



## Faith-Based Mentoring and Support Programs

The Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA) has entered into an innovative partnership with the District of Columbia's faith-based institutions to offer support and assistance to offenders under supervision in the community.

This partnership will link offenders with faith-based institutions that offer the type of programming the offender needs—such as job training, parenting classes, or transitional housing assistance. Mentoring is a key feature of the program. Over 120 prospective mentors are currently in CSOSA-sponsored training to provide personal support to offenders under community supervision.

### Which offenders are eligible for these programs and services?

In the initial, pilot phase of the program, referrals will be made primarily from the population of offenders returning to the community from prison. Supervision officers within the Transitional Interventions for Parole Supervision (TIPS) program will screen offenders in the halfway houses to identify candidates for mentoring and service referrals.

As the network of available services expands, referral opportunities will be available to more offenders. It is expected that within a year of the first referrals, services will be available to many offenders on probation and parole supervision. Certain exclusionary criteria will be maintained. Sex offenders, active mental health cases, repeat violent offenders, and offenders with a pattern of active drug use will not be referred for faith-based services but will be referred to CSOSA programming.

### How are offenders referred to these services?

Offenders will be screened for program participation by CSOSA's Community Supervision Officers. Referrals will be processed through the Supervisory Community Supervision Officer of the branch to which the offender is assigned. The District of Columbia has been divided into three service areas, or clusters, for program matching and administration. Each cluster has a lead institution and a Cluster Coordinator. Referrals will be transmitted from the Supervisory Community Supervision Officer to the Cluster Coordinator, who maintains an inventory of that cluster's resources (participating institutions, program slots available, mentors available, etc.). Every attempt will be made to place the offender in a program or mentorship in his or her cluster of residence.

The cluster boundaries and lead churches are:

<b>Cluster A</b>	<b>Wards 7, 8</b>	<b>East of the River Clergy-Police-Community Partnership</b>
<b>Cluster B</b>	<b>Wards 5, 6</b>	<b>Pilgrim Baptist Church</b>
<b>Cluster C</b>	<b>Wards 1, 2, 3, 4</b>	<b>New Commandment Baptist Church</b>

### How do these programs relate to supervision?

CSOSA's supervision model emphasizes integrating offenders into the community. Risk of new criminal activity decreases as the offender develops pro-social, healthy relationships and activities. Faith-based institutions provide an ideal setting for this type of positive socialization. Moreover, the District of Columbia's faith community has a rich history of outreach to incarcerated individuals. This initiative builds on that tradition to serve offenders in the community.

Faith-based programming supplements and enriches supervision. It helps the offender develop accountability to self and to the community, but it does not replace accountability to the supervision officer, the court or the U.S. Parole Commission. Participation in any faith-based programming is voluntary.

*For more information about this initiative, contact Hal Williams, at CSOSA, 633 Indiana Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20004, (202) 220-5306.*