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FY 2011 Second Chance Act Adult Offender Reentry Demonstration Projects: Evaluability Assessment of the Boston Reentry Initiative

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Evaluability Assessment of the FY 2011 Bureau of Justice Assistance Second Chance Act Adult Offender Reentry Demonstration Projects

Boston Reentry Initiative

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Glossary

ASUS—Adult Substance Abuse Survey
BJA—Bureau of Justice Assistance
BPD—Boston Police Department
BRI—Boston Reentry Initiative
BRIC—Boston Regional Intelligence Center
CJIS—Criminal Justice Information System
COPS—Community Oriented Policing Services
CORI—Criminal Offender Record Information
EA—Evaluability Assessment
HRiA—Health Resources In Action
LSI-R: SV—Level of Service Inventory-Revised: Screening Version
NIJ—National Institute of Justice
RTI—RTI International
SCA—Second Chance Act
SCHOC—Suffolk County House of Correction
SCSD—Suffolk County Sheriff’s Department
TTA—Training and Technical Assistance
UI—Urban Institute
USAO—United States Attorney’s Office
Y.O. Unlimited—Youth Options Unlimited

Evaluability Assessment of the FY 2011 Bureau of Justice Assistance Second Chance Act Adult Offender Reentry Demonstration Projects

Boston Reentry Initiative

Evaluability Assessment Summary

In 2008, the Second Chance Act (SCA): Community Safety Through Recidivism Prevention was signed into law with the goal of increasing reentry programming for offenders released from state prisons and local jails. Programs funded through Title I of the SCA must create strategic, sustainable plans to facilitate the successful reentry of individuals leaving incarceration facilities. Other key requirements include collaboration among state and local criminal justice and social service systems (e.g., health, housing, child services, education, substance abuse and mental health treatment, victim services, and employment services) and data collection to measure specified performance outcomes (i.e., those related to recidivism and service provision). Further, the SCA states that program reentry plans should incorporate input from local nonprofit organizations, crime victims, and offenders' families. It also requires that grantee programs create reentry task forces—comprised of relevant agencies, service providers, nonprofit organizations, and community members—to use existing resources, collect data, and determine best practices for addressing the needs of the target population.

Consistent with the objectives of the Second Chance Act, the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) funded 22 adult offender reentry demonstration grants in FY 2011. Eight FY 2011 SCA projects¹ were selected by BJA for this evaluability assessment (EA). These projects target adult offenders under state or local custody (and about to return to the community) for comprehensive reentry programming and services designed to promote successful reintegration and reduce recidivism. Intended to proactively address the multiple challenges facing former prisoners upon their return to the community, the grants may be used to provide an array of pre- and post-release services, including education and literacy programs, job placement, housing services, and mental health and substance abuse treatment. Risk and needs assessments, transition case planning, case management, and family involvement are key elements of grantees' SCA projects. The goals of the SCA projects are to measurably (1) increase reentry programming for returning prisoners and their families, (2) reduce recidivism and criminal involvement among program participants by 50 percent over five years, (3) reduce violations among program participants, and (4) improve reintegration outcomes, including reducing substance abuse and increasing employment and housing stability. (See Appendix A for the initiative's SCA logic model.)

¹ Boston Reentry Initiative (MA); Hudson County (NJ) Community Reintegration Project; Johnson County (KS) Reentry Project; Minnesota DOC Revocation Reduction Demonstration; Missouri DOC Second Chance in Action Initiative; New Haven (CT) Reentry Initiative; Ohio DOC Healthy Environments, Loving Parents (HELP) Initiative; and Solano County (CA) Women's Reentry Achievement Program (WRAP). In March 2013, the EA study expanded to include two additional FY 2011 sites: the Beaver County (PA) ChancesR program and Palm Beach County (FL) RESTORE Initiative.

Evaluability Assessment Objectives and Activities

Evaluability assessment is crucial in determining if a project is a candidate for meaningful evaluation (Wholey, Hatry, and Newcomer 2004). At minimum, an evaluable program must have well-defined program goals, target populations, and eligibility criteria, as well as reliable and accessible performance data, and a defensible counterfactual (Barnow and The Lewin Group 1997). The current EA study, conducted by the Urban Institute (UI) in partnership with RTI International, is designed to determine what level of future evaluation activity is supportable in each of the eight² SCA sites and to identify the most appropriate research design and methods for each site. While most EAs seek to determine whether a program is evaluable, the EA study's funder, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), is interested in some level of evaluation in *all* eight adult SCA sites; therefore, EA data collection must support more nuanced evaluation recommendations than "Evaluate: Yes or No." Specifically, the EA aims to answer two questions: Is the program evaluable? And if so, how, and at what level of effort?³ Design options must address both the recommended level *and* type of evaluation, including the suggested mix of process, outcome, impact, and cost analyses.

The following criteria (Barnow and The Lewin Group 1997; Wholey et al. 2004) guided EA work in the eight SCA sites.

1. **Measurable outcomes.** Program goals must be clearly stated, consistently understood by staff and partner agencies, and translatable into measurable results.
2. **Defined program components and their hypothesized relationship to outcomes.** An underlying theoretical model and logic model must indicate how program components, both in-facility and community-based elements, contribute to outcomes.
3. **Case flow and attrition.** How clients enter the program, as well as when, how, and why they discharge (either successfully or unsuccessfully) from the program must be documented to inform sample size estimates, comparison group construction, and evaluation recruitment timelines.
4. **Precise target population and eligibility criteria.** The EA must document how eligible participants are defined in each SCA site and how closely projects and their partners adhere to delineated eligibility criteria, including when and why sites deviate from established parameters. Eligibility criteria must be well-defined and consistently applied to minimize selection bias that might arise from arbitrary enrollment rules.
5. **Intake procedures.** Related to items 3 and 4, it will be critical to map how potential participants are identified and referred to the program, including the point at which this referral occurs; this will have implications for planning

² Eight sites were selected by BJA and NIJ for study, however, one site (Johnson County, KS) declined further participation in the grant program after the EA study began. In March 2013, NIJ and BJA, in conjunction with the EA, identified two additional sites—Beaver County (PA) and Palm Beach County (FL)—for the EA. Ultimately, the EA study conducted site visits to nine projects and compiled nine site-specific EA reports. A brief memorandum describing the Johnson County program was also compiled.

