partners.

The documents reviewed by the URSA team prior to the on-site visit included:

1. The Clearinghouse's Exemplary Project Application (January 1974).

2. The Annual Report of the Clearinghouse (October 1972-September 1973).
3. Publications of ABA's National Clearinghouse on Offender Employment Restrictions, including the newsletter, "Offender Employment Review," various pamphlets, and a sample compendium of statutory conditions affecting licensing for ex-offenders in one state.
4. Various newspaper clippings describing the Clearinghouse.

During the on-site visit, the URSA team conducted interviews with Clearinghouse staff; staff of related and associated criminal justice agencies and employment programs; Clearinghouse clients, employers, and several community organizations and agencies.

Clearinghouse staff members who were interviewed included:

- The Project Director;
- The receptionist/secretary; and
- Employment counselors.

Informal interviews were conducted with several clients as they waited to see their counselor or following sessions with counselors. In addition, the URSA team was able to observe a counseling session, a job search using the State Employment Services, microfiche, "Job Bank," and counselors making job development contacts in person and by telephone.

Staff members of associated agencies and programs who were interviewed included:

- Coordinator of the Volunteers in Corrections program under the Bureau of Corrections in Jefferson County;
- the Associate Director of Treatment, other staff members and the Vocational Job Specialist of Dismas House, a cooperating agency;
- the Manager of Manpower Services, Kentucky Department of Economic Security;
- the Corrections Administrator, Bureau of Corrections, Division of Probation and Parole;
- the Community Programs Officer, U.S. Bureau of Prisons;

--the Chief Probation Officer, U.S. District Court, Western District of Kentucky; and,

--the Acting Director of State Parole and various State Parole Officers and Probation Officers.

The URSA team also contacted several employers by telephone following a random search of the Clearinghouse file on employers, and conducted personal interviews with four employers--three private sector employers and one public agency. In addition, during the on-site visit, the URSA team collected samples of all forms used by the Clearinghouse, pamphlets and other literature on corrections in Kentucky and on the State Employment Service, and relevant policy and procedural memorandums. Finally, the URSA team conducted a review of closed cases using random sampling techniques.

### 1.3 Project Summary

#### 1.3.1 Program Concept

The Clearinghouse's program is designed to provide for a coordinated approach to job placement for ex-offenders and to facilitate the delivery of any ancillary services needed by the ex-offender. Although it was not stated explicitly in either the literature on the Clearinghouse that URSA reviewed prior to the on-site visit or by the staff during on-site interviews, it is clear that the Ex-Offenders Clearinghouse is programmatically based on two assumptions:

1. That stable, productive and satisfying employment and assistance in coping with other social, health, and personal problems are key links in encouraging law abiding behavior and preventing recidivism; and,
2. That this effort must be carefully and consciously coordinated in order to most efficiently use scarce resources, and to decrease the alienation and discouragement that occurs when ex-offenders are unsuccessful in finding appropriate employment and feel that they are being needlessly shuttled from one agency to another.

In response to this theoretical position, the Clearinghouse has brought together in one centralized location the services of a variety of agencies and organizations concerned with job placement, and with rehabilitative and

correctional services for ex-offenders. The agencies presently involved include:

- The Kentucky State Department of Economic Security, Office of Employment Services (the state employment service);
- The State Department of Education, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (the state vocational rehabilitation agency);
- The Kentucky Department of Justice, Bureau of Corrections, Division of Probation and Parole;
- The U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Bureau of Prisons; and,
- Dismas House of Louisville--a private nonprofit organization.

These agencies, working together, and in conjunction with other agencies like the U.S. District Courts Probation Office for the Western District of Kentucky, provide job development and placement services; bonding, purchase of work clothes and tools, tuition payments, medical and psychological screenings, and other vocational rehabilitation services; temporary housing and transportation assistance; and referrals--when appropriate to training programs or to various treatment oriented direct service agencies.

### 1.3.2 The Clearinghouse's Structure

The Ex-Offenders Clearinghouse is located in the State Bureau of Corrections, Division of Probation and Parole under the Kentucky Department of Justice. Figure 1.3-A depicts the location of the Division of Probation and Parole in the overall state organization and Figure 1.3-B depicts the relationship of the Ex-Offenders Clearinghouse to the Division of Probation and Parole. The Director of the Clearinghouse is responsible to the Corrections Administration of the Division of Probation and Parole.

Internally, the Clearinghouse has a relatively simple organizational structure--a Project Director with administrative support from a Secretary/ Receptionist, and a staff of full-time and part-time counselors. In addition to his administrative duties, the Project Director also serves as a counselor and has an active caseload. Four of the seven counselors are permanent full-time staff members--two of these full-time counselors were hired by the Clearinghouse and are paid out of the project's grant from

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE ORGANIZATION CHART

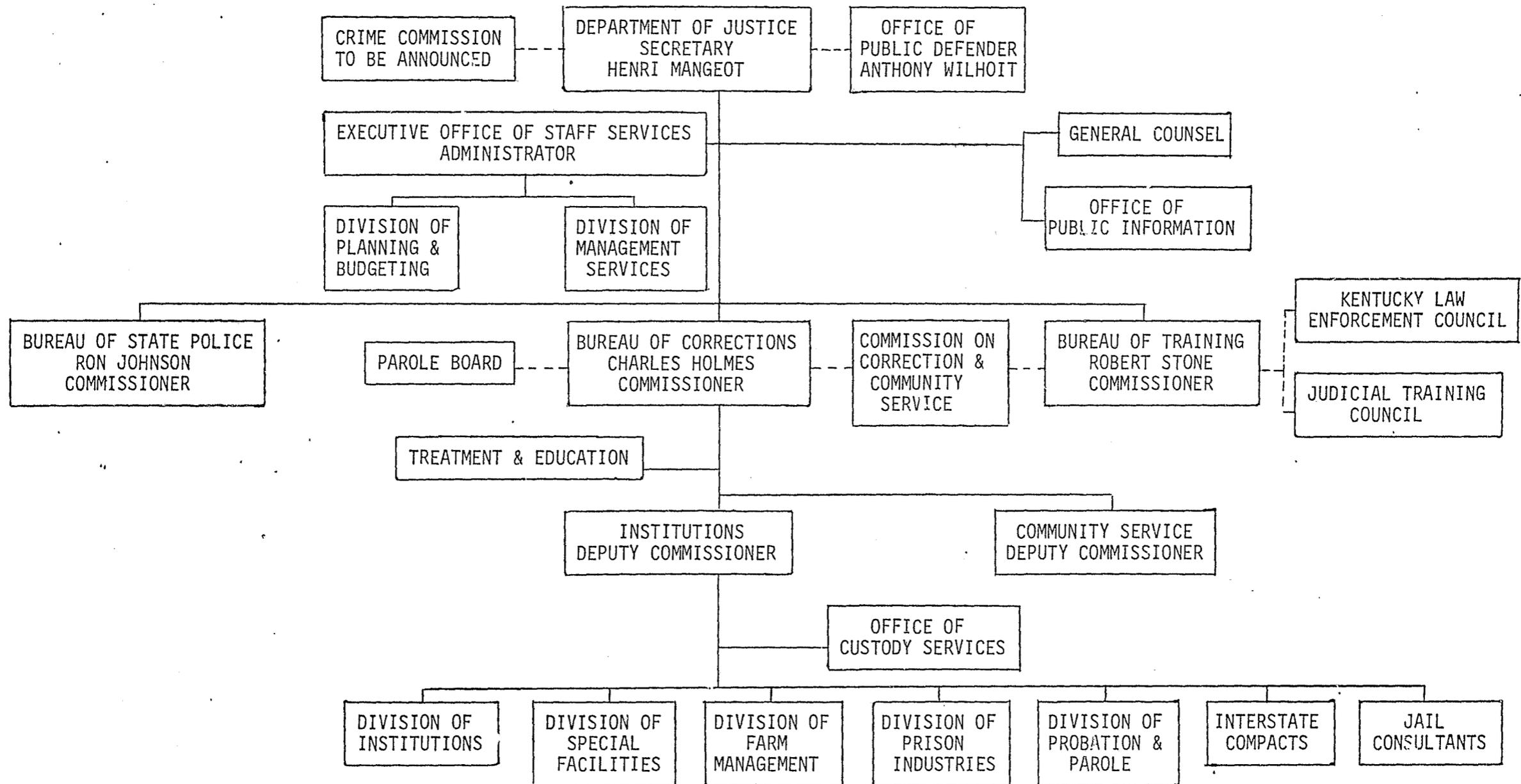
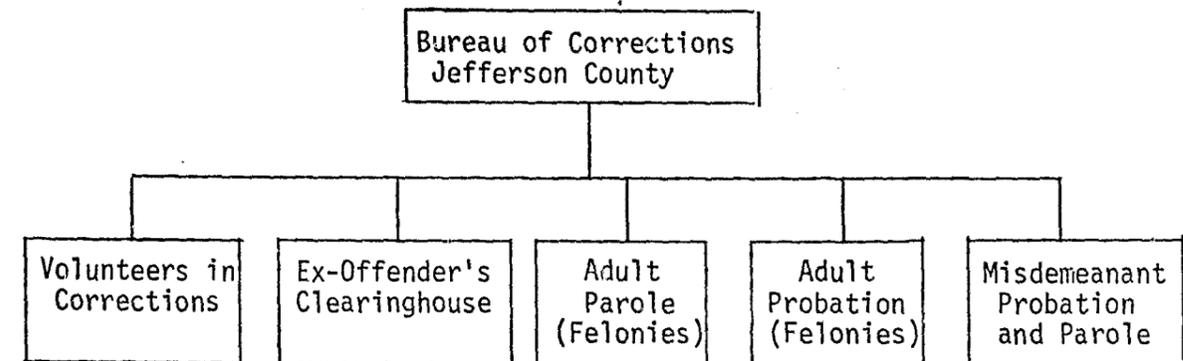


