

Release or Reintegration? Evaluating the Implementation Effectiveness of North Carolina's
Local Reentry Councils

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Acknowledgements and Dedication

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I love you both.

This thesis represents not just the culmination of my academic experiences, but also the culmination of many of my personal experiences growing up—with my father's encounters with the criminal justice system, struggle to maintain stable housing or employment, and inability to stop drinking. Although I feel a measure of satisfaction in transitioning from experiencing reentry issues to now studying them academically in an honors thesis at Duke University within just five years, I also feel terribly unnerved and unable to yet comprehend how dramatically my life has changed in such short time. This process, therefore, has been not just intellectual, but also an emotional process of reflection and discovery. I am grateful for the space to see that process—which represents just the beginning of lifetime endeavor—through.

Lastly, but most importantly, I undertook this project thinking about the nearly 35,000 people locked in North Carolina prisons and 1.5 million people locked in prisons across the US. Although I may not share their experiences, I strive nevertheless to be an ally against injustice. This thesis represents one such attempt. I dedicate every word to every person trying to reintegrate upon release from prison in this country.

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Section One: Introduction

Today, there are more than 900 state and federal laws that deny privileges and rights to North Carolinians with a criminal record (Laurinburg Exchange, 2018). Many of these laws—referred to as “collateral consequences”—impose restrictions or barriers that impede successful reintegration into society, be it discretionarily denying public school attendance for any felonies (UNC School of Government, n.d.) or mandatorily barring public housing for marijuana possession (UNC School of Government, n.d.). For many people returning from prison,¹ a criminal record makes life post-release like “a second prison” with all new hurdles and prejudices despite already having served time (Prison Fellowship, n.d.).

For this reason, public and private entities of all scales and geographies have started to help formerly incarcerated individuals overcome these barriers in the past decade. In 2011, U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder created the Federal Interagency Reentry Council with support from President Obama (Caporizzo, 2011); in 2016-17, 20 state governors prioritized reentry and recidivism reduction in their State of the State addresses (The Vera Institute, 2017); for years, the Rockefeller Foundation and dozens of other foundations have helped finance or sponsor reentry services (Reentry.net, n.d.); since around 2015, corporations like Walmart, Uber, Koch Industries, Starbucks, American Airlines, and others have made hiring practices inclusive of criminal records (The Vera Institute, 2017); as of early 2020, a total of 35 states and DC, 150 cities, and 18 counties around the country have codified ban the box hiring practices of some kind (with 13 such states extending their law to private employers) (World Population Review, 2020); and in the last 5 years,

¹ Per a communication and awareness recommendation made by the Women and Incarceration Workgroup of the NC State Reentry Council Collaborative in 2018, I only use language to describe incarcerated individuals throughout my thesis that “addresses injustices without dehumanizing the people described.” In other words, I use people-first language. For example, instead of saying “inmate,” “offender,” or “prisoner,” I say, “formerly incarcerated individual,” “person in prison,” “incarcerated individual,” or “justice-involved individual.”

even the largest *private prison* companies—GEO Group and the Corrections Corporation of America—have invested in reentry services like halfway homes, health care, and rehabilitation because such services “are in line with current criminal justice reform discussions” and “will create growth opportunities” for their companies (Joseph, 2016).

Given the recent and widespread national prioritization of reentry, systematic analyses of the implementation of reentry initiatives are sorely needed. This is particularly true for programs such as North Carolina’s Local Reentry Councils (hereafter, “LRCs”), first created in 2012, which mix public administration with private service provision, and demand effective coordination to provide holistic service across diverse stakeholders. Thus, I investigate the accessibility, inclusivity, transparency, and efficacy of two dimensions of the LRCs’ implementation: (1) Public-facing information about the LRCs, and (2) internal LRC operations and mechanics. To do so, I evaluate the LRCs’ participant demographics and outcomes, online information, budget, partnerships, referrals, and data priorities.

The study of policy or program implementation is part of the study of the public policy making process, which is a sub-field of political science. Public policy is a crucial element to the political science sub-field of political institutions. At least in part, institutionalism involves the study of government institutions and/or organizations—legislatures, executives, courts, political parties—which determine and implement public policies. According to Anderson (2011), “the formation and implementation of policies are ... political in that they involve conflict and struggle among individuals and groups, officials and agencies, with conflicting ideas, interests, values, and information on public-policy issues” (p. 48). Thus, by studying one aspect of the public policy making process, I am studying one aspect of political institutions.²

² Because the principal framework for my thesis is policy implementation, I justify the relevance of implementation to political science. However, my paper is relevant to political science in other ways, including that I am studying (1)

To better understand policy implementation, I draw on the work of two political scientists: John Kingdon and James Anderson. According to Kingdon (2014), implementation is the fourth step of the simplified policy making process, wherein legislators set an agenda, specify alternatives, decide among the specified alternatives, and then implement the decision. Importantly, no one of these four steps guarantees the other; agreeing on a particular bill does not guarantee effective implementation. Similarly, attentive implementation does not alone guarantee an effective policy. Attentive implementation cannot compensate for policy makers failing to anticipate unintended consequences or appreciating the complexity of an issue when crafting policies. Thus, effective policy requires that the four steps be executed in harmony together.

The notion and focus on implementation first gained traction in the 1960s with the expansion of social welfare programs under the President Johnson administration (Anderson, 2011). Since political scientists John Pressman and Aaron Wildavsky first analyzed the case study of a 1970s failed federal jobs-creation project in Oakland, California, implementation has received extensive attention from political scientists. In general, such scholarly literature employs either a “top-down” or “bottom-up” approach wherein researchers analyze either how the policy goals, experience, and actions of top-level officials affect implementation, or how state and local conditions, attitudes, and actions affect implementation. Of these two, my approach to investigating NC’s LRCs is relatively more “bottom-up,” though with nuances explained below.

The responsibility for policy or agenda implementation usually falls on the shoulders of bureaucrats—staff of various administrative agencies that perform the tasks of modern government (e.g. operating prisons and schools, collecting taxes, regulating banks, maintaining physical

one facet of the criminal justice system and race equity; (2) the relationships between state and local governments; and (3) the relationships between governments, non-profits, community organizations, and NGOs.

infrastructure, and more). Rather than push new ideas themselves, these agents carry out the mandates passed down by administrative or legislative bodies. In the case of my investigation, the relevant bureaucrats include staff of the Department of Public Service (hereafter, “DPS”³), county governments, and the entities that DPS designates to oversee the LRCs. Both Kingdon (2014) and Anderson (2011) describe such bureaucrats as having great power because the majority of people have little to no awareness or understanding of what the bureaucratic agents and agencies work on year to year, yet they have tremendous impact on the scope and nature of government tasks.

Although implementation may in some cases be smooth and effective, it is most likely that there are feedback issues along the way. Kingdon (2014) outlines four categories of issues, each of which I contextualize with a potential scenario involving the LRCs. It is important to note that these issues do not innately undermine a policy—they merely are “inevitable problems” uncovered by implementation (p. 192). First, an administrative or legislative mandate may be interpreted in a way different from the authors’ intent. For example, the LRCs might rely on just a few community partners to meet reentry service needs, whereas legislators imagined they would engage dozens of community partners. Second, the implementation may fail to meet the stated goals of the mandate. For example, staff at DPS may set the target that LRCs should be financially self-sustaining within five years of creation, yet the LRCs may continue to ask for extended financial assistance annually. Third, the program may become too costly to justify its extension. For example, the cost of LRCs meeting rural county needs may be much higher than expected because rural LRCs have to build service capacity themselves (e.g. housing units), not just leverage existing services for their participants. Finally, there may be unanticipated consequences that limit impact or discourage

³ I refer to the NC Department of Public Safety as “DPS,” not “the DPS,” for the sake of readability, and possessively as “DPS’s” for the sake of clarity even though these are not technically nor grammatically correct.

continuation. For example, recidivism inequalities between counties with and without LRCs may lead non-LRC counties to refuse LRCs in the future for resentment of not being included originally.