³ If the program is not evaluable, we will indicate what would be required to bring it in line with evaluation requirements.

random assignment procedures (i.e., what point in program operations should random assignment occur) should the program warrant such rigor and for identifying appropriate comparison subjects if quasi-experimental alternative designs are necessary.

6. **Ability to collect and maintain data.** An accurate management information system that includes data needed for the evaluation must be available. For impact evaluations, comparable data must exist (or be possible to create during the evaluation timeframe) for both treatment and comparison group subjects; site support for primary data collection must be evident.
7. **Presence of a clear counterfactual.** Impact evaluation designs also must consider appropriate comparison or control groups. Clearly documenting the services that are available to such individuals is therefore critical.

Likewise, the EA examined whether the program was mature and stable enough to warrant evaluation (Zedlewski and Murphy 2006); core program elements must be sufficiently fixed (static) to allow for meaningful evaluation.

The forthcoming Evaluation of the FY 2011 BJA SCA Adult Offender Reentry Demonstration Project, which also will be conducted by RTI and UI, entails a research design (subject to revisions based on the Evaluability Assessment of the sites selected by BJA and NIJ for further study) that envisions (1) process/implementation evaluation in all eight sites, (2) recidivism outcome (treatment group only) or impact evaluation (treatment and comparison groups) based on administrative records (secondary data) of arrest and incarceration, (3) more intensive impact evaluation that collects primary data (three waves of interviews) for both treatment and comparison groups, and, where feasible, uses random assignment to construct treatment and control groups, and (4) two different levels of cost analysis (cost studies 1 and 2), in which the sites selected for the intensive impact evaluation would also participate in a more intensive cost study given the ability to use the primary interview data to generate more information about benefits other than recidivism outcomes.

Cognizant of this design,⁴ EA data collection activities consisted of

- **Review of program materials and documents**, including program and partner materials such as blank intake and assessment forms, orientation materials, program handbooks, redacted transition case plans, annual reports, and program logic models to document operations.
- **Analysis of BJA aggregate performance data** including process measures, recidivism outcomes, and other reintegration indicators that may underscore program performance.

⁴ UI and RTI partnered on both the EA work (Focus Area 1 of the evaluation solicitation) and the full evaluation (Focus Area 2), and proposed to use the same teams for both evaluation projects to facilitate critical efficiencies (knowledge, resources, execution, celerity) while building a solid knowledge base of the sites and their capacity for evaluation to the benefit of Focus Area 2 work.

- **Pre-visit phone interviews** with SCA coordinators and project directors in each site were conducted to outline EA objectives and obtain updated project information.
- **Site visits and semi-structured interviews** with policy-level stakeholders and program staff and partners to assess capacity and readiness for evaluation across multiple EA domains and to collect supplemental information on training and technical assistance (TTA) needs. Specifically, interviews with individual stakeholders at the policy-level within the criminal justice system tracked the SCA initiative’s efforts, evolution, and adaptation over the earlier funding period, and the impact of the grant on cross-systems coordination, collaboration, and data exchange, as well as changes in policies and procedures. Semi-structured interviews with program and partner staff documented screening, assessment, case planning, transition planning, case flow, business-as-usual, and other critical program operations. Additional site visit activities included
 - **Review of program case files and administrative records** to determine data quality, verify the scope and content of client-level data routinely collected, and generate case flow and sample size estimates.
 - **Direct observation of program operations to determine logistics** that may inform subject recruitment and enrollment procedures for the full evaluation.

Drawing on the data collected from the above activities, this report (1) describes the SCA program including the implementation status of the site’s SCA program operations, activities, and characteristics, including adherence to stated policies and protocols and fidelity to the SCA reentry model, (2) examines program maturity, stability, and readiness for evaluation, (3) describes “business as usual” and identifies defensible, viable comparison groups, where possible, (4) documents site capacity for evaluation, including data availability (sources, data format, and technological capabilities) and quality to support process, outcome, impact and cost analyses, (5) examines the scope of any local evaluation efforts, and (6) concludes by presenting the range of viable study design options and evaluation recommendations.

On February 13–14, 2013, the EA team visited the Boston Police Department (BPD) and the Suffolk County House of Correction (SCHOC) in Boston, Massachusetts to learn about the Boston Reentry Initiative (BRI). Interviews were held with BRI program leadership and staff, representatives from partner agencies, and other key stakeholders and programmatic materials were collected. Following the visit, the EA team followed up via email and telephone to clarify program features and operations.

Boston Reentry Initiative Project Summary

The BRI was established in 2000 by the BPD, in partnership with the Suffolk County Sheriff’s Department (SCSD), as a strategy to reduce violent crime in Boston. Aimed at young male adult offenders who pose a high risk for committing violent crimes upon their release from the SCHOC, the BRI uses a joint public safety and social service approach to serve offenders with extensive, serious criminal histories (including violence,

firearm offenses, and/or gang associations) who will return to one of Boston's hotspot (i.e., most violent) neighborhoods or adjacent areas.

Offenders who meet BRI eligibility criteria are identified during their stay at the SCHOC. These offenders attend a BRI panel presentation during which, using a "carrot/stick" approach, they learn about available services and supports offered by BRI staff and community service providers and are warned about the potential future consequences of reoffending from prosecutorial staff who draw on information from participants' criminal history records. Following the panel, the four BRI case managers meet individually with offenders to obtain offender buy-in (the program is voluntary) and complete program intake paperwork and assessments (risk/needs and substance abuse).

