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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE BILL

No. 1968 Session of  
2021

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INTRODUCED BY YOUNG, McCLINTON, BROOKS, GUENST, LEE, HILL-EVANS,  
BOBACK, SANCHEZ, BURGOS, HARRIS, SCHLOSSBERG, HOHENSTEIN,  
DALEY, PARKER, DEASY AND SIMS, OCTOBER 12, 2021

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY, OCTOBER 12, 2021

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AN ACT

1 Amending Title 61 (Prisons and Parole) of the Pennsylvania  
2 Consolidated Statutes, in safe community reentry, further  
3 providing for Safe Community Reentry Program and for contract  
4 for services.

5 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
6 hereby enacts as follows:

7 Section 1. Section 4903(b) of Title 61 of the Pennsylvania  
8 Consolidated Statutes is amended by adding a paragraph to read:

9 § 4903. Safe Community Reentry Program.

10 \* \* \*

11 (b) Assessment and plan.--

12 \* \* \*

13 (4) The correctional institution or the board shall  
14 counsel and assist in the completion of applications for  
15 public benefit programs at least 20 days prior to release for  
16 which each incarcerated individual may be eligible following  
17 release from incarceration. Counseling shall include the  
18 following public benefit programs and assistance:

- 1           (i) Medical assistance.
- 2           (ii) Medicaid for former foster care youth.
- 3           (iii) Medical assistance for workers with  
4 disabilities.
- 5           (iv) Medicare savings.
- 6           (v) Children's Health Insurance Program.
- 7           (vi) Health insurance marketplace.
- 8           (vii) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.
- 9           (viii) Cash assistance.
- 10          (ix) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.
- 11          (x) Long-term living services, home and community-  
12 based.
- 13          (xi) Long-term living services, nursing home and  
14 related facilities.
- 15          (xii) Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program.
- 16          (xiii) Free or reduced price school meals.
- 17          (xiv) Child Care Works.
- 18          (xv) Head Start.
- 19          (xvi) Women, Infants and Children.
- 20          (xvii) Department of Human Service's family planning  
21 services.
- 22          (xviii) Access to oral contraceptives.
- 23          (xix) Public housing assistance and shelter needs.
- 24          (xx) Emergency shelter for victims of domestic  
25 violence.
- 26          (xxi) Employment assistance.
- 27          (xxii) Assistance with Supplemental Security Income.
- 28          (xxiii) Assistance with Supplemental Security  
29 Disability Income.
- 30          (xxiv) Information on family law issues relating to

1 custody, child support, divorce and domestic violence.

2 (xxv) Referrals for free legal assistance.

3 (xxvi) Information on community mental health and  
4 emotional support programs.

5 (xxvii) Other Federal or State programs selected by  
6 the correctional institution or board.

7 \* \* \*

8 Section 2. Section 4904(a) introductory paragraph and (b) of  
9 Title 61 are amended and subsection (a) is amended by adding a  
10 paragraph to read:

11 § 4904. Contract for services.

12 (a) Authority.--The [department] correctional institution  
13 and the board may contract with community organizations and  
14 other nonprofit or for-profit entities to provide programs and  
15 services under this chapter. The programs and services provided  
16 under these contracts may include:

17 \* \* \*

18 (16) Assisting incarcerated individuals in applying for  
19 and obtaining access to public benefit programs upon release  
20 from incarceration and providing information about any of the  
21 public benefit programs and assistance under section 4903(b)  
22 (4) (relating to Safe Community Reentry Program).

23 (b) Accountability.--To ensure accountability, any contract  
24 entered under this section shall contain specific performance  
25 measures that the [department] correctional institution and the  
26 board shall use to evaluate compliance with the terms of the  
27 contract.

28 Section 3. This act shall take effect in 60 days.