Figure 1.3-A



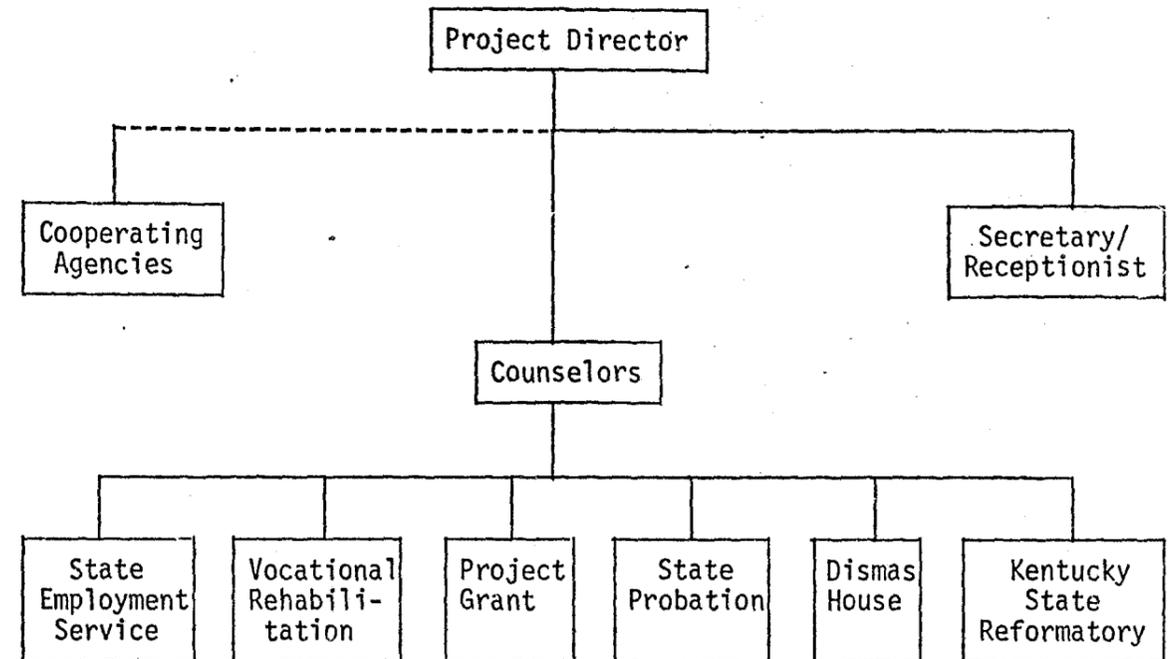
Figure 1.3-B



LEAA and the other two permanent full-time staff were assigned to the Clearinghouse by the State's Division of Probation and Parole, and by the State Employment Service. Both are paid by their own agencies. The three part-time counselors are also paid by other agencies, but assigned to work at or in close conjunction with the Clearinghouse. One of the part-time counselors, for instance, is one of the Pre-Release Officers at the Kentucky State Reformatory and he spends two days a week at the Clearinghouse. Another part-time counselor who spends one day a week at the Clearinghouse is on the full-time staff of State's Vocational Rehabilitation Agency. The third part-time counselor works at Dismas House and is in daily contact with the Clearinghouse, but spends little time there physically.

Figure 1.3-C schematically depicts the internal structure of the Clearinghouse and the cooperating agencies. The relationship that each of the cooperating agencies has with the Clearinghouse is somewhat different in terms of the kinds of contributions the agencies make to the Clearinghouse and the kinds of benefits they derive from their association with the Clearinghouse. The State Employment Services, for example, contributes both the services of a full-time counselor and access to the statewide computerized "job bank"--a system for analyzing and displaying on microfiche data on job availability, qualifications, location, pay scales, and other relevant data. All of the counselors at the Clearinghouse have access to and draw upon the "job bank" and part of their process of matching particular ex-offenders with suitable jobs. In return, the State Employment

Figure 1.3-C



Service gets credit for all job placements made by the Clearinghouse--a significant bureaucratic reward.

The Vocational Rehabilitation Agency brings to the Clearinghouse a variety of other resources that are designed to help counselors diagnose needs and employment related problems of the ex-offenders and to provide direct assistance to the ex-offenders in overcoming obstacles to employment. The resources that the counselor from the State's Vocational Rehabilitation Agency can bring to bear include: medical, dental, and psychological screenings and treatment; provision of specialized work tools and work clothes (e.g., mechanics tools, welders hood, etc.); "bonding" for jobs; initial maintenance (e.g., prior to first pay check); and tuition and book allowances, etc. for ex-offenders enrolled full-time in courses leading to an Associate of Arts degree or Bachelor of Arts degree. Ex-offenders provided with these services are credited to the State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency.

The other agencies involved in the Clearinghouse, on the other hand, essentially serve as liaisons between the Clearinghouse and particular groups of ex-offenders or offenders who are still institutionalized. For those agencies, the Clearinghouse is a major resource for identifying jobs for their constituencies--ex-offenders who are short-term residents at Dismas House, and in the case of the Kentucky State Reformatory and other institutions, offenders who have "made parole" but need a job prior to release.

### 1.3.3 The Clearinghouse's Location

The Clearinghouse is located in office space in a commercial building in downtown Louisville. The location is fairly accessible by public transportation even though the downtown area runs along the river at the western edge of the city.

The Clearinghouse is also located in close proximity to some of the cooperating agencies--it is less than a mile from Dismas House, several blocks from the State Employment Service, and the State Parole Office, and it is located in the same building as the State Probation Office. The geographic proximity of the Clearinghouse to these agencies is functionally important since ex-offenders referred to the Clearinghouse by one of these other agencies can enroll in the Clearinghouse immediately and without undue inconvenience. And, in fact, the Clearinghouse is busiest on those days when parolees and probationers are required to check in with their parole or probation supervisors.