BRI case managers then work one-on-one with participants throughout their incarceration (for an average of 12 to 18 months) to develop an individualized reentry plan that takes advantage of SCHOC programming (e.g., educational, vocational, life-skills) and mobilizes services for transition and reintegration back into the community. In addition to case management support and advocacy, a key element of the pre-release phase of the program is a two-week job skills course (developed and instructed by BRI staff). BRI case managers provide transitional support upon release and work with offenders for up to 12 months following release. Additional core components of the post-release phase include employment services (job readiness development, transitional employment, and wage subsidies), financial assistance for educational and vocational services, and emergency funds to meet basic needs (e.g., clothing, food, transportation). BRI participation and recidivism outcomes are tracked for all participants from enrollment to 12 months following release.

The BRI is a deeply rooted, stable program which benefits from community leaders' dedication to addressing the issue of prisoner reentry (e.g., Mayor Thomas Menino convened a task force on the issue within the past 2 years) and long-standing collaborative partnerships between law enforcement, correctional, prosecutorial, social service, and community-based agencies. Program procedures and practices facilitate key stakeholder coordination and information sharing. Although the program has experienced some change, the target population and key program elements—which are well-aligned to the SCA model—have been consistent since initial implementation in 2000. The BRI program materials cite favorable attention received over the years, including a 2004 International Association of Chiefs of Police Community Policing Award. A quasi-experimental recidivism study found that the BRI was associated with lower rates of recidivism (Braga, Piehl, and Hureau 2009). An evaluation is currently underway of the BRI and three additional Massachusetts county reentry programs (modeled after the BRI).

The BRI has been sustained by various funding sources over the years. SCA grant funds have supported the BRI since October 1, 2010. A total of two SCA grant awards were received by the program (FY 2010 and FY 2011) and no-cost extensions were obtained for both awards. An application for additional SCA funds submitted in 2012 was denied; however, the program has sufficient FY 2011 funds remaining to continue operations under the no-cost extension through September 30, 2013. A total of 193 clients

(approximately 10–15 enrolled monthly) were served with SCA grant funds between October 2010 and January 31, 2013.

As a testament to the BRI's stability, stakeholders did not express significant concern to the EA team about the uncertainty of future SCA funds nor did they discuss any significant changes that were planned for the program. Stakeholders did report, however, that the SCA grant has enhanced the BRI and that they will seek additional funding to sustain operations at the current level if and when SCA funding ends.

Implementation

The BRI has been implemented consistently since it was established in 2000. The BRI has sustained a few changes over the years; however, the program's approach and core components have not changed significantly since the BRI was first implemented. Notably, many of the same individuals have been involved in the BRI for years.

The most prominent changes include:

- **Funding.** The BRI has been supported by a variety of funding sources over the years including federal and state grants from the Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, the Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative, and the Charles E. Shannon Community Safety Initiative, as well as the US Attorney's Office (USAO). Despite continuous financial support, the level of funding has not been always been consistent.
- **Community partners.** The BRI has a strong historical tie with Boston's faith-based community. For the first few years of the program, mentors, provided by faith-based organizations located in the neighborhoods to which participants returned, were the source of one-on-one support and advocacy for BRI offenders both pre- and post-release. When SCA funding was received in 2010, only one of the original faith-based partner organizations was still involved as a formal partner (contracted to provide case management services). In late 2011, BPD's contract with the organization was cancelled because the organization could no longer fiscally support the two case manager positions. Currently, two organizations are contracted to provide case managers: Youth Options Unlimited (Y.O. Unlimited) (a reentry and transitional employment program operated under the Mayor's Office of Jobs and Community Services), and Dorchester Bay Economic Development Center (a neighborhood-based economic development organization).
- **Mentors to case managers.** A recent ongoing change is a shift from mentors to professional case managers. The impetus for this change is to create a more formal case management structure that utilizes evidence-based best practices. Stakeholders reported that the change is more in title than role; however, supplemental training and enhanced documentation procedures have been implemented to support this transition.

In addition to the above, since SCA grant funding was received, the BRI has experienced two implementation challenges:

- **Project coordinator:** A BRI project coordinator position was added to support program operations in FY 2011, however the position was filled for only a short time (March 2012 to December 2012) and is currently vacant.
- **Service gaps:** Stakeholders expressed frustration with existing gaps in post-release resources; in particular, there is a lack of housing options and employment opportunities for the target population. A contract with a community-based organization to provide transitional housing and loans for independent housing security deposits was cancelled in late 2011 due to lack of use as BRI participants did not wish to use the available transitional housing beds and few referrals were made for the loan program.

One potential future adjustment not yet realized is if, how, and to what extent, the BRI will be involved in the statewide issue of managing individuals released from Massachusetts state correctional facilities pending new trials as a result of evidence tampering at the state drug lab.⁵ The BPD is working with criminal justice partners to determine a solution and has already contributed to the provision of quasi-BRI panel presentations to this population that included providing releasing individuals with community resource packets and contact numbers. Utilizing BRI case managers to provide supportive services has been discussed; however, this would be potentially accomplished by hiring additional BRI case managers (which has been approved by BJA) so as not to diminish BRI services as currently provided.

Program Logic

The BRI largely reflects the key elements of the SCA Prisoner Reentry Initiative Logic Model with respect to its overarching goals, design, operations, and implementation.

The three primary goals of the BRI, as outlined in program materials, are

1. **To increase public safety**, particularly in Boston’s most violent neighborhoods.
2. **To reduce the rate of recidivism** among high-risk offenders by 50 percent over five years.
3. **To support the successful long-term reintegration of high-risk offenders** into their communities.

