

## Lead & Mentoring Organizations

A *Lead Organization* is an experienced service organization within the community that takes the lead in recruiting, screening, training, matching and supervising mentors.

A *Mentoring Organization* is a community or faith-based organization of any kind that provides mentors. A *Mentor* is an individual who provides guidance, direction, advice, support and reinforcement of pro-social thinking and skills to a mentee, either through one-on-one matches, or through group meetings.

## Mentoring Safely

- Careful screening & matching
- Detailed training & supervision
- Clear communication with Parole Officers and Mentoring Coordinators
- Clear policies and boundaries regarding contact in the community, and monetary and property issues
- 24/7 access to Mentoring Coordinators



*Dear Fellow Kansan,*

*Kansas has a rich history of serving those in need. When a citizen has finished serving a prison sentence, it is time to let him or her have a second chance to return home and be productive. Mentors provide critical support in the areas of job training, reintegrating safely with family, recovering from addiction, and living a law-abiding life.*

*I am grateful for your willingness to join in this important and rewarding work. Mentoring offenders leads to increased public safety, restored citizens, healthier families, and stronger communities. It provides mentors with a chance to change lives. It gives community and faith-based organizations an opportunity to make Kansas a better place to live. And it holds true to our state motto: Ad Astra per Aspera — to the stars through difficulties.*

*Sincerely,*

*Sam Brownback  
Governor of Kansas*

If you are interested in mentoring offenders, please contact:

**Gloria Geither**

**Mentoring Director**

**Kansas Department of Corrections:**

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Mentoring Adult Offenders in Kansas  
**Mentoring4Success**

## Mentoring4Success “The Helen Initiative”

*Twenty years ago, Helen served 15 years in prison for writing bad checks. She battled mental illness and lost her family ties and support while in prison. After being released and with no place to go, Helen stood outside the fence at the women’s prison in Topeka, asking to be let in – time and time again. There was no one to send her to for help. Helen slept on the streets of Topeka and, in time, she found her way to Wichita. Several years later, Helen died – homeless and alone.*

*If Helen had been able to have a support person – someone to help her find resources, get connected to mental health care, give her advice and kindness – things may have been different.*

*Mentors make a difference.*

Mentoring4Success (M4S) is a statewide initiative that delivers mentoring services to help offenders safely and successfully return to communities. This community-based effort is led by experienced service organizations that guide mentoring organizations and mentors and work closely with the Kansas Department of Corrections to match eligible offenders to mentors as part of reentry.

### In Kansas, it’s a fact:

- 4,700 people release from prison each year.
- At least half need help with housing, employment, family and other issues.
- Kansas has reduced parolees’ returns to prison by half. Mentoring can reduce this even further.

*“Kansas needs people of all faiths and goodwill to come forward to help offenders break the cycle and make our great state a better place to live.”*

*Governor Sam Brownback*

### What Makes a Good Mentor?

A person willing to work with an offender before and after release for 1 year who:

- Is nonjudgmental, positive, nurturing, honest and consistent
- Maintains confidences and professional boundaries
- Focuses on growth and success
- Is willing to be accountable to a Lead Organization
- Has a genuine concern for people in prison, their families and victims
- Is supportive and encouraging without creating a dependent relationship
- Asks for help when confronted with situations beyond his or her knowledge, resources or expertise
- Is free from drug/alcohol addiction

### What Can Mentors Do?

- Employment — mock interviews, review resumes
- Housing — reinforce good tenant-ship; troubleshoot with landlords
- Families — model and reinforce responsible parenting & healthy marriages
- Treatment — help navigate systems; help set recovery goals; help practice coping skills
- Mental health needs — medication checks; peer reinforcement
- Survival needs — help address identification (driver’s license) issues; help identify paperwork and information needed for benefits applications
- Cognitive/pro-social — model pro-social attitudes and actions; help identify risk areas and plan for avoiding