### 1.3.4 The Clearinghouse's Funding

The Clearinghouse's current grant from the SPA, the Kentucky Crime Commission, is for the 14 month period from 1 May 1973 to 30 June 1974. The grant total is \$59,000. Of the total, approximately \$1,500 was allocated for equipment and other nonrecurring "start-up" expenses. The remaining \$57,500 annualizes at a rate of \$49,300, including personnel, travel, rent, and operating expenses (e.g., mailings, telephone, etc.). Personnel costs, however, include salaries and fringe benefits for four persons only--the Project Director, the Secretary/Receptionist, and two full-time counselors. If the cost of the personnel "contributed" by the cooperating agencies was "valued" in dollar terms, the actual operating costs of the Clearinghouse would be between \$85,000 and \$100,000 per year.

### 1.3.5 The Clearinghouse's Operational Approach

There are three major components in the Clearinghouse's approach:

1. Identifying available jobs or employment related training programs;
2. Identifying ex-offenders who need or want employment or training; and,
3. Matching the ex-offenders with appropriate jobs or training opportunities and providing them with whatever assistance is required to enable stable and productive employment.

#### 1.3.5.1 Job Identification and Development

There are two general methods that the Clearinghouse uses in identifying suitable employment opportunities for ex-offenders. To date, the major source of jobs for the Clearinghouse has been the computerized microfilm "job bank" operated by the State Employment Service. A listing of jobs is made available to the Clearinghouse everyday through the Employment Service staff person who is assigned to the Clearinghouse. Each listing includes information on the type of job, location, salaries, and references to duties, training and experiences required, etc.

The other method involves independent job development efforts by the Clearinghouse's staff. Soon after the Clearinghouse began operation, the staff sent out several hundred letters to employers in the Louisville area, explaining the program and soliciting jobs. The letters, in most cases, were followed up by telephone contacts. Where employers expressed interest in a number of cases, personal contacts were made by staff members of the Clearinghouse. In other instances, Clearinghouse staff, staff members in related agencies, and other interested people in Louisville solicited jobs in public agencies as well as private businesses through personal contacts. Finally, Clearinghouse staff regularly reviews the classified advertisements in the local newspapers--particularly in those cases where ex-offenders have specific skills and experience or where they have received training in prison. Staff follows up on these leads by telephone or in person.

The Clearinghouse has an active file of approximately 80 to 90 employers which is reviewed regularly to identify job possibilities.

### 1.3.5.2 Referral and Intake

The status of the ex-offenders served by the Clearinghouse is varied. They include ex-offenders (and some persons with pending cases) who are considered "low risk" and others who are considered to be "higher risks" in terms of employability and in terms of recidivism. The major client groups served by the Clearinghouse are:

- Parolees;
- State and federal probationers;
- "Serve-outs" (ex-offenders who served out their entire sentences);
- Conditional Releases (state) and Mandatory Releases (federal)--(ex-offenders who receive "good time" releases and are subject to supervision by state or federal parole officers for the remainder of their term);
- Deferred prosecution cases (federal) or pending cases and "warrant detainees" (state or local)--(usually cases where prosecution or probation is deferred and contingent on satisfaction of particular conditions);
- Ex-offenders who are no longer under supervision by parole or probation officials.

Ex-offenders are referred to the Clearinghouse by several different sources:

1. Kentucky's State Correctional Institutions. There are five state institutions in Kentucky (a maximum security state prison, two medium security "reformatories"--one for men and one for women, and two minimum security facilities). Each has Pre-Release Officers who help offenders prepare for release. They provide assistance to two groups of ex-offenders. One, the Pre-Release Officers provide information on the Clearinghouse to "serve-outs" and recommend that they register at the Clearinghouse when they are released. In addition, at the Kentucky State Reformatory (KSR)--since it is close to Louisville--the Clearinghouse staff visits the facility and directly provides information and assistance to "short timers."

Two, the Pre-Release Officer at KSR, as noted above, works out of the Clearinghouse's office in Louisville two days a week. The main thrust of his effort there is to identify potential jobs for prisoners who

have received approval of their paroles, but need a job before they can be released. He performs this function for those ex-offenders planning to return to the Louisville area after release from all of the state's correctional institutions. Many of the ex-offenders served in this way never physically enroll in the Clearinghouse.

2. The State Parole Office. Two types of ex-offenders are referred to the Clearinghouse by the state Parole Officer. First, there are parolees who have lost or quit their jobs after release or who want better jobs. Second, ex-offenders who are let out on a "conditioned release."
3. The State Probation Office. Two groups of ex-offenders are referred to the Clearinghouse by the State's Probation Office. One, ex-offenders under standard probation supervision, and two, "pending cases."
4. The Federal Probation and Parole Office. This office refers ex-offenders of the following kinds to the Clearinghouse: "serve-outs" in the federal prisons in Kentucky; parolees from the federal prisons (federal prisoners in Kentucky need only have a "job plan" prior to release on parole); parolees and probationers who have lost or quit their jobs or are seeking better jobs; prisoners let out on "mandatory release;" and pending cases and deferred prosecution cases.
5. The Jefferson County Jail. Ex-offenders released by the Jefferson County Jail and referred to the Clearinghouse are usually either "serve-outs" sentenced for misdemeanors or "warrant detainees."
6. The State Employment Service. Most of the ex-offenders referred by the State Employment Service are not under supervision by parole or probation authorities. In many instances they are not aware of the Clearinghouse or its services prior to the referral.
7. Other Agencies. These agencies that have referred ex-offenders to the Clearinghouse include: Volunteers in Corrections, the Metropolitan Social Service Department (county welfare), the Urban League, the River Region Mental Health program, the Salvation Army, and the Community Drug Abuse Center.

Figure 1.3-D summarizes data on the number and sources of referrals to the Clearinghouse between October 1972 when the Clearinghouse began operations and February 1974.

Figure 1.3-D  
Referral (Data on Sources)

	<u>10/72-9/73</u>	<u>10/73-2/74</u>	<u>Total</u>
State Probation	197	99	296
Parole	238	97	335
Case Pending	8	8	16
Federal Probation	96	20	116
Parole	57	15	72
Case Pending	1	2	3
Deferred Prosecution	7	2	9
Jefferson County Jail	31	5	36
Dismas House	69	40	109
State Correctional Institutions:			
KSK	40	11	51
KCIW	3	3	6
KSP	4	8	12
Frenchburg	9	2	11
Blackburn	9	6	15
Other	1	-	1
Not Under Supervision (Includes Employment Service/Jail/ Serve-Out, New Job Searchers)	<u>136</u>	<u>65</u>	<u>201</u>
Total	906	383	1,289

1.3.5.3 Matching Ex-Offenders with Jobs or Training

Each of the Clearinghouse's counselors is matched with a group of state and federal probation and parole officers who they work with on a regular basis. When one of them refers an ex-offender to the Clearinghouse, the ex-offender is assigned to the appropriate counselor. Any ex-offenders who are referred by a source other than Probation or Parole are assigned to counselors on a rotating basis.

The first meeting with a counselor occurs, in most instances, on the same day that an ex-offender registers with the Clearinghouse--usually within the first hour or two. On those days when the Clearinghouse's registration is particularly heavy, ex-offenders are asked to return the following day. A review of the daily registration forms for the last four months prior to the on-site validation visit revealed that the majority of those ex-offenders who are asked to return the day following initial registration do, in fact, return within three to four days.