To achieve these goals, the BRI is designed to serve “high impact players” returning to Boston’s hotspot neighborhoods who pose the highest risk of committing violent crimes and recidivating based on their criminal histories. The BRI utilizes a “carrot/stick” approach to engage offenders, based on the premise that a combination of heightened public safety enforcement and comprehensive support will deter offenders from continuing their criminal behavior. This approach is realized through the monthly BRI panels that include BRI staff and social service providers who offer the carrot by laying out the variety of available services, and prosecutorial staff who wield the stick by warning offenders about the consequences of future reoffending. The panel encourages open channels of communication to service providers, prosecutors, and probation/parole

⁵ <http://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/specials/druglab>

officers. Services to support successful reintegration and targeted outcomes are provided both pre- and post-release. The BRI model includes strict and swift enforcement and prosecution of BRI offenders who choose to reoffend. Follow-through is made possible through strong stakeholder collaboration and coordination from the time of participant identification to after release.

Furthermore, BRI activities support the achievement of SCA targeted outcomes in the following ways.

- A **validated risk/needs assessment** guides reentry services and transition planning.
- **Priority access to SCHOC services** is offered including educational, vocational, substance abuse treatment, anger management, and parenting skills programs.
- Two-week BRI-tailored **job skills class**, transitional employment assistance, and employment stipends support employment preparation and employment retention.
- **Dedicated case managers** offer substantial advocacy and mentorship from enrollment up to one year following release, including support for stable and healthy relationships with family.
- BRI panel representatives provide **connection to services** (e.g., Massachusetts Department of Revenue representative offers resources for child support assistance).
- Whittier Street Health Center provides **increased access to health care**.

Program staff collects data to track and report on participant outcomes related to BRI goals.

Appendix B provides a graphic portrayal of the program's logic, based on inputs, activities and outcomes. The diagram is a condensed version of the nine-page BRI logic model that was included with the BRI's FY 2012 SCA grant application.

Program Operations

Exhibit A outlines the key characteristics of the BRI which are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

Target Population, Selection, and Enrollment

As previously described, the program targets male offenders between the ages of 17 and 30 with extensive, serious criminal histories (including violent offenses, firearm offenses, gang associations) who are sentenced to SCHOC and who have committed crimes in and/or will return to the city of Boston after release. The majority of participants return to one of Boston's most violent hotspot neighborhoods—Mattapan, Dorchester, or Roxbury (74 percent of BRI participants returned to one of those three neighborhoods in 2011–12).

Exhibit A. Boston Reentry Initiative Site Characteristics

SITE	Boston (MA) Police Department (Lead agency) * Continuation of program implemented in 2001
ENROLLMENT and CASEFLOW	* 193 served as of January 31, 2013 (out of 219 eligible); 10–15 each month invited to Panel * No plans to conclude enrollment * 263–298 total cases likely by September 30, 2013
TARGET POPULATION and ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	* Males 17–30 years old * Extensive, serious criminal histories (including violent and firearm offenses and gang associations) * Sentenced to SCHOC * Returning to city of Boston (majority return to Mattapan, Dorchester, Roxbury neighborhoods) * <i>Eligibility based on offense history</i>
PRE-RELEASE CORE COMPONENTS	* Enrollment within 45 days of intake * Average 12–18 months * BRI Panel – Criminal justice representatives, BRI case managers, community-based service providers present consequences for reoffending and available support (carrot/stick approach) * Four BRI case managers provide individualized advocacy, support, transition planning, and make referrals * SCHOC programming * Two-week job skills class (led by BRI staff) * Meet with Career Development Coordinator and representative from men's health clinic * LSI-R and ASUS (at program enrollment)
POST-RELEASE CORE COMPONENTS	* Twelve months * BRI case managers meet participants upon release * BRI case managers provide transitional support, advocacy, referrals to community resources (e.g., men's health clinic) * Job readiness, transitional employment, job wage subsidies * Educational and vocational assistance (e.g., cover trade certification) * Emergency funds for clothing, basic necessities, metro cards
FEASIBILITY OF RANDOMIZED/ QUASI-DESIGN	QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL—Yes Comparison group from a different county since all eligible offenders are served at SCHOC. RANDOM ASSIGNMENT—No Not good candidate given history, commitment to serving target population, and ability to serve all eligible
LOCAL EVALUATION	YES—external evaluator * Quasi-experimental design * Measuring criminal justice outcomes only
PROGRAM STABILITY	* Operations and core components stable * Deeply rooted and supported by long-standing collaborative partnerships * BPD working with criminal justice partners to determine solution for addressing population of individuals releasing from MA state prisons pending new trials as a result of evidence tampering at state drug lab. Using BRI case managers has been discussed; however, potentially additional case managers would be hired (approved by BJA) so as not to diminish BRI services.
IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES	* Coordinator position open (first coordinator March 2012 to December 2012) * Changes in formal key community partners due to partners' inability to fiscally support case manager positions * Recent ongoing shift from mentors to case managers * Service gaps in employment and housing options; contract with housing partner cancelled due to lack of use (not good fit for population)

The program's selection and enrollment processes are illustrated in a case flow diagram (Exhibit B). The selection process begins with the BRI Data Analyst (at BPD's Boston Regional Intelligence Center [BRIC]). Once a month, the analyst reviews the SCHOC commitment report to identify 17–30 year old male offenders who meet other BRI eligibility criteria. Several data sources, including police intelligence and the Massachusetts Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS), are examined to ascertain whether the offender is active in the city (i.e., has committed crimes in and/or will return to a Boston neighborhood) and whether the offender is a high impact player with a criminal history that merits program inclusion. Although the criteria include some subjectivity, BRI program staff and stakeholders conveyed a clear, consistent understanding of the standards for inclusion. Participants do not enter the program by way of referral.

Once the list of potential eligible offenders is compiled, the BRI reentry coordinator, the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office, and the USAO review the list to identify offenders who are not eligible. Reasons for exclusion include an ICE detainer, an open state or federal case, or placement in administrative segregation. Offenders may be reconsidered for BRI participation if and when their status changes (e.g., they move out of administrative segregation⁶).