There are at least two ways in which my investigation uniquely adds to scholarly conversations about implementation. First, Kingdon (2014) and Anderson (2011) contextualize policy implementation as a process in which bureaucrats carry out legislative mandates. Although this is partly true in the case of NC's LRCs (because DPS executed a mandate from the NC General Assembly), more accurate is that *community* entities or individuals carry out mandates *from* DPS bureaucrats. In this way, I add nuance to the hierarchy of implementation established in literature by observing that the catch-all definition for "bureaucrats" has internal hierarchies that may yield feedback issues of their own. Second, I operationalize implementation to include the public information available on the internet about the program, not just the private, internal mechanics of the program. Implementation, in my definition, is not merely whether a policy or program achieves its target outcomes, but also to what extent the public is aware of the policy or program.

There are seven additional core sections to this paper. In "Section Two: Background of North Carolina Prisons," I describe NC's criminal justice system—its reshaping in 2011, demographic composition, recidivism statistics, and reentry strategy. In "Section Three: The Local Reentry Councils," I breakdown the NC LRC model's design, governance structure, and aims as described originally by DPS. In "Section Four: Research Methods and Design," I outline my four evaluation criteria, methodological approaches, data variables, and design inspirations. In "Section Five: County and Participant Data," I provide summary statistics about LRC counties and participants between FY2018-2019 and make contextual observations about LRC outcomes. In "Section Six: Public Information Findings," I present my findings from the online lists of LRCs, the information included on LRC websites, and the value-messaging of LRC goals. In "Section

Seven: DPS and LRC Interview Findings,” I discuss what interview respondents said about LRC funding, partnerships, service provision, and data prioritization, as well as other three unexpected findings. Finally, in “Section Eight: Conclusion and Discussion,” I pull together participant data, website findings, and interview responses to evaluate the implementation of LRCs in relation to my four criteria, as well as highlight potential avenues for future research.

Section Two: Background on North Carolina Prisons

Sentencing Reform: The 2011 Justice Reinvestment Act

The 2011 Justice Reinvestment Act (JRA) changed sentencing and corrections law in North Carolina to prioritize community supervision over jails or prisons in a wide variety of issues—sentencing, post-release accountability, drug treatment program access, and more.

Much inspiration for the JRA came from data-driven evaluations of NC’s justice system conducted by the Council of State Governments Justice (OPENnetTV, 2011). This data—which helped drive bipartisan support—revealed that the state was effective at incarcerating people but ineffective at public health spending. For example, in 2009, more than 56 percent of new admissions to state prisons were from probation revocations, 76 percent of which were from technical violations, not crimes committed. And in terms of reentry, 85 percent of the people released from prison were released without any supervision, fueling acute recidivism.

Before JRA changes, NC’s sentencing framework was established by the Structured Sentencing Act (SSA) of 1994. The SSA provided judicial guidelines for sentencing to community, intermediate, or active prison punishment (“C/I/A”). Community punishment involved traditional probation, victim restitution, or community service. Intermediate punishment was “intrusive and intense,” restricting liberty while remaining in community (NC DPS, 2016). Active prison punishment was reserved for people who commit the most serious and chronic crimes, shifting some of those who commit less serious or chronic crimes to intermediate punishments.

The JRA made several key changes to reduce the number of people in prison and to strengthen community supervision. To reduce prison populations, the Act (1) universalized post-release supervision to help minimize recidivism; (2) established early supervised release for some incarcerated individuals; (3) limited judicial authority to revoke probation offenses; and (4)

transitioned people who committed a misdemeanor from prisons to local jails. To strengthen community supervision, the JRA (1) provided probation officers (“POs”) more sanctioning tools; (2) allowed POs to impose electronic monitoring or require short-term jail “quick-dips” to address non-compliant behavior; (3) required POs to assess reoffense risk and maintain smaller caseloads with people of moderate and high reoffense risk; and (4) limited confinement time for particular probation violations.

Results of the 2011 JRA are positive. Below are some of the key findings (NC DPS, 2016):

- ⇒ In 2011, the number of people in prison was about 41,000, with projections estimating a 5 percent growth rate. Between FY2011-15, however, the number decreased 9.6 percent to approximately 37,000.
- ⇒ Prison admissions due to probation revocations decreased 65 percent from 15,118 to 5,291 between FY2011-15. As expected, however, post-release returns have increased, doubling to nearly 4,000 in the same period.
- ⇒ In FY2015, 75 percent of people convicted of felonies received post-release supervision, up from just 16 percent in FY2011.
- ⇒ More than 12,000 formerly incarcerated individuals received new treatment and recidivism reduction services in communities during FY2015.
- ⇒ NC netted about \$165 million in savings FY2012-15 that can be attributed to JRA policies, reinvesting \$30.5 million in additional savings.

Prison Demographics and Recidivism

As of April 1, 2020, there were 34,994 people in NC state prisons, 76,705 probationers, and 12,545 people on post-release or parole (NC DPS, n.d.). In terms of demographics of the 35,085 people in prison by the end of February 2020, 46.7 percent were of African descent, 38.9

percent of European/North American/Australian descent, 5.4 percent of Hispanic/Latinx descent, 2.2 percent of American Indian descent, and the rest were either Slavic, Asian, Oriental, Nordic/Scandinavian, Pacific Islander, or recorded as Other or Unknown. More than 90 percent of people were male, and 98.2 percent had a felony status. The age distribution was as follows:

Age Group	Total Count	% of Population
Under 20	417	1.2%
20-24	2,646	7.5%
25-29	4,959	14.1%
30-34	5,465	15.6%
35-39	5,335	15.2%
40-44	4,475	12.8%
45-49	3,737	10.7%
50 and over	8,051	22.9%

Figure 1: Age groups of the prison population (35,085) as of February 29, 2020.

For the year of March 1st, 2019, to February 29, 2020, there were 25,049 people released from state prison. This release population was 41.9 percent of African descent, 48.3 percent of European/North American/Australian descent, 3.3 percent of Hispanic/Latinx descent, and 2.6 percent American Indian. Nearly 85 percent of the population was male, and 93.2 percent had felony status. The returning age distribution was as follows:

Age Group	Total Count	% of Population
Under 20	607	2.4%
20-24	3,141	12.5%
25-29	4,905	19.6%
30-34	4,630	18.5%
35-39	3,781	15.1%
40-44	2,671	10.7%
45-49	1,979	7.9%
50 and over	3,335	13.3%

Figure 2: Age groups of the prison exit population (25,049) between the year of 3/1/19-2/29/20

Approximately 95 percent of all of NC's incarcerated individuals will be released at some point in the future (Carrana, 2019), with nearly half of those released reoffending within two years of release (referred to as "recidivism") (Eanes, 2019). Yet two years is not the period of highest risk. Langan and Levin (2002) note that returning individuals are at greatest jeopardy of reoffending during their first 120 days; and Alper et al. (2018) discovered in a longitudinal analysis of 30 state prison populations that the likelihood of recidivating in the first year is higher than any other. Robust reentry services, then, may help stabilize reintegration and mitigate NC's recidivism rate. Indeed, an investigation of 12 reentry programs in 12 states by Vishner et al. (2016) revealed that reentry program participation is associated with longer time until arrest and fewer arrests overall, and that programs focusing on individual change as opposed to practical skills and needs were most beneficial. Given that DPS reports the average annual cost of incarcerating per individual at minimum, medium, and close custody facilities to be \$37,712.87—compared to just \$1,874.12 for community supervision—reentry can also save direct (and uncalculated collateral) costs of incarceration (NC DPS, 2019).

North Carolina's Reentry Strategy

According to Nicole Sullivan, Director of Reentry Programs and Services for DPS, North Carolina has a three-pronged approach to reentry (Caranna, 2019). Although the following is particular to prisons, the reentry outreach approach is very similar for jails.

First, people in prison can volunteer to move closer to their home county months before release. Because people may be housed far from the community-based resources that will support their reentry, they can opt to move to one of the 12 minimum-custody reentry transition facilities closest to their home county. This allows incarcerated individuals to connect with family, find resources, and plan with staff trained reentry-focused staff for their release.

Second, people in prison are introduced to their probation and parole officers specializing in reentry. The officers—also called case managers—prepare incarcerated individuals for community-based supervision in one-on-one meetings, explaining the conditions of their release and identifying any unique needs of the incarcerated individual that they communicate to supervising officers in home communities.