Ex-offenders who come into the Clearinghouse on their own or who are referred for services have a variety of employment related needs. Typical needs include:

- Unemployed ex-offenders who are looking for jobs or training;
- Ex-offenders who have a job commitment but need to be bonded;
- Ex-offenders who have jobs but need transportation or financial assistance until they receive their first pay check;
- Ex-offenders who have jobs but need housing or temporary shelter;
- Ex-offenders who need various forms of assistance from the state's Vocational Rehabilitation agency;
- Ex-offenders who are employed, but want skill training; and,
- Ex-offenders who are employed but want to upgrade their employment.

for those who are looking for jobs, and that includes most of the ex-offenders who utilize the Clearinghouse's services--the initial counseling session generally focuses on:

- Assessing the ex-offenders employability in terms of literacy and other basic skills; level of job related skills; orientation to reality in terms of expectations regarding job types, salary levels, and working conditions; and attitudinal sets regarding authority, dependency, etc.
- Assessing the ex-offenders needs and interests, including work history, past employment related problems, interest in training or education, and any potential barriers to employment (financial, physical, psychological, or social).

In addition, the counselor reviews job availability via the "job bank" microfilm and other employment listings and attempts to make an immediate referral in order to demonstrate to the ex-offender that the Clearinghouse is action-oriented and direct in its attempts to provide assistance. In many cases, particularly those with low skill levels and poor or limited work histories, the counselor advises the ex-offender to take any reasonable job offer, even if the wages are low, and to return to the Clearinghouse for assistance in upgrading and finding a better job after a couple of months of stable employment.

During the initial counseling session or subsequent sessions, if it is discovered that an ex-offender needs services other than job placement, he or she is referred to an appropriate agency. The most common agencies involved are the Metropolitan Social Service Department (county welfare), the local regional mental health agency, the State Welfare Agency, the State Employment Services Division of Social Insurance, the Board of Education adult education division, the Louisville Housing Authority, Legal Aid, nonprofit welfare organizations (Volunteers of America, Salvation Army, etc.). Following receipt of services, they may return to the Clearinghouse for additional employment related services.

Those ex-offenders who need aid from the Vocational Rehabilitation Agency are asked to return to the Clearinghouse for an appointment with the staff member assigned to the Clearinghouse by Vocational Rehabilitation. Those services, depending on need, may include: provision of work tools or special work clothes and equipment, training, medical screening and assistance, psychological evaluation and counseling, and tuition assistance for ex-offenders who are enrolled full time in institutions of higher education or in Area Vocational Schools.

Ex-offenders who are interested in and suitable for skill training and development are screened and referred for various training slots, including MDTA, on-the-job training, the local Concentrated Employment Program (CEP), the Area Vocational Schools, and various apprenticeship programs.

Following the initial counseling session, ex-offenders are told to maintain daily contact with the counselor. Most contacts of this type are made

by telephone--ex-offenders call in and the counselors search the "job bank" microfiche or identify job possibilities known to other counselors through the development efforts or other contacts. If the counselor identifies potentially appropriate jobs, the ex-offender is given pertinent information and referred. In some instances, the counselor may make an initial contact with the employer to "ease the way" for the ex-offender. In most cases, however, the Clearinghouse emphasizes that the ex-offender is responsible. Ex-offenders are asked to call back and keep the counselor informed, or to get additional referrals. Counselors estimate that an average of three to four referrals are required before most ex-offenders get a job, although six to seven referrals are often required in the case of unskilled clients. Of course, in some instances, ex-offenders are hired as a result of their first referral while in other cases the Clearinghouse has referred some ex-offenders to over twenty jobs.

Following a referral, the Clearinghouse's counselor follows up via a telephone call to the employer, feedback through the Employment Services computer system or a call back from the ex-offender.

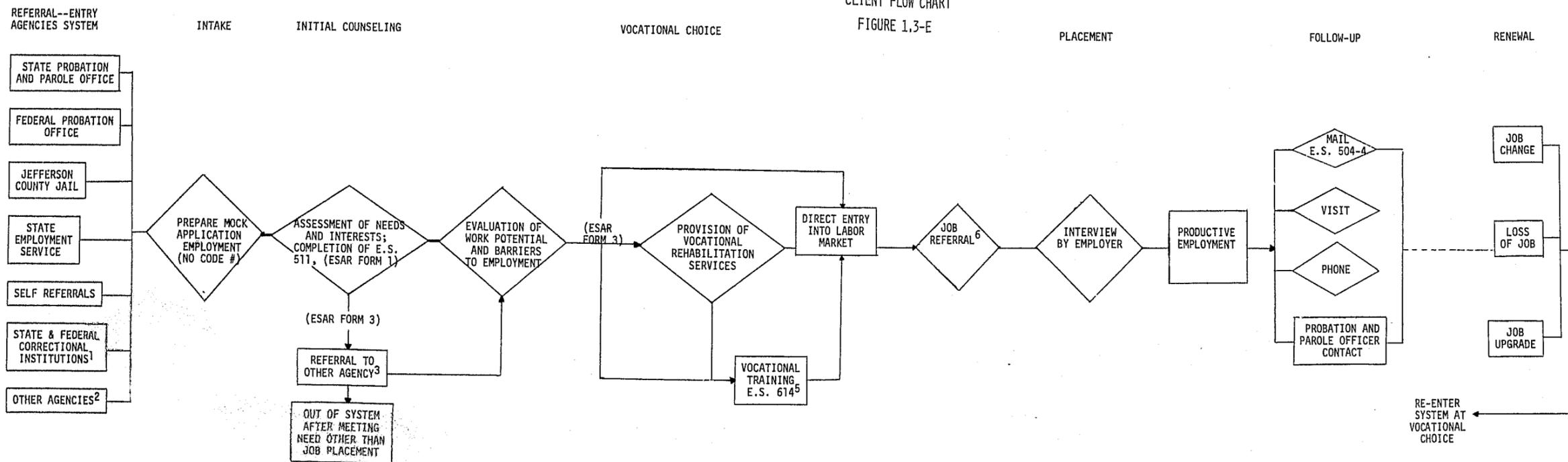
If the ex-offender is hired, the Clearinghouse follows up for three months--usually by telephone or mail with the ex-offender or through the client's Probation or Parole Officer. If a particularly good relationship exists between the Clearinghouse and an employer, the Clearinghouse may make periodic direct contacts with the employer.

The Clearinghouse closes out a case when:

- The ex-offender has been employed on a stable basis for three months;
- Mail follow-ups by the Clearinghouse are not answered for three months (normally in the case of "serve-outs" who have no telephone and are not under supervision;
- The ex-offender is rearrested or probation or parole revoked; or
- The ex-offender leaves the area.

Figure 1.3-E charts the flow of clients through the Clearinghouse.

CLIENT FLOW CHART  
FIGURE 1.3-E



- 1) Kentucky State Reformatory, Kentucky State Prison, Blackburn Pre-Release Center, Frenchburg (youths 18-23), first offenders usually, Kentucky Correctional Institution for Women.
- 2) Metropolitan Social Services Department (MSSD), Urban League, River Region Mental Health, Salvation Army, Drug Abuse Center.
- 3) MSSD, Lottie Crabtree Fund (emergencies) Legal Aid, River Region Services, State Bureau of Human Resources, State Unemployment Insurance, GED, Volunteers of America, Louisville Housing Authority, Private Sources.
- 4) Provision of Training, tools, work clothes, medical assistance, higher education, psychological evaluation.
- 5) MDTA, OJT, Jobs Now, Area Vocational Schools, Apprenticeship Programs.
- 6) Job Bank--computerized E.S. 508(6), Job Development--E.S. 331 and Clearinghouse Employer Contact Card; client leads, employer requests, newspapers.

### 1.3.6 The Clearinghouse's Developmental History

Prior to the establishment of the Clearinghouse in 1972, there were several serious defects in the way ex-offenders employment related needs were met in Louisville. For one thing, relationships between correctional agencies and agencies primarily concerned with employment and training were virtually nonexistent. There were only a few employment specialists or counselors who were knowledgeable about the special needs and problems of ex-offenders. Employment and training agencies frequently duplicated each other's job placement and job development efforts--often to the point where employers were alienated. Finally, ex-offenders had to register with a variety of different agencies and frequently felt frustrated.