Approximately 10–15 eligible offenders are identified each month. Potential BRI participants attend a BRI panel presentation⁷ during which they are introduced to the BRI program and available supports and services offered by BRI case managers and community service providers and warned about the potential future consequences of reoffending from representatives from the USAO, the DA's Office, the Massachusetts Department of Probation, and the Massachusetts Parole Board. Prosecutors present a coordinated, informed front having reviewed participants' criminal history records prior to the panel. Offenders are given the opportunity to ask questions of and confer with panel presenters during and after the panel (e.g., discuss child support issues with the Massachusetts Department of Revenue representative; clarify post-release supervision requirements with probation staff). The day before the panel, BRI staff brief potential participants on the purpose and format of the panel and the voluntary nature of the program so that they know what to expect.

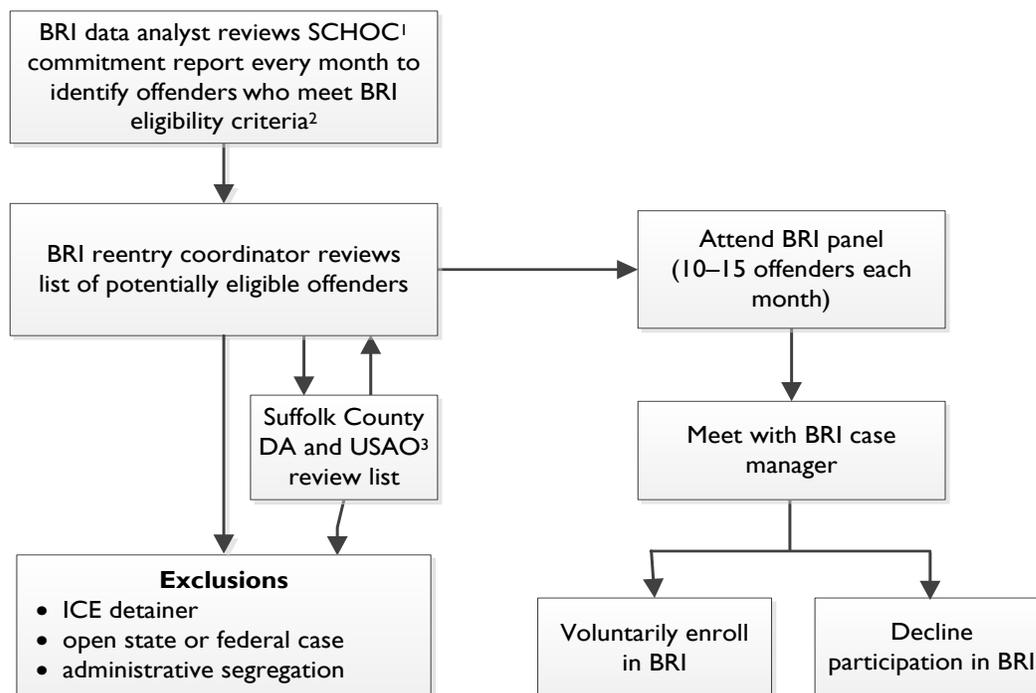
Following the panel, the four BRI case managers meet individually with participants to further describe the program, obtain offender buy-in,⁸ complete intake paperwork, and administer the Level of Service Inventory-Revised: Screening Version (LSI-R: SV) and the Adult Substance

⁶ If an offender remains in administrative segregation for the duration of his jail term *after* BRI enrollment, BRI pre-release services will be discontinued but the individual will remain eligible for post-release services.

⁷ In rare situations, an eligible offender is unable to attend the panel for security reasons (e.g., gang/personality conflict with another participant) and would be scheduled for a panel at a later date.

⁸ An offender may change his mind after he declines BRI participation, but he would have to initiate engagement; case managers do not continue BRI recruitment.

Exhibit B. Boston Reentry Initiative (BRI) Case Flow



1. Suffolk County House of Corrections

2. In addition to being sentenced to SCHOC, eligibility criteria include:

- Male
- 17–30 years old
- Returning to Boston (*Note that the majority of participants return to the neighborhoods of Mattapan, Dorchester, Roxbury however eligibility is not limited to these areas.*)
- Extensive, serious criminal histories that include violence, firearms, and/or gang associations

3. United States Attorney’s Office

Abuse Survey (ASUS)⁹. BRI enrollment occurs usually within 2 months of an offender's intake at SCHOC.

Pre-Release Processes and Core Components

Four BRI case managers work with participants throughout their incarceration (12–18 months on average) to provide individualized transition planning, support and advocacy. On average, case managers meet with participants twice a month. All BRI clients participate in a two week job skills training class (developed and instructed by the BRI reentry coordinator and the BRI case managers). Topics covered include resume writing, interview skills, dressing for success, financial literacy, and their rights with respect to their criminal history records. In addition, case managers help clients identify jail programs and services (e.g., educational, vocational, life-skills, spiritual) that meet their needs and facilitate enrollment (BRI clients receive priority placement). Approximately four months prior to release, participants' goals and needs (e.g., housing, employment, identification, benefits, transportation) are reassessed in preparation for transition and reintegration back into the community. Clients who will have employment and/or health care needs upon release meet with community service providers (specifically, the career development coordinator from Y.O. Unlimited and a representative from Whittier Street Health Clinic) prior to release to prepare for post-release service provision.

Post-Release Processes and Core Components

Case managers work with clients up to 12 months following release to provide continued support, including providing referrals to services, facilitating access (e.g., providing transportation) to services, advocating on behalf of a client to probation or parole, and providing family support and mentoring. Additional post-release BRI key elements include employment assistance, employment stipends, educational/vocational assistance (e.g., pay for trade certification), and emergency funds to meet basic needs (e.g., food, clothing, metro cards).

The EA team observed that although victim assistance, mental health services, and substance abuse treatment were occasionally mentioned in the program materials, stakeholders did not discuss the availability and provision of these services during the site visit.

Stakeholders reported that an important aspect of the BRI is the case manager-client relationship—the case manager helps offenders succeed, in part, through building rapport and trust with the offender and his family and serving as a positive role model. Staff reported that it is not rare for case managers to maintain informal contact with clients for an extended time past the formal program duration.