Finally, people returning from prison work with LRCs to receive assistance with the needs identified with case managers: Housing, employment, food, clothing, transportation, substance abuse and mental health treatment, mentorship, and/or any other needs. LRCs are networks of local service providers from across a county that help formerly incarcerated individuals successfully reintegrate into society. A Local Reentry Coordinator for the LRC communicates with justice-involved individuals, coordinating with service providers or putting them in touch with staff specialists (e.g. job placement) to fulfill as many of their reentry needs as possible.

Background History of North Carolina's LRCs

North Carolina's focused efforts on reentry began in 2009, when then-NC Attorney General Roy Cooper requested Governor Perdue's signature on Executive Order No. 12, the Governor's StreetSafe Task Force to Stop Repeat Offenders (NC DPS, 2018). This Task Force—which Cooper co-chaired—established reentry planning and preparation goals for policymakers, agencies, and community organizations. In 2010-11, two reports were published that laid the groundwork for NC's approach to reentry for formerly incarcerated individuals: One by the StreetSafe Task Force (NC Governor's StreetSafe Task Force, 2010) and the other by the General Assembly's newly created Joint Select Committee on Ex-Offender Reintegration into Society (NC General Assembly, 2011). The StreetSafe report recommended 24 changes along 7 key principles: (1) Create a continuum of services; (2) increase educational and work opportunities; (3) expand

safe, affordable housing; (4) incentivize legal lifestyles with pardons, expungement, and more; (5) ensure a clean slate upon release; (6) coordinate government services; and (7) educate the public. Similarly, the Select Committee recommended 15 legislative and agency changes.

Many of these two sets of recommendations were implemented in the following six years, including the Select Committee's suggestion to develop between 3-10 local reentry councils in Senate Bill 141, Section 5(c) (NC General Assembly, Senate Law 2012-168). The bill reads:

*“During the 2012-2013 fiscal year, the Research and Planning Section of the Department of Public Safety shall work with local communities to **form up to 10, but not less than three, local reentry councils to develop comprehensive local reentry plans, to document and maximize the use of existing services, and to supervise and coordinate innovative responses to the reintegration of ex-offenders at the local level.** The Section shall also form a State-level advisory group with broad representation of involved State agency leadership, service providers, and program recipients.”* [bolding mine]

When now-Governor Cooper took office in 2017, he launched his Reentry Action Plan to facilitate transition from incarceration or community supervision back into society by “coordinating existing resources, identifying resource gaps, and advocating on behalf of individuals with criminal records” (NC DPS, 2018). There are two keys to the success of Cooper’s Plan: (1) The repurposing of prison facilities for reentry purposes, and (2) the development of additional LRCs to add to the existing 14 as of late 2017. In terms of the LRCs, the Plan states that “the existing councils cover 20 counties and the goal is to expand the availability of reentry councils to all 100 counties” (NC DPS, 2018). Indeed, by the end of 2017, DPS’s Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice (“DACJJ”) launched 5 new councils.

North Carolina’s LRCs Since 2017

In February of 2018, Governor Cooper’s North Carolina’s Reentry Action Plan was fully formed and launched. The Plan has 6 main components: (1) Create a State Reentry Council

Collaborative; (2) develop detailed implementation components of the Plan; (3) provide capacity building and technical support to LRCs; (4) expand faith- and community-based organizational involvement in reentry; (5) resolve warrants and pending charges pre-release; and (6) address reentry barriers with stakeholders (NC DPS, 2018).

Of these components, the third is the most relevant to LRCs, which notes that capacity training and technical support are necessary to the “sustainability and development” of the LRCs to “adapt and thrive within their communities” (NC DPS, 2018). In terms of capacity building, DACJJ must provide individualized expert training and growth support to each LRC, focused on financial support, community-based collaboratives, strategic planning and board development, and/or sustainability planning and fund development, depending on LRC needs. In terms of technical support, the DACJJ must help LRCs cultivate a service provider network, create a referral and intake process, promote evidence-based assessment, plan and manage cases, utilize employment training programs, build relationships with public housing authorities, and monitor reentry outcomes. Separately, the DACJJ must also coordinate a one-day workshop for LRC staff, intermediary agency staff, and executive committee members to learn how to better serve formerly incarcerated individuals. The first such workshop was held on November 17, 2017, with more than 70 participants in attendance, including from all LRCs (NC DPS, 2018).

By the end of 2018, the new State Reentry Council Collaborative (hereafter, “SRCC”) also reported the first of its annual recommendations to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety about how stakeholders can collaborate to meet the needs of justice-involved individuals and to increase the effectiveness of LRCs (State Reentry Council Collaborative, 2018). According to NC Senate Bill 257, the SRCC consists of up to two representatives from the Division of Motor Vehicles, Department of Health and Human Services,

Administrative Office of the Courts, NC Community College System, DPS Division of Adult Correction, selected nonprofits that provide reentry services or programs, and any other state agency that the SRCC Secretary deems relevant (NC General Assembly, Senate Law 2017-57). In total, 10 SRCC workgroups provided recommendations, with one action item for immediate implementation and additional items for future implementation depending on time, funding, and/or legislative assistance. The workgroup issue areas include: Legal; Education and Vocational Training; Employment; Housing; Transportation; Mental Health, Substance Misuse, and Medical; Advocacy; Faith/Community-Based Organizations; Family Reunification; and Women and Incarceration. By end of 2019, the first 10 action items were either completed or underway.

Section Three: The Local Reentry Councils

Local Reentry Councils (LRCs) are networks of individuals, agencies, and advocates across a county or counties that help coordinate reentry services to support the reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals. As stated in a booklet about the LRCs from private correspondence with DPS staff, the mission of an LRC is “to reduce recidivism and victimization, increase public/community safety, create a network of individuals and organizations assisting returning individuals, maximize the use of existing resources and services[,] and develop innovative responses to address gaps in resources and services” (private correspondence with NC DPS, 2020). According to DPS’s LRC and Reentry Facility Breakdown (Figure 3) and Catchment Map (Figure 4), which was last updated in late 2018, 15 LRCs support reentry in 22 different counties across the state (which has 100 counties overall).

Designated Reentry Facility (Minimum)	Level	Established LRC in Catchment Areas
Caldwell Correctional Center	2 & 3	McDowell County Local Reentry Council, Buncombe County Local Reentry Council
Lincoln Correctional Center	1	Re-Entry Partners of Mecklenburg Local Reentry Council
Gaston Correctional Center	2 & 3	Re-Entry Partners of Mecklenburg Local Reentry Council
Davidson Correctional Center	2 & 3	Guilford County Local Reentry Council, Forsyth County Local Reentry Council
Orange Correctional Center	2 & 3	Durham County Local Reentry Council, Orange County Local Reentry Council
Wake Correctional Center	2 & 3	Wake County Local Reentry Council
NCCIW- Minimum	1, 2 & 3	Wake County Local Reentry Council
Johnston Correctional Institution	1	Wake County Local Reentry Council
Greene Correctional Institution	1	Nash/Edgecombe/Wilson (NEW) Local Reentry Council, Pitt County Local Reentry Council (STRIVE)
Hoke Correctional Institution	1	Hoke/Robeson/Scotland South East Regional Local Reentry Council (HRS), Fayetteville-Cumberland Reentry Council (FCRC)
New Hanover Correctional Center	2 & 3	New Hanover County Local Reentry Council (LINC)
Carteret Correctional Center	2 & 3	Craven/Pamlico Reentry Council(CPRC), Jones/Onslow Local Re-Entry Resource Council

Figure 3: NC DPS’s Breakdown of Minimum Custody Transition Facilities and the corresponding proximate LRC, updated July 2018. There are 15 distinct LRCs listed. Retrieved from a booklet about the LRCs sent by DPS staff.

