



The Suffolk County Academy of Law  
*The Educational Arm of the Suffolk County Bar Association*  
560 Wheeler Road, Hauppauge, NY 11788  
(631) 234-5588

**Leveraging a Continuum of Supportive Services  
to Assist Criminal Defendants in  
Courtrooms, Corrections, and with Community Reentry**

This 2-hour course will cover the underlying factors that lead people to justice-system involvement; Jail Rehabilitation and Reentry Programming; the Sheriff's Family Reunification Initiative; the S.T.A.R.T. Resource Center; and Collaboration with the Court System. *Participants may earn 1 Professional Practice and 1 Diversity MCLE upon completion.*

**Wednesday, October 20, 2021**

**1:00-3:00 p.m.**

**Central Jury Room, Central Islip Courthouse**

***Optional video conference attendance through Microsoft TEAMS.***

***Faculty***

Welcome remarks by Jarrett M. Behar, Dean, Suffolk Academy of Law

Introduction by Hon. Andrew A. Crecca, J.S.C.

*District Administrative Judge*

Moderators:

Hon. Karen Kerr, Supervising Judge of the Suffolk County District Court

Hon. Richard Ambro, Supervising Judge of the Suffolk County Court

*Presenters:*

Dr. Errol D. Toulon Jr., Suffolk County Sheriff

Hon. Fernando Camacho

Vincenzo Barone, Deputy Warden, Suffolk County Correctional Facility

***Register Online***

Go to [www.scba.org](http://www.scba.org) and *click on the calendar.*

direct link: <https://scba.org/?pg=events>

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## *The Sheriff's Transition and Reentry Team*

# START



## RESOURCE CENTER

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### Changing the Paradigm of Corrections to Promote Desistance from Crime

An often-overlooked aspect of the role of corrections is facilitating successful reentry for justice-involved individuals. The Suffolk County Correctional Facility has long been a model for jail-based rehabilitation and transitional programming for county inmates. Under Sheriff Errol D. Toulon's leadership, a wide range of services are offered in dedicated programmatic housing areas designed to meet the unique needs of individuals preparing for release from incarceration. Suffolk County inmates have access to a wide array of vocational training, education, and counseling to address mental health, substance abuse and emotional needs, as well as criminogenic thinking.

These programs, while robust, are not wholly unique to the Suffolk County Correctional Facility; programming and reentry planning have long been a facet of corrections work nationwide. While rehabilitation initiatives are often viewed as beneficial on many levels, criminal justice professionals are often disheartened by the numbers of individuals that return to custody once released. According to a 2018 report by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, 68% of inmates are re-arrested within 3 years post-release and 83% within 9 years.

Considering the cyclical nature of crime and incarceration, Sheriff Toulon has spearheaded a different approach to reentry

which emphasizes correctional strategies to promote desistance from crime through ongoing engagement between corrections staff, former offenders, and community-based partners. This work is being coordinated through a new **Sheriff's Transition and Reentry Team (START)** inside its new headquarters on the grounds of the Yaphank Jail in Suffolk County, New York. It's called the START Resource Center and the staff, Suffolk's first group of Community Correction Officers, has received specialized training to provide continual support to former county inmates.

The START Resource Center is a unique and innovative model that has been a dream of Sheriff Errol D. Toulon, Jr.'s. He developed the idea based on his experiences working for more than 30 years in the field of law enforcement and corrections. It is a holistic approach and is based in current research that suggests that desistance from criminal behavior is more likely to occur when ex-offenders develop stronger social ties with the community and a greater level of stability in areas such as housing, employment and mental healthcare. Suffolk County Correction Officers, along with the Sheriff's Interfaith Council, and a range of government and non-profit partners are working hard to foster this connectiveness.



### *Reentry Starts on the First Day of Incarceration*

The Resource Center has Case Managers and Correctional Counselors to help with:

- Housing
- Jobs Assistance
- Educational Opportunities
- Local Group Meetings
- Substance Abuse Treatment
- Identification Issues
- Transportation
- Clothing and other Items
- Temporary Assistance
- Food
- and much more

**Center hours:**

Monday-Friday  
8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Walk-ins Welcome  
Appointments:  
(631) 852-5391

**Address:**  
200 Glover Drive  
Yaphank, NY 11980



/TheSTARTCenter

The momentum towards this goal starts the week that an inmate begins his/her stay at the Suffolk County Correctional Facility. Suffolk County Correctional Counselors conduct assessments and match inmates' needs to a full range of jail-based programming, religious services, recreation, education and vocational training.