BRI services are discontinued for the small number of participants who relocate to areas outside of the city, although BRI case managers make an effort to connect clients to services in their area.

⁹ Stakeholders noted that these assessments provide an indication of where the client is and what services are needed. The assessments are administered only to offenders who voluntarily enroll in BRI. They are not readministered at a later date.

Key Staff and Resources

The four case manager positions are fully supported by SCA grant funds (three at Y.O. Unlimited and one at Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation); the grant covers cell phones for the case managers and SCSD provides a dedicated office space in the jail. The SCA grant covers one and a half staff positions at Y.O. Unlimited dedicated to employment development and coordination, as well as a small amount of organizational management time. In addition, Y.O. Unlimited manages grant resources that directly support clients including employment stipends, educational/vocational financial assistance, and emergency funds to provide basic needs. Other grant-supported key BRI staff include the BRI project coordinator¹⁰ and the BRI data analyst. The BRI reentry coordinator is fully supported by SCSD, and additional monetary and in-kind matches are provided by the BPD, the SCSD, Y.O. Unlimited, and Dorchester Bay. Illustrative of the strong support that exists for the BRI, many of the core administrative functions of BRI have been sustained by in-kind contributions from BPD and SCSD, and more recently, the Mayor's Office (Y.O. Unlimited).

Several structures are in place to oversee and guide BRI operations. The BRI Task Force meets monthly to review policy, procedures, and protocol with respect to implementation of the BRI program and shared database, as well as to negotiate partnerships with service providers. In addition to the BPD and the SCSD, the task force includes representatives from the Suffolk County DA's Office, the USAO, the Massachusetts Department of Probation, the Massachusetts Parole Board, the Massachusetts Department of Revenue, Y.O. Unlimited, Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation, and Whittier Street Health Center. In addition to the task force, the BRI's program materials describe a BRI direct service team that supports case management practices and client needs, as well as new and ongoing subcommittees to address sustainability, housing, family support, and probation.

Business as Usual

All offenders at SCHOC have an assigned facility caseworker and receive an individualized service plan and a facility discharge plan. However, facility caseworkers' time to counsel and support offenders is very limited. The BRI case managers significantly supplement standard case management given that they are dedicated to working solely with BRI participants and have much smaller caseloads; as a result, transition planning is greatly enhanced for BRI participants. All offenders at the jail have access to a variety of services including educational, vocational, spiritual, and life skills programs. BRI participants have access to the same programs, however they may receive priority placement (via BRI case manager advocacy). Additionally, BRI participants benefit from the BRI job skills class which is available only to them.

Length of stay at SCHOC is not affected by BRI participation. Following release, probation and parole supervisory requirements are not different for non-BRI and BRI clients. All offenders releasing from jail to Boston have access to many of the same community services that BRI participants do; however BRI participation supports BRI clients in identifying and accessing needed services. Specifically, they have the

¹⁰ The Project coordinator is located in BPD's Office of Research and Development, the entity responsible for SCA grant administration.

advantage of connecting with employment assistance and men's health prior to release, as well as accessing wage stipends, educational and vocational financial assistance, and emergency funds for basic necessities including transportation as they reintegrate into the community. Case managers create a bridge from the jail to the community and provide mentorship, advocacy, and serve as a role models for the clients and their families.

Potential Comparison Groups

The BRI is able to serve all eligible offenders at the SCHOC. A comparison group would need to be identified through another county. Both local evaluations (described in more detail below in the Local Evaluation section on page 17) utilized a quasi-experimental design—the first used a historical matched comparison (offenders committed to SCHOC two years prior to BRI implementation) and the second study (ongoing) identified offenders in another county (Middlesex) that does not offer reentry services.

The EA team heard conflicting perspectives regarding the use of random assignment. Although some expressed an interest in this strategy for the research benefits, others expressed opposition since the population served poses such a dire risk to public safety.

Training and Technical Assistance

The Council of State Governments conducted a three-day site visit in January 2012. A report summarizing the visit provided recommendations in four areas.

1. Continuing education of caseworkers including best practices around case management.
2. Screening, assessment, and referral process to ensure identification of medium-high risk offenders and to appropriately develop individualized plans based on risks and needs.
3. Areas of expansion for the BRI panel sessions.
4. Reengaging and identifying new partners for the BRI Reentry Task Force and subcommittees.

The TTA staff provided resources, guidance and suggestions for addressing these areas identified for program improvement. The EA team believes that there may be room to improve the incorporation of risk/needs assessments into case planning procedures—a need that has already been identified by program staff and TTA providers.

Additionally, the BPD hired Health Resources in Action (HRiA) to provide training around case management best practices and provide consultation on improving BRI panel presentations. HRiA trainers led a customized two-day retreat in late 2012 for BRI stakeholders. The majority of the retreat was designed for the case managers (one half day included other stakeholders). Topics covered included myths and facts about reentry, motivational interviewing and client centered service, and engaging clients with substance abuse and trauma issues. Stakeholders reported that the training facilitated BRI staff alignment and supported the transition from mentorship to case management, with an increased emphasis on case planning, documentation, and client tracking. Planning for a second one-day training focused on skill-building and best practices is underway.

Stakeholders did not report additional TTA needs, nor did the EA team identify any beyond those already described. The EA team considers the BRI's dedication to program improvement commendable.

Data Elements, Data Sources, Systems, and Strategies

The BRI uses a database created specifically for the BRI in 2000 (referred to as “the BRIG”) to track BRI case flow, client descriptive information, case management services, and recidivism outcomes. The BRIG database is maintained by a full-time BRI data analyst who enters information about all new participants and updates the information on a regular basis. The database is shared with SCHOC—BRI case managers and the reentry coordinator have write access from the jail. The reentry coordinator enters information pertaining to enrollment and records updates (e.g., probation/parole status). The case managers enter case notes and services provided on a regular basis which is submitted to the BRI data analyst once a month. The data analyst produces quarterly reports on BRI participants' status and recidivism outcomes.