Then, in April 1972, a planning meeting was held to discuss the need for and the problems associated with obtaining productive employment for ex-offenders. Staff of the Federal Bureau of Prisons Community Relations Office were reportedly instrumental in convening the meeting, and other participants included the ex-offender Employment Specialist from the State Employment Service, jail representatives, staff of the State Department of Education's Vocational Rehabilitation agency, administrative staff of the Kentucky State Department of Corrections, and staff of the Kentucky Crime Commission--the SPA.

The result of that meeting was a commitment to develop a coordinated approach to providing employment services for ex-offenders in Louisville. A grant application was written and submitted to the Kentucky Crime Commission. It was funded and in October 1972, the Ex-Offender's Clearinghouse began operations using borrowed space in the U.S. Probation Office.

In November 1972, the Clearinghouse moved into its own offices in its present location. The State Department of Education assigned a staff member of the vocational rehabilitation agency to work at the Clearinghouse one day a week, and Dismas House also assigned a staff member on a one day a week basis.

In December, the Corrections Specialist on the staff of the State Employment Service was assigned to the Clearinghouse on a full time basis. The SES also made its computerized job bank available for use by the Clearinghouse and agreed to house the federal bonding programs.

In January 1973, the Clearinghouse implemented a system for providing feedback to probation and parole officers on Clearinghouse contacts with ex-offenders.

In February 1973, coordination of the Clearinghouse's efforts with the pre-release program in the state's correctional institutions was initiated.

In July 1973, a grant proposal was submitted to the Kentucky Crime Commission and the Department of Finance for an expansion of the Clearinghouse concept to the Lexington, Kentucky area.

In August 1973, the SES implemented a statewide job bank system. The Clearinghouse was provided with access to the job bank. This capability allowed the Clearinghouse to provide statewide job leads for Pre-Release Officers in the state prisons.

At the time of the on-site visit by the URSA team, the new Clearinghouse office in the Lexington area was just being organized. The Clearinghouse had seemingly achieved broad support and there was a commitment to statewide implementation of the concept.

## 2.0 FINDINGS ON THE VALIDATION STUDY

Findings regarding the Clearinghouse's suitability for Exemplary Project status are organized in this section according to the criteria established by the Exemplary Project Advisory Board. In addition, issues of specific interest to NILECJ staff are also addressed in this section.

### 2.1 Goal Achievement and Effectiveness

There are two explicit goals defined in the Clearinghouse's application for Exemplary Project status:

1. The Clearinghouse "has as its primary purpose the coordination and implementation of job placement of the ex-offenders in Louisville and Jefferson County."
2. "Its secondary purpose is to act as a facilitator in obtaining other needed social services for the ex-offender."

Both of these goals are "instrumental" goals. That is, achievement of these goals would presumably be instrumental in bringing about some impact or on changes in behavior on the part of those served by the program. The Clearinghouse has not explicitly defined any goals or objectives related to expected impacts or effects of its services. Implicitly, however, it seems clear that the Clearinghouse is aimed at decreasing unemployment among ex-offenders supporting continued law abiding behavior, and decreasing recidivism.

The Clearinghouse has clearly met its two instrumental goals. It is now the established agency for job placement services and other employment related services for ex-offenders in the area. It has credibility with and the acceptance of the State Employment Service, state and federal probation and parole, the Pre-Release programs in the state's correctional institutions, and the State's Vocational Rehabilitation agency. The State Employment Service, in particular, was lavish in its praise of the Clearinghouse. One SES administrator stated that, in his opinion, the Clearinghouse does a better job than the Employment Service in counseling, follow-up with clients and with employers, and in the use of the services of other agencies.

Assessing the extent to which the Clearinghouse has achieved its implicit goals--those related to impact on the population of ex-offenders--is more problematic. Much of the data is qualitative and judgmental while in other cases the data needed to make quantitatively valid assessments is either totally unavailable or it is not in a readily retrievable form or condition (see Section 2.2, Measurability).

The URSA team attempted to focus on three different sets of issues related to impact: first, the issue of whether the Clearinghouse is effective in reaching its target population; second, those issues concerned with the quality of the Clearinghouse's services; and third, those issues concerned with whether or not the Clearinghouse is having its intended effects on the behavior and attitudes of ex-offenders.

#### 2.1.1 Effectiveness in Reaching the Target Population

Clearinghouse's target population is, of course, the ex-offender--primarily those who live in the Louisville and Jefferson County area at present. During the year just prior to the founding of the Clearinghouse, fiscal year 1971, 1,540 ex-offenders were released from prisons in Kentucky and placed on parole. Three hundred forty-seven of those ex-offenders were released to Jefferson County. When probations were included and unemployed ex-offenders on existing parole and probation caseloads were added, the total exceeded 500 easily. In fact, the Federal Probation Offices Community Relations Specialist alone was called on to attempt placements for over 500 ex-offenders. Many of them, of course, had also registered with the State Employment Service as well, or were using other job placement resources.

The Clearinghouse estimated that it would serve 500 ex-offenders during its first year of operation. In fact, in the nine month period between October 1972 and July 1973, the Clearinghouse served 906 ex-offenders. Between October 1973 and February 1974 the Clearinghouse served another 383 ex-offenders for a grand total of 1,289 in 16 months. The total probation and parole caseload in Jefferson County reportedly averages about 1,200 at any one time. Thus, it seems that in terms of sheer numbers, the Clearinghouse has served or been in contact with a substantial number of the ex-offenders in Jefferson County. The range of different types of ex-offenders served by the Clearinghouse is also significant. Some are still

in prison when their relationship with the Clearinghouse begins, some are on probation or parole, some are unsupervised. Some of the ex-offenders are newly released, and others have been out of prison for extended periods--sometimes years--before they contact the Clearinghouse. The majority of those served by the Clearinghouse, however, are still in prison or on probation and parole (7.4% of the 1,289 ex-offenders served by the Clearinghouse were referred by pre-release programs within institutions and 65.7% were referred by state or federal probation and parole authorities); most are between the age of 20 and 30 years old--although some are as old as 50 years of age. Most are male (male ex-offenders served by the Clearinghouse outnumber females by ten to one according to Clearinghouse staff, and in URSA's random sampling of 47 closed files there were 42 males and five females); educationally, the "last grade completed" by the ex-offenders in URSA's random sampling of closed cases ranged from six to 16 with a median "last grade completed" of 11; and a little more than half (24 of 47 in the URSA sampling had some job related training or skilled job experience in the past).

Although there was no data available at the Clearinghouse on the demographic characteristics of the ex-offender population in Kentucky or the population within the various institutions in the state, the URSA team had no reason to suspect that the population of ex-offenders served by the Clearinghouse was not typical.

#### 2.1.2 Effectiveness of the Clearinghouse's Services

URSA considered the effectiveness of the Clearinghouse's services from three perspectives: one, how effective are those services specifically delivered by the Clearinghouse (e.g., job placement); two, how effective is the Clearinghouse in getting other needed services for ex-offenders; and three, how does the Clearinghouse compare to general guidelines for ex-offender employment programs developed by URSA staff and consultants.

Between October 1972 and February 1974 the Clearinghouse served 1,289 individuals and made 2,332 job referrals. Seven hundred ninety-five or 34.1% of these referrals resulted in job placements. That is, there is one placement for every three referrals more or less. The Clearinghouse does not keep regular statistics on the distribution of frequency of referrals and

the data is not in readily retrievable form, so URSA was unable to find out exactly how many individual ex-offenders received multiple referrals before being placed or before they "dropped out" of the system. Nor is it possible to tell exactly how many ex-offenders did "drop out" without placement given the data that is currently available.

