

WELCOME HOME!

YOUR FIRST 30 DAYS

PRE-RELEASE:

LOCATE AND/OR OBTAIN YOUR BIRTH CERTIFICATE

Before you get out, if you have family, ask them where your birth certificate is and to have it ready. If you don't have a Birth Certificate, order one or have someone order it for you ASAP and have it sent somewhere safe: www.vitalchek.com/vital-records

FIGURE OUT WHERE YOU'RE SLEEPING THE FIRST NIGHT OR TWO

- Call friends and family.
- Look for short-term government housing opportunities. If you believe you have COVID and have no place to stay safely, LA County provides spaces to quarantine to those experiencing homelessness: 1-833-540-0473
- Purchase a tent at Wal-Mart for as little as \$25, set up the tent in a safe place near the Parole Office you will report to.

LINE UP YOUR RESOURCES

Make sure to get updated contact information for all of your loved ones and your valuable resources. Also, make a transition plan. You can find great resources and a template at www.211oc.org/re-entry.html.

POST-RELEASE:

STEP ONE: CASH OUT YOUR GATE MONEY

You are entitled to receive \$200 of gate money when you leave prison. Technically, you receive a certain amount for every day that you spent incarcerated, but the amount maxes out at \$200. You will receive that money on a card. However, every time you use the card, it will charge you a service fee. \$200 isn't a lot of money, and you will need all of it. If you withdraw all of it at once from an ATM, you will only have to pay the service fee one time. Then you'll get all \$195 of the \$200 instead of paying that service fee over and over. It is smart to use some of that money to buy a visa card so that you can make online purchases if necessary.

STEP TWO: GET YOUR BENEFITS

- You'll need your benefit cards for many things, and this is also how you get health coverage, food help, and cash assistance. Sign up for MediCal, GR, and FoodStamps. Call or go online to begin the application for DPSS.
 - Call 866-613-3777.
 - Go online to yourbenefits.laclrs.org/
- If you don't have access to a phone, you can go to an office and ask for assistance at the doors. You can locate an office here: dpss.lacounty.gov/en/resources/offices.html

STEP THREE: VISIT YOUR PAROLE AGENT AND FOLLOW THEIR INSTRUCTIONS

STEP FOUR: FIGURE OUT WHERE YOU'RE SLEEPING FOR THE NEXT SIX MONTHS

You may qualify for funded housing. If you are required to be in transitional housing for six months, you most likely qualify for funded housing. A 1040 form will be required from your PO to send you to STOP- funded or THP-funded housing. Ask your PO about the possibility of housing opportunities. They may be able to assist you with rent for a month or two or help you find placement. Make sure to advocate for yourself and ask them for assistance.

STEP FIVE: GET TRANSPORTATION

Get a transit pass for the County where you now live. In LA, you can buy a TAP card at any Metro Rail Station, and it will let you ride the bus or train. Purchase a used bicycle at a thrift store or used bike shop or a new bicycle at Wal-Mart for as cheap as \$125.

STEP SIX: GET CLOTHING

At your housing, there will often be extra clothing you can ask about from others. Reentry organizations often have clothing that you can have. Contact them about clothes in your size.

STEP SEVEN: CREATE A SYSTEM FOR MAKING AND SAVING SAFE PASSWORDS

You need to have a different password for each of your important accounts. Do not reuse passwords, do not use passwords that have names or dates that are familiar to you, do not use passwords that are simple or short. Do not store your passwords in your phone. If you have to, write down your passwords on paper and keep them somewhere safe. Never let someone else make your password for you.

STEP EIGHT: SET UP A GMAIL ACCOUNT

Make a gmail email account for yourself. You will need it for many things. Choose an email address with your full name and if necessary, additional numbers to make it unique that are not dates. Choose a secure password and make sure to remember it by memorizing it or writing it down. accounts.google.com/signup

STEP NINE: GET YOUR ID

You can complete the application for an ID card at any DMV office location on paper. You will need to prove your citizenship (birth certificate), you'll need your social security number, and you'll also need a document to prove residency in California (you can get a letter from your PO). If you want to get the REAL ID (necessary to fly), you have to prove your SSN (Social Security card or tax document), and provide two documents to show residency. You can also complete your application online, but you'll still need to go in to get your picture taken: www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/driver-licenses-identification-cards/dl-id-online-app-edl-44/

STEP TEN: GET A LIFELINE CELL PHONE

Free cellphones and cellphone plans are available to low-income individuals. You will need proof of low income and ID. Any of your benefits cards will prove that you are low-income. You can use a MediCal or EBT card. You can get a printout of your MediCal enrollment from Rite-Aid. Lifeline phones come with very limited data plans. Whenever possible, connect to the WiFi in the location you are at to avoid using your own data. www.californialifeline.com

STEP ELEVEN: GET A SOCIAL SECURITY CARD

You can apply for your Social Security Card at an SSA office or you can apply online. You will need your Birth Certificate and a picture ID. If you apply online, you will need photocopies of these documents. www.ssa.gov/ssnumber/



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YOUR NEXT THREE MONTHS

STEP TWELVE: APPLY FOR A BANK ACCOUNT

You'll need ID, your SSN, and possibly a small fee to open a new account. You can open one online or in person. Some banks require a credit card to open an account, so you'll often need to try big banks or credit unions to find one that will allow you to open an account.

STEP THIRTEEN: GET YOUR DRIVER LICENSE

If you've never had a license, you'll need to apply for an instruction permit and pass the knowledge test. You can find practice tests online. After this, you can sign up to take the driving test. www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/driver-licenses-identification-cards/instruction-permits/

STEP FOURTEEN: FIND EMPLOYMENT

There are many staffing agencies and worksorce centers that can get you started in a temporary position almost immediately. You can register with more than one to widen your options. Here are just two examples of places to contact to start looking for work:

workforce.lacounty.gov/

www.sbsafety.com

STEP FIFTEEN: GET A CELLPHONE PLAN WITH MORE DATA

Join together with family or friends to get a family plan at one of the affordable cellphone companies. Many people use MetroPCS, Verizon, Cricket, or T-Mobile.

STEP SIXTEEN: BUY A CHEAP LAPTOP

You can practice your computer skills and have more access to resources and entertainment if you have your own laptop to use. You can buy a refurbished laptop or a Chromebook for under \$300. Make sure to check warranties for this item.

STEP SEVENTEEN: PURSUE YOUR EDUCATION

If you'd like to gain more certifications or degrees, you should start to research how to enroll and how to fit them into your schedule. There are many free opportunities. You should also enroll in free online courses and any technology courses that are available to you.

www.laccd.edu

YOU'VE DONE IT! SETTLE IN

All along the way, hopefully you've taken time to enjoy your freedom. Make sure that you also connect with all the valuable connections that you made while you were in. And, now that you've put so much work into getting settled, support your community however you can. Give back and help others to live a life of joy and purpose!