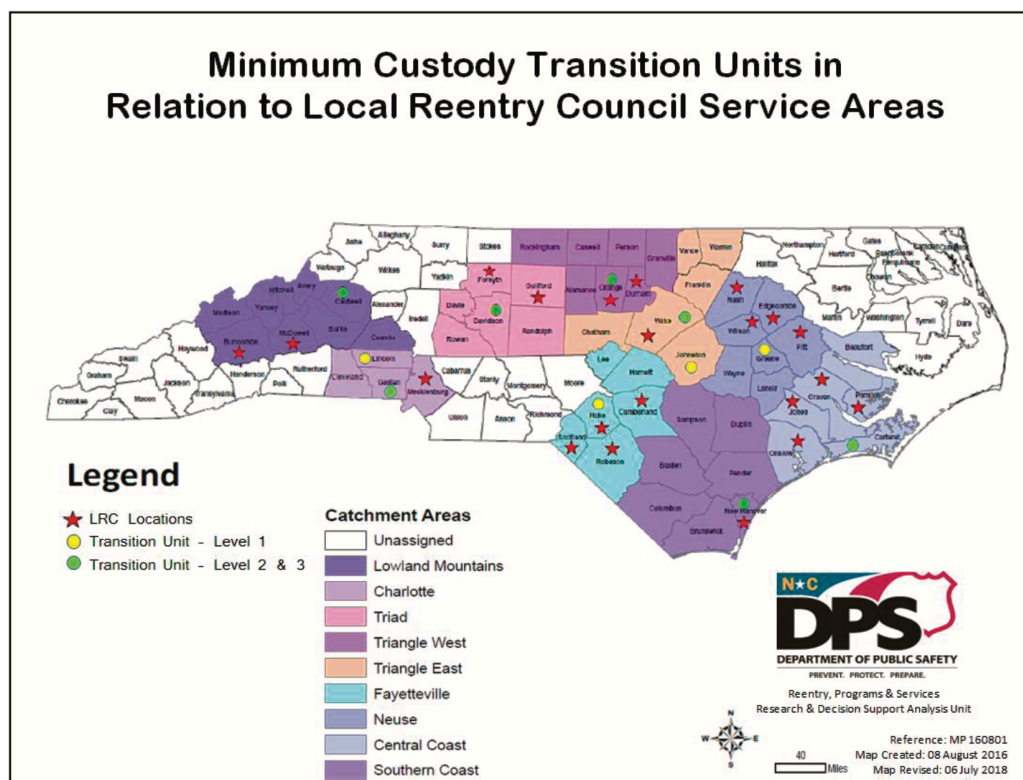


Figure 4: NC DPS's Catchment Areas Map of LRC and Minimum Custody Transition Facilities, updated July 2018. The stars represent LRC locations; they cover 22 counties in total. Retrieved from a booklet about the LRCs sent by DPS staff.

By design, the governance structure of each LRC should mirror that of Figure 5. In this structure, there are five key components to an LRC. First, the NC DPS oversees people who are in prison, under community supervision, or participating in rehabilitative services that are referred to the LRC for assistance. Second, each LRC has an Intermediary Agency, an entity with local recognition and community-based relationships that houses the LRC, coordinates the reentry process via hired LRC Coordinators and Job Placement Specialists, and liaises between DPS and the LRC. Third, every LRC has community- and faith-based Service Providers in its network that provide reentry services ranging from housing assistance to mentorship programs. Fourth, LRCs have Advisory Committees consisting of community leaders, formerly incarcerated individuals, and business and government leaders from across the county that help identify and address resource gaps, conduct reentry education, and facilitate outreach to the community. Finally, these

four branches of the LRC are overseen by a Local Executive Committee—a decision-making body that decides on the LRC’s operation, design, and implementation. The Executive Committee has designated co-chairs and is comprised of representatives from the Intermediary Agency (hereafter, “IA”), the Advisory Committee, Service Providers, and the NC DPS local staff.

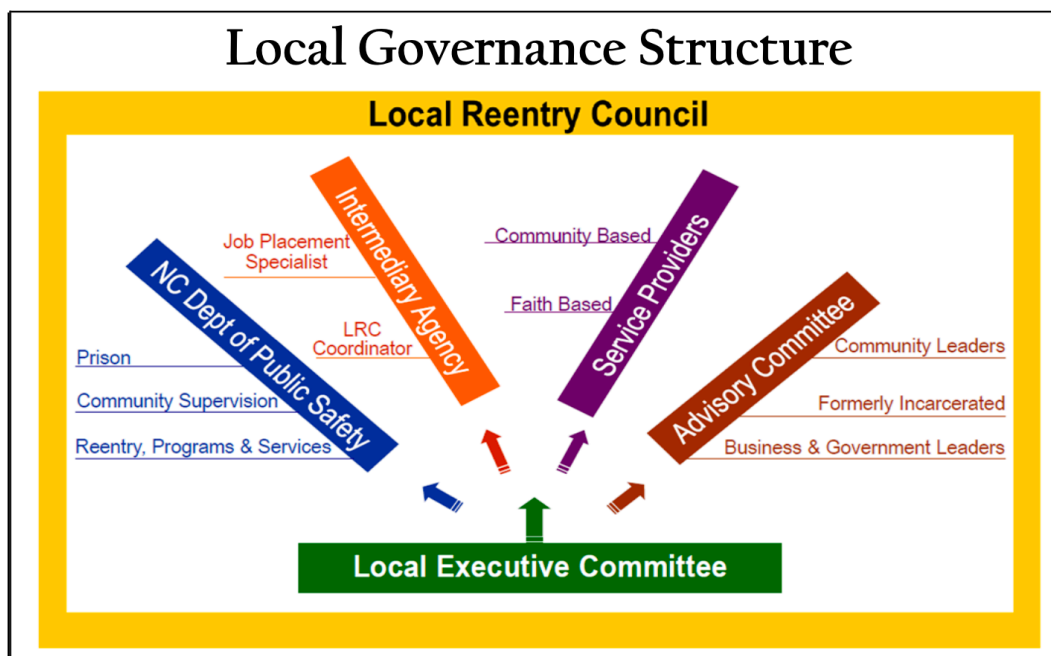


Figure 5: LRC governance structure overview from a booklet about the LRCs sent by DPS staff.

There are several purposes for LRCs. Some of these include (1) coordinating services to help facilitate a better transition from incarceration back into society for returning individuals and their families; (2) developing a network of local resources and service providers; (3) leveraging local resources to meet identified service gaps; (4) recommending policy changes to the SRCC and DPS; (5) conducting education and outreach campaigns in the community to change public perception about returning individuals; and (6) identifying potential funding sources to sustain and

bolster local reentry initiatives. Although LRC membership may vary depending on community, the potential stakeholders include any combination of those identified in Figure 6.

There are two dedicated staff positions within LRCs that are hired by the IA: The Local Reentry Coordinator and the Job Placement Specialist/Case Manager. In general terms, the Local Reentry Coordinator is the “point of contact” coordinating the community’s inputs to the LRC and overseeing the day-to-day delivery of services. In practical terms, the Coordinator is responsible for developing partnership agreements with local service providers so that returning individuals can be referred to these agencies, as well as for managing the referral process and individual case services. The Job Placement Specialist has three roles: (1) Cultivating and educating potential employers; (2) providing employability training, job finding resources, and coaching assistance to formerly incarcerated individuals; and (3) providing service coordination, support, and guidance to returning individuals.

To meet client reentry needs, LRCs must first cultivate a network of stakeholders offering direct services. As noted, these services may include housing, employment, transportation, and any other supportive services. Once such a network exists, the IAs and LRC staff can utilize a tracking database created by the Reentry, Programs & Services division of DPS to manage referrals, track outcomes, and generate data reports. DPS provides each LRC a unique portal for their site where they can enter and analyze client data.