The BRIG database is housed at the BPD's BRIC which supplies intelligence to enable the BPD to effectively address criminal activity including shootings, gang violence, and terrorism. To determine BRI eligibility, the BRI data analyst relies on several BRIC data sources (e.g., police incident reports, field interrogation and/or observation reports, gang intelligence, the Partnership Advancing Communities Together database) as well as Massachusetts Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) contained in the Massachusetts CJIS. This statewide data source would include information on BRI participants as well as potential comparison subjects. The local evaluations described below utilized CORI data.

The SCHOC uses a Lock and Track information management system. BRI program staff (case managers and the data analyst) have access to Lock & Track data. The EA team did not have the opportunity to investigate the Lock & Track system, but we intend to explore the system in more detail as part of the full evaluation.

Local Evaluation

As previously mentioned, the BRI was the subject of an evaluation (Braga, et al. 2009) that used a quasi-experimental design to compare recidivism outcomes of BRI participants to those of a cohort of offenders released from SCHOC two years prior to BRI implementation. The study found that the BRI was associated with significant recidivism reductions. Specifically, BRI participants were found to have 30 percent lower rates of re-arrest than comparison group members, although differences between rates of arrest among the two groups narrowed over the three-year follow up period.

Currently, the same investigator, Anthony Braga of Harvard University, is conducting another study of recidivism. The study uses a quasi-experimental design and survival analysis to evaluate the effects of four Project Safe Neighborhood jail reentry programs (including BRI), on subsequent recidivism of program participants relative to a matched control group. The study uses Massachusetts CORI data to measure recidivism (arrest). The treatment group includes reentry program participants from four counties (Suffolk

[BRI], Bristol, Norfolk, and Plymouth)¹¹. The comparison group includes offenders committed to Middlesex County House of Correction (which does not offer reentry services) during the study period—calendar year 2010. Preliminary findings are expected to be available in spring of 2013. The study is supported by the USAO.

Support for Additional Evaluation Activities

BRI staff and stakeholders were very hospitable and forthcoming. The majority of key stakeholders expressed a basic understanding of and appreciation for evaluation. Stakeholders were receptive to the EA team and to additional evaluation, save for concerns voiced about redundancy of a national evaluation given the ongoing local evaluation.

Stakeholders did not articulate questions for future evaluation beyond recidivism reduction. Several did however express an interest in program improvement, particularly in the areas of housing and employment, as well as best practices and strategies for preventing criminal behavior among youth.

Evaluability Assessment Recommendations

The BRI would be a strong candidate for *process and implementation evaluation*, as well as well as the *recidivism outcome analysis* using administrative records, and *cost analysis*. Evaluation recommendations and considerations are summarized in Exhibit C.

The BRI is a well-established, stable program with clearly defined components, consistent selection and enrollment processes, and a steady case flow sufficient to support an outcome evaluation. The program weaknesses noted by the EA team (integration of validated risk/needs assessment, lack of housing opportunities) are being addressed in ongoing program improvement efforts. The question of if and how the BRI will be involved in providing reentry services to individuals releasing from Massachusetts state prisons as a result of evidence tampering at the state drug lab has not been resolved; however, stakeholders predicted that it is unlikely that BRI services for the current target population will be affected.

As previously stated, a quasi-experimental research design would be feasible using a comparison group from another jurisdiction. The EA team believes that the BRI is not a good candidate for random assignment given the history of the program, stakeholders' strong commitment to serving the target population, and the ability of the program to provide services to all eligible offenders. Furthermore, since the BRI program model has been studied and shown to be associated with positive recidivism outcomes, and is currently the subject of a rigorous, ongoing local evaluation, an impact evaluation of the BRI does not seem to be the best use of limited evaluation resources.

¹¹ Bristol, Norfolk, and Plymouth Counties' programs utilize different eligibility criteria but all utilize a panel presentation modeled after the BRI.

Exhibit C. Boston Reentry Initiative Evaluation Recommendations

SITE	Boston (MA) Police Department (Lead agency)
PROS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Long standing program integrated into SCHOC/BPD * Steady case flow * Recognized as model program * Extensive on-going evaluation (by Anthony Braga)
CONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Selection process and eligibility criteria includes subjectivity * Post-release component largely consists of support and advocacy by case manager and employment assistance * BRI case managers may begin to serve DOC offenders releasing due to evidence tampering at state drug lab; uncertain if/how this will impact program, but the hiring of additional case managers to serve this population has been approved by BJA * Extensive on-going evaluation (by Anthony Braga)
LEVEL/TYPE OF EVALUATION RECOMMENDED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Process/implementation * Recidivism outcome * Cost study I

Summary

The Boston Reentry Initiative, founded on long-standing collaborations between law enforcement, prosecutorial, and faith- and community-based organizations, uses a joint public safety and social service approach to reduce violent, gun, and gang crime among young male offenders with extensive, serious criminal histories and support their successful reintegration into their Boston neighborhoods. While the BRI is the subject of rigorous local evaluation, process and cost evaluations will supplement the previous and ongoing evaluation work and likely yield useful information for practitioners, program developers and policy makers.

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Appendix A.