Correctional Counselors:

- Identify skills and employment options
- Identify programs available inside the facility to address needs and determine if specialized mental health or addiction treatment is required
- Create an Individual Rehabilitation Plan (IRP) for their client

When appropriate, inmates are offered opportunities to participate in specialized programmatic housing areas such as the Veteran's Program, the 55+ Program, the Sheriff's Addiction Treatment Program, Choose Your Path for young adults and Choose to Thrive for incarcerated women. Correctional Counselors will continue to stay in contact with the inmate throughout his/her period of incarceration and will transfer the case to a Community Correction Officer from the START Resource Center once a discharge date is identified.

### A New START

Transitioning from jail to the community after a period of incarceration can be a difficult process. In the weeks prior to release from incarceration, a comprehensive screening packet is completed by one of the Community Correction Officers. It identifies the individuals' needs post-incarceration and establishes a discharge plan for successful reentry into the community. The Community Correction Officers will meet with the clients inside the jail and assist them with their transition. Once discharged from the facility, the justice-involved individuals visit the START Resource Center, where solutions for their identified needs are addressed by Center staff in conjunction with service providers. At this time, the warm handoff to the community begins, and the lines of communication are established for follow up care.





# START

RESOURCE CENTER

## Leveraging Community Partnerships

Staff at the START Resource Center engage with many community-based partners, including other county agencies, potential employers, non-profit organizations, and the faith community in order to assist inmates in their transition. Correctional Counselors meet frequently with their clients in person and by phone, and stay in touch with providers to gauge each client's success in completing the steps outlined in their individualized transition plans. The START Resource Center is also set up to provide more than case management. On premises are computers for resume writing and job searches, a food pantry, gently-used clothing for distribution, and meeting spaces for individual and groups sessions.

## A Case Example

The continuum of services offered by Correctional Counselors inside the jail and post-release by the Community Correction Officers at the START Resource Center have shown to be an invaluable resource for those currently and previously incarcerated.

In September of 2020, a former justice-involved individual contacted a Correctional Counselor at the START Resource Center. While this client had finished serving time at the Suffolk County Correctional Facility in 2019, and left with a transition plan, he did not follow up with corrections staff until 1-year post-release when he called to request employment assistance and community resources for mental health and substance abuse support.

That same day, a Correctional Counselor at the START Resource Center sat down with him to provide help and guidance for how to successfully navigate reintegration into the public sector and remain on a positive path. The START staff also arranged for this client to meet with a representative from the Suffolk County Department of Labor (DOL) at the Center, and they discussed employment options. During the meeting, the DOL representative referred the client to a local maintenance firm that has worked with START staff to successfully employ numerous justice-involved individuals.

The Correctional Counselor was also able to connect the individual with a local non-profit agency for mental health support and substance abuse counseling. The appointment was expedited for the client and scheduled by the Correctional Counselor within three days. Several weeks later, the client called the Correctional Counselor at the START Resource Center to provide an update that he obtained a job at the maintenance company and had also followed through with the appointments for counseling services. The individual personally called to thank the Correctional Counselors at the Resource Center for their guidance and assistance in connecting him with the resources he needed to be successful. For this individual, the START Resource Center proved to be an important safety net and an intervention to prevent potential relapse into criminogenic behavior.





***If you or someone you know has been previously incarcerated and needs assistance, we can help.***

*The Sheriff's Transition and Reentry Team*



# START



**RESOURCE CENTER**

*Dr. Errol D. Toulon, Jr., Suffolk County Sheriff*



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- **Jobs Assistance**
- **Educational Opportunities**
- **Local Group Meetings**
- **Substance Abuse Treatment**
- **Identification Issues**
- **Transportation**
- **Clothing and other Items**
- **Temporary Assistance and DSS**  
*and much more.*

**Center hours:**

**Monday-Friday**

**8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.**

***Bus Route: S68***

***Probation Stop***

**Walk-ins welcome but**

**meetings are by appointment only.**

**Please call:**

**(631) 852-5391**

**Visit us online at**

**[www.suffolksheriff.com](http://www.suffolksheriff.com)**

**Address:**

**200 Glover Drive  
Yaphank, NY 11980**

**The Center is on the grounds of the Yaphank Correctional Facility.**



**Scan the QR code to go directly to our webpage.**

**Follow us on social media.**



**@theSTARTcenter**