However, the random sampling of closed files that URSA did may be indicative. Forty-seven ex-offenders files were reviewed. The 47 ex-offenders received a total of 163 referrals--or 3.5 referrals per individual--from the Clearinghouse before their cases were closed. In seven cases, ex-offenders received only one referral. In other cases, ex-offenders received five or more referrals including one individual who received 13 referrals and another who received 26 before the Clearinghouse closed his case. Figure 2.1-A summarizes the data on the frequency of referrals among the 47 cases in URSA's sample.

Figure 2.1-A

Number of Referrals	Number of Ex-Offenders	Total Referrals
0	3	0
1	7	7
2	6	12
3	21	63
4	4	16
5	1	5
6	1	6
7	1	7
8	1	8
13	1	13
26	1	26
Grand Total	47	163

URSA also attempted to track through the 163 referrals to determine outcomes. Figure 2.1-B summarizes the data that was available on dispositions.

Figure 2.1-B

Outcome Per Referral	Number of Referrals
Hired	26
Found own job	15
Took other referral	5
Will call	1
Not qualified or refused by employer	11
Job filled or no suitable opening	19
Failed to report	13
Moved	1
Return to prison	4
Unknown	10
Deceased	1
No data	57
<b>Total</b>	<b>163</b>

During the time they were on active status with the Clearinghouse, 34 of 47 ex-offenders (72%) whose cases were reviewed by URSA either were placed through the efforts of the Clearinghouse (26 referrals) or their own efforts (15 referrals). That is, the 34 ex-offenders held a total of 41 jobs while enrolled at the Clearinghouse.

In addition to its job placement activities, the Clearinghouse coordinates training referrals for ex-offenders and for vocational rehabilitation and bonding services as well.

Between October 1972 and February 1974, out of the total of 1,289 served by the Clearinghouse, 90 ex-offenders were referred for vocational training to other agencies--most often to MDTA programs or the local CEP programs. Of this number, only 17 ex-offenders were enrolled. The Clearinghouse attributes the minimal enrollment (18.9% of the 90 referrals) to two causes. First, there was a federal freeze on training funds for a number of months; and second--and most important--there are long waiting lists for the most

desirable training programs in the area (e.g., welding) and the ex-offenders get tired of waiting and discouraged.

A total of 72 ex-offenders were referred for vocational rehabilitation services during the same period. Of those referred, on 11 (15.3%) were served, primarily, according to Clearinghouse staff because of residual "red tape" that hampers the delivery of the services.

Finally, 12 ex-offenders were bonded under the federal bonding program and 297 other referrals were made to other agencies. Most of the 297 referrals, according to Clearinghouse staff, were to the county welfare department for emergency funds, to the VA for veterans benefits, or to drug, alcohol, and mental health agencies.

In 1972, the U.S. Department of Labor developed a "set of guidelines" for manpower programs designed to serve ex-offenders. In addition, URSA staff and consultants contacted the American Bar Association's National Clearinghouse on Offender Employment Restrictions and reviewed a variety of other materials in order to develop a sense of other guidelines which--when added to those set forth by the Department of Labor--would comprise a comprehensive set of ideal criteria for the design and operation of employment programs for ex-offenders.

The Clearinghouse's performance is assessed against these criteria below. Department of Labor Criteria are indicated by (DOL).

#### Guideline 1

(DOL) In formulating the manpower delivery system for those in conflict with the law, the following criminal justice system levels must be incorporated: pre-trial, probation, incarceration, parole, and release on expiration of sentence.

The Clearinghouse works with offenders and ex-offenders at all of these levels.

#### Guideline 2

(DOL) Essential components must include inmate training, employment services, counseling at all levels, bonding, extensive use of work release and training release laws, generating employer support, and coordinating all related supportive services.

The Clearinghouse, of course, is just one element in the overall criminal justice system in Kentucky. It does not have broad coordinative powers and cannot, for example, mandate inmate training or coordinate manpower training programs. It does, however, serve as the interface--or point of contact--between the other elements in the criminal justice system and the system of employment, training, and social service agencies.

The Clearinghouse does provide employment placement services and employment upgrading services, it provides counseling regarding employment related matters, bonding up to \$10,000, and it actively cooperates with agencies providing supportive services, although it does not coordinate the delivery of such services except in the case of the vocational rehabilitation agency's services to ex-offenders.

Where work release and training release programs operate, on the federal but not the state level in Kentucky, the Clearinghouse provides counseling and placement services to ex-offenders who are released under these programs.

The Clearinghouse has contacted several hundred employers and has developed placements with a number of private sector employers through its own job development. It does not, however, have any long term approach designed to develop broadscale support of and commitment to the program among employers.

#### Guideline 3

(DOL) In the largest metropolitan area in each state there should be created a manpower service center to serve ex-offenders through a concentration of manpower staff specializing in the corrections field.

The Clearinghouse is an operating model of such a manpower service center.

#### Guideline 4

(DOL) The hiring of ex-offenders, paraprofessional, and minority group members in line with the target group being served should be emphasized.

The Clearinghouse does not have any ex-offenders on its staff at present, although a former receptionist was an ex-offender. Apparently, one of the counselors has been an ex-offender. Two of the staff are minority group members--both black--and two of the counseling staff are women.

## Guideline 5

(URSA) Job development efforts should be aggressively pursued with an emphasis on face-to-face discussions with employers.

The Clearinghouse relies primarily on telephone and mail contacts with employers. Between October 1972 and February 1974, the Clearinghouse made a total of 1,404 employer contacts. Of these 1,354 (96.4%) were by telephone and only 50 (3.6%) involved personal visits by Clearinghouse staff to employers. Clearinghouse staff recognizes this deficiency and has placed a high priority on more aggressive face-to-face job development.

## Guideline 6

(URSA) Ex-offender employment programs should provide differentiated services to groups of ex-offenders who may have different needs based on their age, sex, history of convictions and incarceration, etc.

The Clearinghouse attempts to address the particular needs of the various ex-offenders it serves through a variety of counseling, job placements, and referrals. It has also recently developed an experimental group counseling approach for ex-offenders who seem to have recurring problems in maintaining employment.

The Clearinghouse does not, however, seem to differentiate between various groups of clients (e.g., nonsupervised clients, serve-outs and those released under mandatory or provisional release, "longtimers," or first offenders) in terms of the kind of services provided, the number of counseling sessions, the frequency and character of contact with the parole or probation officer, the support given in fulfilling a job referral or in maintaining employment, or in the kind and length of follow-up activities by Clearinghouse staff.

## Guideline 7

(URSA) Active follow-up with ex-offenders should continue for at least six months and preferably one year after placement in order to help assure job maintenance and encourage job upgrading.

The Clearinghouse presently follows-up on placements for three months before files are closed on an ex-offender. Staff acknowledges that this is probably too short a period.

The Clearinghouse's follow-up is fairly passive, too. It is primarily based on telephone and mail rather than visits to ex-offenders homes or job-sites. The Clearinghouse made a total of 1,391 recorded follow-up attempts between October 1973 and February 1974 and of these 733 (52.7%) were by telephone, 654 (47.0%) were by mail, and only 4 (0.3%) were in person.

### 2.1.3 Effectiveness in Achieving Desired Impact on Ex-Offenders

URSA attempted to utilize four measures to assess the extent to which the Clearinghouse had an impact on ex-offenders:

- Recidivism rates;
- Unemployment rates;
- Duration of placements; and
- Job upgrading.

In each instance, URSA intended to utilize data from other ex-offender employment programs (CEP for ex-offenders in North Carolina, Project Transition in South Carolina, Job Therapy of Seattle, Washington, and HIRE in Minnesota) as well as data on the Louisville area predating the establishment of the Clearinghouse.

Unfortunately, the Clearinghouse does not have data available on recidivism; data on job retentions and upgrading would have to be developed by an analysis of the Clearinghouse's files and phone calls to employers; and, data on unemployment rates for ex-offenders was not available.