Figure 6: A List of potential LRC members from a booklet about the LRCs sent by DPS

- Local Reentry Council Members**
- Local Prison Facilities
 - Community Corrections
 - Division of Juvenile Justice
 - Alcohol & Chemical Dependency Programs
 - County Public Health Department
 - County Department of Social Services
 - County Vocational Rehabilitation Services
 - Local Mental Health Professional(s) & Advocate(s)
 - Local Workforce Development Board
 - Local Division of Workforce Solutions
 - County Public Housing Authority
 - Local Division of Motor Vehicles
 - Local Community College
 - Local Community Action Agency
 - Local City/Town Council Member(s)
 - Local City/Town Representative(s)
 - Local Chamber of Commerce Representative(s)
 - County Court System Representative(s)
 - County Commissioner(s)
 - County Sheriff’s Department
 - County District Attorney’s Office
 - County Clerk of Courts
 - Local City/Town Police Department
 - Legal Aid Representative
 - Local Public Defenders Office
 - Local Service Providers
 - Faith Based & Non-Profit Organizations
 - Local Employers
 - Formerly Incarcerated Individuals

Using this data, DPS must then submit a report about the status of the LRCs by March 1st of each year to the NC Senate and House of Representatives, as stipulated by General Statutes 143B-1155(c). For LRCs specifically, this report must include the components detailed in Figure 7 below (NC General Statues, §143B-13-604(b)).

- | |
|---|
| (4) Local Reentry Councils (LRC): |
| a. The target population. |
| b. The amount of funds contracted for and expended each fiscal year. |
| c. The supervision type. |
| d. The risk level of the offenders served. |
| e. The number of successful and unsuccessful core service exits with a breakdown of reasons for unsuccessful exits. |
| f. The demographics of the population served. |
| g. The employment status at entry and exit including, wherever possible, the average wage received at entry and exit. |
| h. Supervision outcomes, including completion, revocation, and termination. |

Figure 7: A list of components required in DPS's report about the status of LRCs to NC Senate and House of Representatives. Retrieved from NC General Statues, Chapter 143B, Article 13, Part 1, Section 1155(c)(4).

Section Four: Research Methods and Design

I use four variables to evaluate the implementation of the LRCs: Accessibility, inclusivity, transparency, and efficacy. Accessibility refers to the extent to which information about the councils is easy to locate, clear and simple to understand, and provides a satisfactory baseline knowledge about LRCs to anyone who reads it (i.e. the information is scaffolded). Inclusivity refers to the extent to which the LRCs are welcoming of all persons in their messaging, able to provide support to all who need and/or request it, and intentional about reaching out to communities that might not otherwise know about the LRC. Transparency refers to the extent to which the LRCs provide information about their governance structures and hierarchies, partnerships and service capacities, funding sources and budget allocations, priorities and motivations, and participant outcomes. Efficacy refers to the extent to which LRCs fulfill the service needs in their counties and facilitate successful reentry for their participants.

In the following three sections of this paper, I analyze data about the LRCs that are relevant to these four criteria. First, with county and participant demographics as well as LRC outcomes data, I assess the LRCs' inclusivity and efficacy. Second, with online information about the LRCs, I assess their accessibility, inclusivity, and transparency. Finally, with interviews with DPS and LRC staff about funding, partnerships, referrals, and data priorities, I assess the LRCs' inclusivity, transparency, and efficacy.

LRC Counties, Participants, and Outcomes

I referenced and reformatted select data points reported by the U.S. Census American Community Survey 2014-2018 5-Year Estimates to provide demographic context about the counties in which the LRCs are situated (US Census Bureau, 2019). These data points include population number; major urban areas (defined as the most populous 15 cities in North Carolina);

percent male and female; percent White, Black, Hispanic/Indian, Asian/Oriental, and Native American; percent of persons in poverty, 2014-18; per capita income, 2014-18 (in 2018 dollars); percent of people aged 25 or older that are high school graduates or higher, 2014-18; percent of people aged 25 or older that have a Bachelor's degree or higher, 2014-18; median value of owner-occupied housing unit, 2014-18; median gross rent, 2014-18; and mean travel time to work (minutes) for workers aged 16 or older, 2014-18. I also include rural, suburban, or urban classifications provided by the NC Rural Center.

To understand the constituency served by the LRCs, I referenced an Excel dataset from DPS with disaggregated LRC participant demographics for FY2018-2019. This included 14 LRCs: Buncombe, Craven-Pamlico, Cumberland, Durham, Forsyth, Guilford, Hoke-Robeson-Scotland, McDowell, Mecklenburg, Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson, New Hanover, Orange, Pitt, and Wake.⁴ The dataset anonymously listed the risk level, sex, race, ethnicity, age, and supervision type of LRC participants. Several LRCs were either missing some data or did not report data in one or more of these categories. I performed basic statistical calculations to determine the summary statistics of each variable. Participant demographic data provides insight into the inclusiveness of the LRCs: What constituencies are they reaching and supporting?

To breakdown LRC outcomes, I referenced a second Excel dataset from DPS that aggregated monthly reports from the same 14 LRCs during FY2018-2019. This set provided data about five categories of information: (1) The number of newly enrolled and the total number of active participants, including new enrollees; (2) the number of participants who received employment, documentation, childcare, life skills, vocational, transportation, education,

⁴ The 14 LRCs for which DPS records data are slightly different than the 15 LRCs reported in DPS's LRC Catchment Map referenced in Section Three and later, in Section Six. In contrast to the list used in these sections, this list of 14 LRCs does not include Onslow-Jones because the LRC disbanded in late 2019. The reasons for and significance of these differences are discussed in further detail in Section Seven and Section Eight, respectively.

mentorship, basic needs, housing, mental health, and substance abuse services from an LRC; (3) the number of participants who gained employment paying minimum, minimum-\$9.00, \$9.01-\$10.00, and \$10.00+ wages; (4) the number of participants who moved into emergency, transitional, or permanent housing after release; and (5) the number of participants who successfully completed, were non-compliant, moved away, dropped out of, were out of contact during, were re-arrested during, passed away during, or were transferred to a different LRC during the LRC reentry process. I added three data categories for analytical clarity: The number of active participants who gained employment of any wage; the number of active participants who gained housing of any type; and the number of active participants who became inactive in some way. I also added the total numbers of participants in each data category across all LRCs.

According to DPS, the term “successfully completed” is defined as completing a reentry case plan with proof from service providers; “non-compliant” is defined as refusing to follow a case plan and making no progress toward goals; and “no contact” is defined as without communication with LRC staff for two to three months. Using this dataset, I made analytical observations about the county contexts in which the LRCs operate, and how effective they are at meeting county need and facilitating successful reentry.

Public Information

I operationalized implementation to include public information so as to understand what a justice-involved individual, family member, public advocate, researcher, and/or service provider might understand about LRCs based on the internet alone. This provides insight about the LRCs’ accessibility, inclusivity, and transparency. Specifically, I chose three categories of data to analyze: Public lists of LRCs, information available on LRC websites, and values communicated in their goals. I selected these three data categories because they are analytically sequential, first

defining what LRCs exist, then what information there is about each LRC, and finally why each LRC is doing reentry work. Thus, these three data categories provide sequentially deeper insight into the LRCs' accessibility, inclusivity, and transparency.

First, I compared three lists of LRCs that I found through a Google search of "North Carolina Local Reentry Councils." I then located the websites or webpages of each LRC (some had independent websites while others had pages housed on the websites of an Intermediary Agency or County). As long as the website was run by the LRC, the IA, or the County, I included it in my analysis. I discovered these sites through verbatim Google searches of the LRC names; in general, they were one of the first five search results. The extent to which a public list of LRCs is available, clear, and decipherable is important to accessibility.

Second, I systematically analyzed whether the sites had, included, and/or provided information about some 20 variables I selected: A website; a physical address; a phone number; an email address; a fax number, hours of operation/availability; an account or accounts or any mainstream social media platform; their IA; their goal(s), vision, mission, and/or motivation; their eligibility criteria; their governance structure (at least including staff, and potentially also the Advisory Committee, the Local Executive Committee, and internal hierarchies); their reentry services (e.g. housing, mental health); their partner organizations; a partnership application or information page; information about LRCs or the process of working with an LRC; a referral form (for self- or community referrals); an activity calendar; additional languages; a budget breakdown; and any past outcomes data or results. Some variables I independently chose (e.g. budget, data/results), while others I was inspired by in my initial readings (e.g. partnership application/page, eligibility) as good practices across LRCs that meet some or all of these criteria

In an Excel spreadsheet, I assigned the color Green to any LRC that had, included, or provided information about any one of these variables, Blue to any IA website host that did so but with minimal or no reference to the LRC, Yellow to any LRC or IA that did so but with unclear or incomplete information, and Red to any LRC or IA that did not at all. The inclusion or exclusion of these data points speaks to the accessibility and transparency of the LRCs.