Second Chance Act Logic Model

Second Chance Act Prisoner Reentry Initiative Logic Model

Goal(s): *Increase Public Safety and Reduce Recidivism by 50 percent over 5 years*

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES	OUTCOME MEASURES	LONG TERM OUTCOMES/IMPACT*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Support of the Chief Executive officer of the state, unit of local government, territory, or Indian Tribe ■ Extensive description of the role of state corrections departments, community corrections agencies, juvenile justice systems, and/or local jail systems – that will ensure successful reentry ■ Extensive evidence of collaboration with state and local government agencies, as well as stakeholder groups. ■ Analysis plan for: statutory, regulatory, rules-based, and practice-based hurdles to reintegration of offenders ■ Target Population (TP): High-Risk Offenders ■ Risk and Needs Assessments ■ Reentry Task Force membership ■ 5-year Reentry Strategic Plan ◇ Plan to follow and track TP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop and coordinate a Reentry Task Force ■ Administer validated assessment tools to assess the risk factors and needs of returning inmates ■ Establish pre-release planning procedures ■ Provide offenders with educational, literacy, and vocational services ■ Provide substance abuse, mental health, and health treatment and services ■ Provide coordinated supervision and comprehensive services for offenders upon release from prison or jail ■ Connect inmates with their children and families ■ Provide victim appropriate services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A reduction in recidivism rates for the target population ■ Reduction in crime ■ Increased employment opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of new offenders added to the TP this quarter Total number of TP in the initiative Number of TP released this quarter Total number of TP released since the beginning of the initiative Number of TP resentenced to prison with a new conviction this quarter Total Number of TP resentenced to prison with a new conviction since the beginning of the initiative Total number of crimes reported during this quarter Total population for the area that the TP is returning to (i.e., statewide, county, city, neighborhood) Number of TP who found employment this quarter Total Number of TP who are employed Number of TP who have enrolled in an educational program this quarter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increase public safety ■ Reduce Recidivism by 50 percent over 5 years

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Sustainability Plan ◇ Plan to collect and provide data for performance measures ■ Pre- and post-release programming ■ Mentors ■ Provide a 50 percent match [only 25 percent can be in-kind] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Deliver continuous and appropriate drug treatment, medical care, job training and placement, educational services, and housing opportunities ■ Examine ways to pool resources and funding streams to promote lower recidivism rates ■ Collect and provide data to meet performance measurement requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increased education opportunities ■ Reduction in violations of conditions of supervised release ■ Increased payment of child support ■ Increased housing opportunities ■ Increased participation in substance abuse services ■ Increased participation in mental health services 	<p>Total number of TP who are currently enrolled in an educational program</p> <p>Number of TP who have violated the conditions of their release this quarter</p> <p>Total number of TP who have violated the conditions of their release</p> <p>Total number of TP that are required to pay child support</p> <p>Number of TP who paid their child support this quarter</p> <p>Number of target population who found housing this quarter</p> <p>Total number of TP who have housing</p> <p>Number of TP who were assessed as needing substance abuse services this quarter</p> <p>Total number of TP who have been assessed as needing substance abuse services</p> <p>Number of TP who enrolled in a substance abuse program this quarter</p> <p>Total number of TP enrolled in a substance abuse program</p> <p>Number of TP who were assessed as needing mental health services this quarter</p> <p>Total number of TP who have been assessed as needing mental health services</p> <p>Number of TP who enrolled in a mental health program this quarter</p> <p>Total number of TP enrolled in a mental health program</p>	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Reduction in drug abuse ■ Reduction in alcohol abuse	<p>Total number of TP re-assessed regarding substance use during the reporting period</p> <p>Total number of TP re-assessed as having <i>reduced</i> their substance use during this reporting period</p> <p>Total number of TP re-assessed regarding alcohol use during the reporting period</p> <p>Total number of TP re-assessed as having <i>reduced</i> their alcohol use during this reporting period</p>	
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Appendix B.

Boston Reentry Initiative (BRI) Logic Model

Appendix B. Boston Reentry Initiative Logic Model

(Italics indicate features unique to the program)

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOME MEASURES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mayor’s Citywide Reentry Task Force ▪ BRI Reentry Task Force ▪ History of collaboration among law enforcement, correctional, prosecutorial, and faith- and community-based organizations ▪ BRI Staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ BRI project coordinator (BPD) ▪ BRI data analyst ▪ BRI reentry coordinator (SCHOC) ▪ BRI case managers (Y.O.U., Dorchester Bay) ▪ Transitional employment and career development coordinators (Y.O.U.) ▪ Core Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Boston Police Department ▪ Suffolk County House of Correction (SCHOC) ▪ Youth Options Unlimited ▪ Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation ▪ Suffolk County District Attorney’s Office ▪ US Attorney’s Office ▪ MA Dept. of Probation ▪ MA Dept. of Revenue ▪ MA Parole Board ▪ Whittier Street Health Center ▪ Victim Advocates ▪ Key Elements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Risk assessment (LSI-R) ▪ High-risk target population (TP) ▪ Pre- and post-release case management ▪ Employment assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pre-Release <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Convene monthly BRI panel—service providers offer resources, prosecutors warn about future reoffending</i> ▪ <i>Administer LSI-R and ASUS assessments</i> ▪ <i>Provide individualized case management and advocacy</i> ▪ <i>Develop transition plan</i> ▪ Connect offenders to SCHOC programs and services ▪ <i>Provide job skills class</i> ▪ <i>Connect offenders to employment assistance and men’s health/reentry programming</i> ▪ Post-Release <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Individualized case management and advocacy</i> ▪ Make referrals to counseling and treatment programs ▪ <i>Provide transitional employment assistance</i> ▪ <i>Provide emergency assistance with basic necessities and transportation</i> ▪ Connect offenders with housing opportunities ▪ <i>Provide financial assistance</i> ▪ Victim notification and support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enroll 10–15 high impact offenders returning to Boston neighborhoods ▪ Channels of communication opened between offenders and panel representatives ▪ Employment, educational, vocational training, housing placements ▪ Health and addiction assessments, mental health and substance abuse referrals and treatment, insurance coverage, counseling, and overall wellness ▪ Assistance with basic needs (food, clothing, transportation) ▪ Enhanced supervision ▪ Coordination of enforcement and supervision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduced recidivism among TP by 50 percent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduce reincarcerations ▪ Reduce arrests ▪ Reduced gang activity ▪ Enhanced public safety ▪ Increased pro-social behavior and stability ▪ Increased lawful employment ▪ Educational advancement ▪ Increased safe and appropriate housing ▪ Increased family/pro-social supports/social stability ▪ Improved offender wellness ▪ Smoother transition back into family and community networks