### 2.2 Measurability

It is obvious from the discussion on Goal Achievement and Effectiveness that the Clearinghouse has data problems. Apparently some of them result from a conscious decision by administrative staff to sacrifice data collection and analysis efforts in order to utilize scarce staff resources in the direct delivery of services.

The kinds of data problems that currently affect the Clearinghouse are:

- Some data is not collected either by the Clearinghouse or by other agencies;

- Some data is collected but aggregated in inappropriate categories (referrals for training are not distinguished by the various training programs);
- The Clearinghouse does not adequately distinguish between or relate data on individuals served and events (job referrals, number of follow-up contacts, etc.);
- Data is not adequately correlated (e.g., the Clearinghouse does not know how many individuals received a particular mix of services, whether those individuals share any common characteristics, and whether any common effects ensued);
- Data categories and recording practices are not standardized among the Clearinghouse's counselors;
- Ex-offender case files are incomplete in some instances; and,
- Some data is collected, but it is difficult to retrieve (e.g., job types, salaries, etc.)

Most of the Clearinghouse's statistical reports provide information on operational capacities or service statistics (e.g. number of people served, kinds of services provided, number of public relations contacts and speeches, etc.). No data related to impact on the target population behaviors, attitudes, or conditions (e.g., recidivism, job retention and satisfaction, unemployment, etc.) is reported on a regular basis. If, in fact, data of this type is collected, it is as a by-product of other efforts or the result of other agencies' activities.

Most of the data needed to assess the Clearinghouse's impact could be collected, but it would require restructuring of the data collection and recording system in use and a commitment to divert staff time for this purpose.

### 2.3 Efficiency

URSA considered efficiency from several different perspectives: cost, impact on the utilization of other resources, staff utilization, and administrative efficiency.

Since the Clearinghouse's grant period is not concurrent with its statistical reporting periods, it is difficult to develop precise unit costs for

ex-offenders, various services, or for successful placements. However, some reasonable estimates can be made based on the annualized operating costs of \$49,300 or a monthly cost of \$4,108. By projecting the monthly costs for the 17 months between October 1972 and February 1974 a total estimated cost of \$69,836 is obtained. During this period, the Clearinghouse served 1,289 ex-offenders, and made 2,332 referrals that resulted in 795 placements. On this basis the average cost of services was \$54 per ex-offender, \$30 per referral, and \$88 per successful job placement. Even if it is assumed that "contributed" staff (by SES, Vocational Rehabilitation, etc. would increase costs by a factor of two if the Clearinghouse had to pay for them, the costs would still seem to be reasonable. Additional data on job retention that would allow calculation of costs per "month of employment" would be useful as well.

By centralizing and assuming responsibility for job placement services and other services for ex-offenders the Clearinghouse has had a range of impacts on other agencies and the way they utilize their resources.

Overall, the implementation of the Clearinghouse has virtually eliminated duplication of effort as far as job development and placement of ex-offenders is concerned. Dismas House still does some independent job development in addition to drawing on the Clearinghouse's resources-- however, this is minimal apparently. All other criminal justice and employment service agencies refer ex-offenders to the Clearinghouse. For state and federal probation and parole officers, the establishment of the Clearinghouse has meant that they are no longer required to do job development and employment related counseling for their clients and can focus more on in-depth counseling. For pre-release staff in the state correctional institutions, the Clearinghouse provides access to a much broader range of potential placements than they had before. And, since the job bank went on a statewide basis, access to the Clearinghouse's resources has allowed pre-release staff to identify job possibilities for prisoners who do not intend to reside in Louisville and Jefferson County as well as for those who do not intend to live there.

The caseloads of Clearinghouse staff ranges from about 115 to 140 with an estimated 50% to 60% active at any one time. In addition to intake

counseling diagnosis and job referrals, the counseling staff is responsible for job development through their own efforts, the newspaper, and the job bank in order to make "matches" with their particular clients needs, skills, and interests. They are also responsible for referrals for ancillary services, follow-up efforts, for case record keeping and, in the cases of ex-offenders who are under supervision, the counselors are responsible for maintaining liaison with the Probation and Parole Officers that they work with. Counselors are able to perform most of these tasks only because of their heavy reliance on use of the telephone. They would be unable to accomplish much of their work if they had to use the more effective face-to-face methods of job development, client support, and follow-up that URSA would recommend.

The Clearinghouse, in URSA's opinion, is understaffed. In addition to more counselors, at least one experienced full-time job developer would be desirable. The present Project Director, despite his experience and skill as a counselor, could with additional staff, be fruitfully freed up from his case-load and encouraged to devote more time to development of active support for and commitment to the program among employers.

#### 2.4 Replicability

In assessing the Clearinghouse's potential for replication in other communities, the URSA team considered factors:

1. The extent to which need for programs like the Clearinghouse exists in other communities;
2. The Clearinghouse's organizational structure;
3. The Clearinghouse's location and facilities;
4. The Clearinghouse's staff;
5. The Clearinghouse's methods; and,
6. Community support and cooperation.

In each instance, the URSA team was interested in assessing whether other communities might reasonably expect to duplicate the context in which the Clearinghouse exists and be able to draw upon similar resources. In general, URSA concluded that the Clearinghouse could easily be replicable in any

locale where parole and probation authorities and state employment service officials are ready to cooperate with each other and where there is a substantial population of ex-offenders. In cities or counties larger than the Louisville-Jefferson County area (700,000) there might need to be satellite Clearinghouses bound together administratively and sharing a common communications network for use in job identification and development, placements, and follow-up.

#### 2.4.1 Extent of Need

There are two prerequisite conditions that indicate need for, or the potential utility of, a Clearinghouse type program. One is the presence of a substantial population of ex-offenders in need of assistance in obtaining employment, and the other is the existence at the local level of a plethora of uncoordinated employment service agencies and agencies concerned with the delivery of other services needed by ex-offenders.

These conditions exist in most urban areas in the nation. For example, in 1969, the Pownall study, "Employment Problems of Released Prisoners," conducted for the U.S. Department of Labor noted that:

"Employment is an important factor in successful reintegration of the offender in society (and)...employment does not mean just getting a job, it also emphasizes the importance of the right job and maintaining a reasonable length of employment."

Yet Pownall found that unemployment rates among ex-offenders are four to five times higher than that of the general population and that ex-offenders who are employed generally have lower than average incomes.

With specific regard to parolees the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals stated that "the difficulty of finding employment often is an additional source of anxiety because the most common reason why offenders are held beyond the date fixed for their release is that they have no job to go to."

The National Information Center on Volunteers in Court also concluded that, "Parole failure is closely related with the lack of employment and economic status. Parolees with full-time jobs succeed four to one as compared with parolees with only occasional employment or no employment."

Thus, need for assistance in obtaining employment is not only a widespread need among ex-offenders, it seems also to be functionally related to success in maintaining law abiding behavior and avoiding recidivistic behavior.

Since coordination of employment programs and other training and employment related programs is rare--particularly for ex-offenders, there is probably a widespread need for programs like the Clearinghouse.

#### 2.4.2 The Clearinghouse's Organizational Structure

The Clearinghouse, as noted above, is part of the State Bureau of Corrections, Division of Probation and Parole. Its status as part of a governmental agency and particularly as part of the criminal justice system was undoubtedly helpful in gaining credibility with state and federal probation and parole--and while it did not seem to be critical to the SES it was clearly not a negative factor with the Employment Service or the State Department of Education.

Within the Division of Probation and Parole's structure, however, the Clearinghouse seems to operate with substantial independence--a factor which may help it to maintain credibility with the ex-offenders that it serves. That is, the atmosphere, the layout of the offices, the demeanor and behavior of the staff, is nonauthoritarian and nonbureaucratic. In URSA's opinion, this is an important contributor to the Clearinghouse's acceptance.