Finally, I recorded any LRC's stated goal(s), vision, mission, and/or motivation, and annotated them according to underlying values justifying reentry work (e.g. cost-savings, public safety, recidivism) and other themes that appear across LRCs (e.g. the notion of "success" and of "community"). By linguistically analyzing the values communicated, I assessed the inclusivity of the LRCs public information: To what extent, if at all, are the LRCs goals welcoming toward people returning from prison?

DPS and LRC Interviews

To contextualize the public information and to dig deeper into the LRC's internal mechanics, I conducted nine 20-60-minute semi-structured interviews with eight staff members at eight LRCs and with one staff member at DPS. The eight LRCs were Buncombe, Craven-Pamlico, Durham, Mecklenburg, McDowell, New Hanover, Scotland, and Wake. Conversations with LRC staff members focused on four data points that are not available online: (1). Funding quantity and sources, (2) partner organizations and service provision, (3) participants and how they connected to the LRC, and (4) data priorities and contact duration with participants.⁵ The conversation with the DPS staff member focused on DPS's relationship with LRCs, LRC budgets and structures, data collection processes, and LRC geographical distribution. The data points across interviews are

⁵ This is only not true for Durham—which I did not discuss the last two data points with—because I interviewed Durham weeks before the other LRCs and, in the meantime, reformulated my interview question topics and approach according to reflection and additional research.

relevant to the LRCs' inclusivity, transparency, and efficacy. Information about participant referrals and geographical distribution show who LRCs are serving across NC and within counties [inclusivity]; information about funding, partners, governance structures, data, and DPS relationships reveal behind-the-scenes mechanics and priorities [transparency]; and information about service gaps and data highlight successes and limitations [efficacy].

I received approval for all interviews from Duke University's Institutional Review Board. A detailed outline of my interview script and planned questions with LRC and DPS staff are attached in Appendix A. Due to environmental disruptions, I asked only a subset of the pre-approved questions in interviews. I selected interview subjects based on their proximity to and role in facilitating the work of the LRCs.

Section Five: County and Participant Data

In this section, I first summarize the demographics of the 19 distinct counties that the 14 LRCs listed by DPS are located within. Next, I describe the LRC participant demographics to understand the inclusivity of the LRCs. Finally, I discuss the LRC outcomes in the context of the county demographics to gain insight on the LRCs' efficacy.⁶

County Demographics

The 19 unique counties covered by the LRCs listed in DPS data range in population size, from 12,726 (Pamlico) to 1,111,761 (Wake), as seen in Figure 8 below. Seven of the 19 counties have populations less than 100,000 people, five have populations between 100,000-299,999, four have populations between 300,000-999,999, and two have populations over 1,000,000. Also included in Figure 8 are the rural, suburban, and urban county classifications by the NC Rural Center (Pennington, 2015), and a list of any major urban areas and their populations falling within the counties (World Population Review, 2020). Although urban areas do not universally fit completely within county boundaries (e.g. Chapel Hill between Orange and Durham counties), I associated them with whichever county they predominately comprise. In total, there are nine rural, four suburban, and six urban counties.

⁶ For both county and LRC participant demographics, I use the verbatim data categories and titles used by DPS (e.g. "Hispanic/Indian" for Race), except for the category "Unknown/Other" for race. Accordingly, I translate all U.S. Census data titles into DPS titles.

Counties	Population	NC Rural Center Class	Major Urban Areas (2018 Populations)
Buncombe	261,191	Suburban	Asheville (92,452)
Craven	102,139	Rural	
Pamlico	12,726	Rural	
Cumberland	335,509	Suburban	Fayetteville (209,468)
Durham	321,488	Urban	Durham (274,291)
Forsyth	382,295	Urban	Winston-Salem (246,328)
Guilford	537,174	Urban	Greensboro (294,722), High Point (112,316)
Hoke	55,234	Rural	
Robeson	130,625	Rural	
Scotland	34,823	Rural	
McDowell	45,756	Rural	
Mecklenburg	1,110,356	Urban	Charlotte (872,498)
Nash	94,298	Rural	
Edgecombe	51,472	Rural	
Wilson	81,801	Rural	
New Hanover	234,473	Urban	Wilmington (122,607)
Orange	148,476	Suburban	Chapel Hill (60,988)
Pitt	180,742	Suburban	Greenville (93,137)
Wake	1,111,761	Urban	Raleigh (469,298), Cary (168,160)

Figure 8: A list of the 19 counties covered by the 14 LRCs listed in DPS data, along with their populations, rural-suburban-urban classification by the NC Rural Center, and major urban areas (defined as the top 15 largest cities in the state). Data from U.S. Census Bureau, July 1, 2019 (county populations), and 2018 (city populations).

The sex and racial demographics of the counties are displayed in Figure 9, along with the same color-coded classifications for rural (green), suburban (orange), and urban (blue) counties as in Figure 8. Across all LRC counties, the male-female split is approximately 52-48, and residents are about 55 percent White, 29 percent Black, 9 percent Hispanic, 3 percent Asian, and 4 percent Native. Although the male-female ratios are comparable across the counties, several counties have race statistics that are much different than the averages. McDowell and Buncombe counties, for example, both have percentages of White residents above 80 and percentages of Black residents below 7, while Edgecombe county has 36 percent White residents compared to 58 percent Black residents. Likewise, whereas most counties have percentages of Native residents between 0.5 and 2, Robeson has 41.7 percent Native residents, nearly four times more than the next highest county—Scotland with a 12 percent Native population.

Counties	Sex		Race				
	% Male	% Female	% White	% Black	% Hispanic/Indian	% Asian/Oriental	% Native American
Buncombe	47.9%	52.1%	83.5%	6.3%	6.7%	1.4%	0.5%
Craven	50.6%	49.4%	65.7%	21.5%	7.4%	3.1%	0.7%
Pamlico	50.6%	49.4%	74.3%	19.2%	4.1%	0.6%	0.8%
Cumberland	49.5%	50.5%	42.6%	39.0%	11.9%	2.8%	1.8%
Durham	47.7%	52.3%	42.6%	37.3%	13.7%	5.5%	0.9%
Forsyth	47.4%	52.6%	56.5%	27.5%	13.0%	2.6%	0.9%
Guilford	47.3%	52.7%	49.8%	35.1%	8.2%	5.4%	0.8%
Hoke	49.4%	50.6%	39.3%	35.3%	13.6%	1.5%	9.1%
Robeson	48.2%	51.8%	25.0%	23.8%	9.0%	0.7%	41.7%
Scotland	49.6%	50.4%	43.2%	39.0%	3.1%	0.9%	12.4%
McDowell	49.9%	50.1%	87.3%	4.1%	6.3%	1.1%	0.8%
Mecklenburg	48.1%	51.9%	46.4%	32.9%	13.6%	6.4%	0.8%
Nash	47.9%	52.1%	49.4%	41.0%	7.1%	1.0%	1.0%
Edgecombe	46.2%	53.8%	36.3%	57.8%	4.8%	0.3%	0.8%
Wilson	47.3%	52.7%	47.0%	40.4%	10.8%	1.2%	0.6%
New Hanover	47.7%	52.3%	77.4%	13.7%	5.6%	1.6%	0.6%
Orange	47.8%	52.2%	69.2%	11.8%	8.6%	8.3%	0.6%
Pitt	47.0%	53.0%	54.3%	35.7%	6.3%	2.2%	0.5%
Wake	48.7%	51.3%	59.8%	21.0%	10.3%	7.5%	0.8%
TOTAL AVG	48.4%	51.6%	55.2%	28.5%	8.6%	2.8%	4.0%
RURAL AVG	48.9%	51.1%	51.9%	31.3%	7.4%	1.2%	7.5%
SUBURBAN AVG	48.1%	52.0%	62.4%	23.2%	8.4%	3.7%	0.9%
URBAN AVG	47.8%	52.2%	55.4%	27.9%	10.7%	4.8%	0.8%

Figure 9: Select sex and race population percentages for each LRC county, color-coded by the rural-suburban-urban classifications of Figure 8. Data from U.S. Census, July 1, 2019. Because the Census reported more race categories than included here, and because their categories are different than DPS's, the averages and LRC totals do not all add up to 100 percent.