If this atmosphere could be maintained and if probation and parole officials would designate staff members to be assigned to the Clearinghouse, a State Employment Service might also be an effective organizational host for a Clearinghouse type program. Again, the fact that the SES is a governmental agency would help build credibility--in this case--among the criminal justice agencies.

However, given the U.S. Department of Labor's apparent commitment to cooperate in comprehensive programs aimed at dealing with the employment needs of ex-offenders, and the familiarity of the SES in assigning staff to "out reach stations" (e.g., in anti-poverty agencies and public housing projects), it is likely that, in most instances, it will be easier to locate Clearinghouse type programs within the Criminal Justice systems structure and request the support and cooperation of the SES and other relevant agencies.

#### 2.4.3 The Clearinghouse's Location and Facility

The Clearinghouse could be located in any type of building. The space required to operate a Clearinghouse type program is limited. A reception area is needed--with a seating capacity of 10-20 persons; desk space with some provision for insuring privacy is needed for each counselor; a small amount of central space is needed to house case files and the microfiche display screen, the "job bank," employer files, and other information on available jobs. A job development office would be ideal, and space for administrative functions is required.

Although it is not absolutely necessary, it is desirable for the Clearinghouse to be close to other centers of activity for ex-offenders such as state and federal probation and parole offices. It is essential also that the Clearinghouse be located, in a building that can be reached easily by public transportation since many ex-offenders do not have cars.

#### 2.4.4 The Clearinghouse's Staff

The staff of the Clearinghouse is competent and committed. For the most part, although they are young, they also have had experience in employment counseling and/or work with ex-offenders.

Similar staff, however, could be recruited in other cities--drawn from the ranks of parole and probation officers, the SES and private agencies serving ex-offenders, as well as from the ranks of those ex-offenders who have the ability needed to be an effective counselor.

#### 2.4.5 The Clearinghouse's Methods

The methods used by the Clearinghouse to identify and develop jobs, to match ex-offenders with jobs, and to provide for the delivery of employment related services are not for the most part uncommon or innovative. They could be easily replicated, particularly since many of the methods and forms used by the Clearinghouse are basically those that are standard with the State Employment Service.

However, in many instances, other communities might develop or adopt more innovative methods or procedures than the Clearinghouse.

## 2.5 Accessibility

The Clearinghouse stated in its application for Exemplary Project status that the State Department of Corrections expected to continue the program after LEAA funding ends.

The Clearinghouse does not seem to be "fragile." That is, the program seems to be able to accommodate outside observers without severe disruption of its activities. During the on-site visit, the URSA team was able to observe counseling sessions, job development activities, and job identification techniques, and conduct interviews with staff of the Clearinghouse, ex-offenders, employers, and staff and administrators of other cooperating agencies. Other visitors could be accommodated just as easily.

In addition to the on-going activities of the Clearinghouse, visitors concerned with assessing the feasibility of replicating the program in their communities would be well advised to discuss the program with those people who originally organized the Clearinghouse and with key staff of all cooperating agencies in order to develop a sense of the "politics" of the program, the formal and informal agreements between agencies, the trade-offs and the benefits the various agencies derive from their cooperation, the resistances that were encountered and the methods used to overcome those resistances.

### 3.0 STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

#### 3.1 Strengths

Most of those features in the Clearinghouse's program that URSA considers to be strengths have been mentioned in earlier sections of this report. However, in summary, they are:

1. The Clearinghouse seems to reach a major portion of the ex-offender population in the Louisville-Jefferson County area.
2. The Clearinghouse serves ex-offenders who have a variety of statuses vis a vis the criminal justice system (e.g., pre-trial, probation, pre-release, parole, "serve outs," etc.)
3. The Clearinghouse has strong support from the traditional criminal justice agencies.
4. The Clearinghouse has brought a range of employment related services together and coordinates their delivery from one location. It has eliminated duplication of job development, and job placement efforts.
5. The Clearinghouse relates to and uses a variety of existing community resources to meet the ancillary needs of ex-offenders.
6. The Clearinghouse maintains regular communication with parole and probation officers and provides feedback on the ex-offenders progress. (Parole and probation officers reported that the State Employment service agencies did not maintain contact in the past.)
7. The Clearinghouse has allowed the staff of other criminal justice agencies to redirect their efforts and make more efficient use of resources.
8. The Clearinghouse has access to the SES statewide job bank.
9. The staff of the Clearinghouse is competent and committed to providing assistance to ex-offenders.
10. The Clearinghouse's approach is relatively inexpensive and cost effective.

### 3.2 Weaknesses

URSA has indicated what some of the Clearinghouse's current weaknesses seem to be in earlier sections of this report. They are:

1. The caseloads of Clearinghouse counselors seem to be too large. Caseloads reduced by 40% to 50% would seem to be more appropriate.
2. The links of the Clearinghouse with some of the state correctional institutions pre-release programs are relatively weak--largely because of geographic distance.
3. The Clearinghouse's independent job development efforts are limited. They need to be expanded and strengthened by the addition of more staff.
4. The Clearinghouse does not seem to provide differentiated treatment approaches to functionally different groups of ex-offenders.
5. The Clearinghouse does not provide support for ex-offenders in the job application and interview process and during the initial period of adjustment to employment. This limitation is clearly related to case-load size.
6. Follow-up efforts are limited in terms of both the methods employed and duration.
7. The Clearinghouse has no ex-offenders on the counseling staff.
8. The Clearinghouse's data collection efforts are severely deficient and need to be redesigned to allow for the collection and analysis of data on impact as well as data on operational effectiveness.

### 3.3 General Comments

Although valid data on impact was not available, the URSA team was convinced that the Clearinghouse has had a significant impact on the reduction of unemployment rates among ex-offenders in the target area. Moreover, the URSA team felt that the Clearinghouse approach would be beneficial to and easily replicated by other jurisdictions.

However, the URSA team also felt that there were also elements in the Clearinghouse's scope, approach, and procedures that might be improved upon

in other settings. For example, the effectiveness of the Clearinghouse could be enhanced if the Clearinghouse was one element in an overall state-wide system of coordinated employment services and related services to ex-offenders. This would not only help to decrease the difficulty that the Clearinghouse has in serving ex-offenders in distant institutions, it could also be used to assure greater access to training programs for ex-offenders, and to coordinate utilization of OJT funds. It was also suggested to the URSA team that the effectiveness of the Clearinghouse could be increased if additional agencies were also brought into the same location to create a "one stop supermarket of services." Some people related to the Clearinghouse suggested that it would be useful to include welfare workers, crisis intervention staff, etc. under the Clearinghouse's umbrella if the program is replicated.

The possibility of building these elements into replications of the Clearinghouse should be considered in URSA's opinion in order to strengthen the program. They need not, however, be viewed as vital prerequisites since the Clearinghouse with all of its weaknesses and limitations also has significant strengths and, at the very least, represents a major improvement in the way employment services are delivered to ex-offenders in most places.

#### 4.0 RECOMMENDED DOCUMENTATION

In the event that the Exemplary Projects Advisory Board decides to proceed with documentation of the Clearinghouse, the following materials might be appropriate:

1. The "how to" manual generally described in URSA's proposal to NILECJ. In this instance, the manual might include:
  - A descriptive overview of YSP's organization, operations, and history;
  - A discussion of the Clearinghouse's accomplishments;
  - A discussion of programmatic options that address current weaknesses in the Clearinghouse's program, that supplement or extend the program's capabilities, or that represent "best practices" in other programs.
  - A detailed evaluation design and system for collecting, organizing and analyzing data in Clearinghouse type programs;
  - A discussion of program administration procedures including:
    - content of interagency agreements and interagency relations;
    - staff selection and training;
    - staff utilization;
    - employer relations and media relations.
2. An illustrated promotional brochure based on the manual and designed for wide distribution.
3. A set of color slides describing the Clearinghouse's concept and operations with a script or narrated script on tape cassette.

**END**