Averaging the rural, suburban, and urban populations separately does not reveal dramatic differences, at least in part because relative outliers skew the results significantly, particularly within such small sample sizes. For example, although the average White and Black percentages for rural counties is about 52 and 31 percent, respectively, McDowell has 87 and 4 percent White and Black populations, respectively. Similarly, in suburban counties, although there is an average of 62 percent White, 23 percent Black, and 8 percent Hispanic residents, Buncombe has 84 percent White and 6 percent Black residents, and Cumberland has 12 percent Hispanic residents. Given the few samples in this dataset, it is difficult to draw overall conclusions about demographic differences between rural, suburban, and urban counties; instead, it is more precise to evaluate each county individually.

As exhibited in Figure 10, the counties have notable differences in terms of statistics regarding income, education, housing, and transportation. Despite small sample sizes, differences between the average totals for the rural and urban counties are salient (in average and general terms, the statistics of suburban counties fall somewhere in between these two statistics). The urban counties have a per capita income that is more than \$10,000 greater than that of the rural counties; the percentage of people 25 or older with a Bachelor's degree or higher is 24 percentage points higher in the urban counties than it is in the rural counties; and median owner-occupied housing unit values and gross rents are about \$90,000 and \$240 more expensive in the urban counties than they are in the rural counties, respectively.

Although mean travel time to work is somewhat similar across all counties, this data point fails to capture nuances in transportation type (e.g. public, private car/truck, Uber or Lyft sharing, etc.), costs, work distances, traffic, road quality, and other factors. Thus, although Edgecombe (rural), Orange (suburban), and Durham County (urban) all share the same travel time to work of 23 minutes, it is likely that three justice-involved individuals commute unevenly in these counties via, for example, a \$2,000 used car in Edgecombe, free walking in Orange, and a \$2.50/ride public bus in Durham. Ultimately, the data points in Figure 10 are important because they provide an economic picture of the county or counties in which each LRC is situated, and therefore help contextualize the LRC outcomes described at the end of this Section. For more information about the individuals returning per county, see Appendix B.

Counties	Income		Education		Housing	Median Gross Rent	Transportation Mean Travel Time to Work (Minutes)
	% Persons in Poverty	Per Capita Income	% People 25+ Graduate HS	% People 25+ Bachelor's or Higher	Median Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units		
Buncombe	11.5%	\$31,439	91.0%	39.2%	\$222,300	\$933	20
Craven	13.9%	\$28,007	88.2%	25.7%	\$158,300	\$878	21
Pamlico	16.6%	\$27,026	88.0%	19.4%	\$154,500	\$706	29
Cumberland	17.0%	\$24,301	90.7%	25.0%	\$132,500	\$922	21
Durham	13.5%	\$34,063	88.4%	47.5%	\$209,300	\$1,014	23
Forsyth	16.4%	\$29,921	88.8%	33.8%	\$154,500	\$791	22
Guilford	15.4%	\$29,708	89.1%	35.3%	\$162,400	\$850	22
Hoke	18.0%	\$20,656	86.0%	18.4%	\$139,000	\$877	28
Robeson	24.5%	\$17,881	77.1%	13.2%	\$74,600	\$626	24
Scotland	26.9%	\$18,242	79.8%	15.5%	\$84,500	\$662	22
McDowell	15.4%	\$22,725	83.8%	16.9%	\$113,900	\$643	24
Mecklenburg	11.7%	\$37,298	90.1%	44.8%	\$219,800	\$1,099	26
Nash	14.2%	\$26,980	85.4%	20.9%	\$126,200	\$769	22
Edgecombe	22.9%	\$20,055	79.7%	12.7%	\$85,200	\$677	23
Wilson	21.1%	\$24,273	80.3%	19.6%	\$121,300	\$751	21
New Hanover	15.3%	\$32,629	92.9%	39.3%	\$233,700	\$978	20
Orange	12.4%	\$40,650	92.7%	57.6%	\$292,500	\$1,077	23
Pitt	23.2%	\$25,722	89.4%	31.8%	\$141,100	\$778	21
Wake	8.4%	\$39,102	92.7%	51.8%	\$265,800	\$1,102	25
TOTAL AVG	16.8%	\$27,930	87.1%	29.9%	\$162,705	\$849	23
RURAL AVG	19.3%	\$22,872	83.1%	18.0%	\$117,500	\$732	24
SUBURBAN AVG	16.0%	\$30,528	91.0%	38.4%	\$197,100	\$928	21
URBAN AVG	13.5%	\$33,787	90.3%	42.1%	\$207,583	\$972	23

Figure 10: Data points on poverty, education, housing, and transportation for each LRC county, color-coded by the same rural-suburban-urban classifications as in Figures 8 and 9. Data retrieved from U.S. Census Bureau. The dates each data category was collected are described in Section Four; generally, data is from between 2014-2018.

LRC Participant Demographics

Across the 14 LRCs included in DPS's participant data, there was a total of 3,831 LRC clients between FY2018-2019. The number and percentage of clients per LRC is shown in Figure 11 below. The three LRCs with the highest number of clients are Hoke-Robeson-Scotland, Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson, and Mecklenburg. In contrast, the three LRCs with the fewest number of clients are Orange (established in 2019), Cumberland, and Forsyth.

LRC	# Clients	% of Total
Buncombe	215	5.61%
Craven-Pamlico	300	7.83%
Cumberland	49	1.28%
Durham	255	6.66%
Forsyth	68	1.77%
Guilford	239	6.24%
Hoke-Robeson-Scotland	892	23.28%
McDowell	218	5.69%
Mecklenburg	435	11.35%
Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson	520	13.57%
New Hanover	116	3.03%
Orange	49	1.28%
Pitt	242	6.32%
Wake	233	6.08%

Figure 11: Number and percentage of participants by LRC between FY2018-2019.

Although about 17 percent of data about risk level, 19 percent about sex, 16 percent about race, 21 percent about ethnicity, 16 percent about age, and 23 percent about supervision status is missing⁷ there are nonetheless distinctive qualities about the client base of LRCs—all of which reveal that LRCs are inclusively serving high-need clients. Ethnicity data is included separately in Appendix C, both because it resembles the race data breakdowns, and because there are too many categories to fit the page conveniently.

In terms of risk level, more than half of all clients served by the LRCs are considered to have a medium risk of reoffence based on DPS surveys (Figure 12). Additionally, nearly 20 percent of all LRC clients are categorized as high risk, with a range between Buncombe’s 10 percent of high-risk clients and Orange’s 43 percent. In this way, some LRCs are more inclusive than others in serving high-need clients. Although DPS does not record data for the risk levels of all people in prison, the distribution of LRC client risk level is approximately symmetrical, centered around “Medium Risk.”

⁷ Unfortunately, as evidenced in Figures 9-13, Cumberland County LRC does not have data for any of these categories.

LRC	# Data Available	Low Risk	Medium Risk	High Risk
Buncombe	215	43.7%	46.5%	9.8%
Craven-Pamlico	148	43.9%	45.3%	10.8%
Cumberland	0			
Durham	213	40.8%	45.1%	14.1%
Forsyth	68	30.9%	48.5%	20.6%
Guilford	0			
Hoke-Robeson-Scotland	889	18.0%	58.4%	23.6%
McDowell	208	36.5%	48.6%	14.9%
Mecklenburg	295	27.5%	57.3%	15.3%
Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson	518	30.5%	44.2%	25.3%
New Hanover	116	10.3%	62.1%	27.6%
Orange	40	7.5%	50.0%	42.5%
Pitt	242	40.1%	45.0%	14.9%
Wake	226	4.4%	76.5%	19.0%
TOTAL	3178	27.2%	53.1%	19.7%

Figure 12: Percentage of participants by risk level for each LRC and in total.

In terms of sex, as seen in Figure 13, the male-female split is approximately 80-20 overall, with a range amongst LRCs of 70-30 (New Hanover) to 93-7 (Mecklenburg). This is higher than the approximately 90-10 split in state prison writ large.

LRC	# Data Available	Male	Female	% Male	% Female
Buncombe	210	156	54	74.29%	25.71%
Craven-Pamlico	213	157	56	73.71%	26.29%
Cumberland	0	0	0		
Durham	237	195	42	82.28%	17.72%
Forsyth	65	54	11	83.08%	16.92%
Guilford	198	147	51	74.24%	25.76%
Hoke-Robeson-Scotland	820	668	152	81.46%	18.54%
McDowell	72	61	11	84.72%	15.28%
Mecklenburg	297	275	22	92.59%	7.41%
Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson	480	369	111	76.88%	23.13%
New Hanover	105	73	32	69.52%	30.48%
Orange	40	33	7	82.50%	17.50%
Pitt	242	193	49	79.75%	20.25%
Wake	107	77	30	71.96%	28.04%
TOTAL	3086	2458	628	79.65%	20.35%

Figure 13: Percentage of participant sexes by LRC and in total.

In terms of race, close to 62 percent of clients are Black, 28 percent are White, 8 percent are Hispanic, and 2 percent are Native American (Figure 14)—a population comprised of more people of color than state prisons at large (which have some 39 percent White people). There is, however, great variability across LRCs: Whereas Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson serves about 82 percent Black clients, McDowell serves about 83 percent *White* clients. The percentage point differential between the LRCs serving the highest and second highest percentages of Hispanic

clients is 25. And whereas most LRCs serve between 0-2 percent Native clients, Guilford and McDowell both serve about 6 percent Native clients.

LRC	# Data Available	% White	% Black	% Hispanic/Indian	% Asian/Oriental	% Native American	% Unknown/Other
Buncombe	210	74.29%	21.90%	1.90%	0.00%	1.90%	0.00%
Craven-Pamlico	213	30.99%	68.08%	0.00%	0.00%	0.94%	0.00%
Cumberland	0						
Durham	237	17.30%	79.32%	0.84%	0.00%	2.53%	0.00%
Forsyth	65	27.69%	69.23%	0.00%	0.00%	1.54%	1.54%
Guilford	198	51.52%	38.89%	2.53%	0.00%	6.57%	0.51%
Hoke-Robeson-Scotland	820	13.78%	55.49%	27.56%	0.12%	2.56%	0.49%
McDowell	72	83.33%	11.11%	0.00%	0.00%	5.56%	0.00%
Mecklenburg	422	26.78%	71.80%	0.71%	0.47%	0.24%	0.00%
Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson	480	17.50%	81.25%	0.42%	0.00%	0.63%	0.21%
New Hanover	105	44.76%	50.48%	1.90%	0.00%	1.90%	0.95%
Orange	40	40.00%	55.00%	2.50%	0.00%	2.50%	0.00%
Pitt	241	23.65%	75.10%	0.41%	0.00%	0.41%	0.41%
Wake	107	33.64%	64.49%	0.93%	0.00%	0.93%	0.00%
TOTAL	3210	28.32%	61.74%	7.69%	0.09%	1.87%	0.28%

Figure 14: Percentage of participant races by LRC and in total.

Based on Figure 15 about participant ages, a frequency distribution of ages within this dataset (Figure 16) is right skewed with a mean age of 39 years, median age of 37 years, standard deviation of 12.49 years, interquartile range of 18 years, minimum age of 17 years, and maximum age of 105. There are many cases greater than the mean that have z-scores of +2, +3, +4, and even +5.46 for the oldest participant. In general, this is similar to the distribution of DPS's population.

LRC	# Data Available	Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum	St Dev
Buncombe	210	38	37	20	72	10.74
Craven-Pamlico	213	40	39	21	72	10.68
Cumberland	0					
Durham	233	41	41	19	68	11.06
Forsyth	65	33	30	19	64	10.03
Guilford	198	46	45	20	96	15.31
Hoke-Robeson-Scotland	820	35	34	18	79	10.68
McDowell	72	40	40	22	74	11.28
Mecklenburg	423	44	45	17	105	13.57
Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson	480	36	34	18	87	12.26
New Hanover	104	39	37	21	71	11.27
Orange	40	40	40	21	66	10.67
Pitt	242	37	34	18	98	12.29
Wake	107	42	39	19	96	14.03
TOTAL	3207	39	37	17	105	12.49

Figure 15: Summary statistics for the ages of LRC participants.

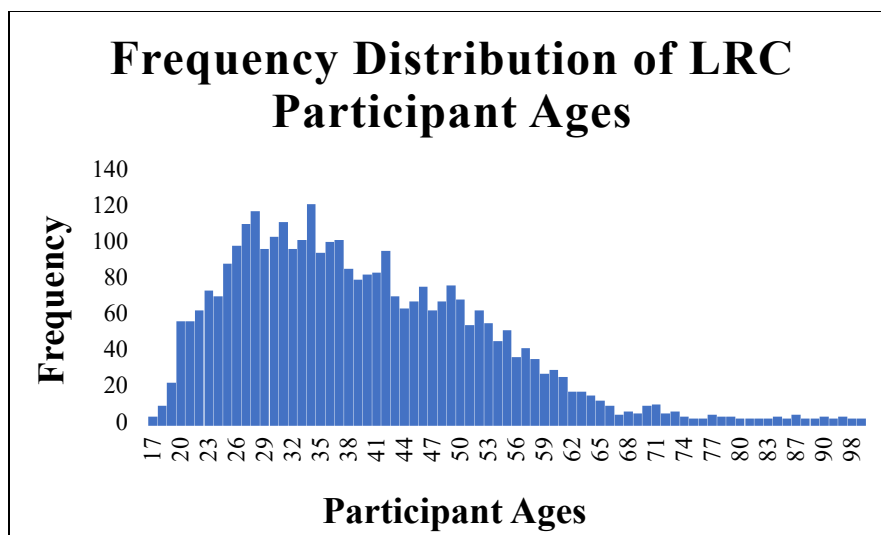


Figure 16: Frequency distribution of LRC participant ages. The distribution is right-skewed because there are many participants with z-scores of +2, +3, +4, and even +5.46.

Finally, although there is a substantial amount of data missing from New Hanover, Orange, Pitt, and Wake LRCs, participants are overwhelmingly on probation, with the total percentage of people with probation status being 88 percent (Figure 17). The next highest supervision type is post-release, comprising 7.7 percent of total cases, followed by parole at 3.5 percent. Nevertheless, there is some variability among LRCs. For example, Cumberland has highest relative percentage of post-release participants at 17 percent, compared to McDowell's 3 percent post-release participants.

LRC	# Data Available	% Probation	% Parole	% Post-Release	% Dual Supervision
Buncombe	210	88.1%	2.4%	8.6%	1.0%
Craven-Pamlico	212	92.0%	2.8%	5.2%	0.0%
Cumberland	0				
Durham	223	89.7%	4.0%	6.3%	0.0%
Forsyth	65	89.2%	3.1%	7.7%	0.0%
Guilford	157	89.2%	7.6%	3.2%	0.0%
Hoke-Robeson-Scotland	792	88.3%	3.2%	8.5%	0.1%
McDowell	69	84.1%	0.0%	15.9%	0.0%
Mecklenburg	277	84.5%	8.3%	5.8%	1.4%
Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson	472	89.8%	2.3%	7.0%	0.8%
New Hanover	99	86.9%	4.0%	8.1%	1.0%
Orange	39	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Pitt	235	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Wake	103	79.6%	0.0%	17.5%	2.9%
TOTAL	2953	88.2%	3.6%	7.7%	0.5%

Figure 17: Percentage of participant supervision type by LRC and in total.

LRC Outcomes

Importantly, although I make analytical observations about the LRC outcomes relative to the county demographics, I do not—and cannot—draw connections between the LRC outcomes described herein and my findings about public and private information in Sections Six and Seven. This subsection is useful for developing a deeper understanding of the LRCs and their county contexts, but it is separate from later analysis of the LRCs online presence and internal mechanics.

The raw dataset of LRC outcomes, color-coded by the same rural, suburban, and urban classifications as Figures 8-10, is included in Appendix D. This dataset is incomplete. Orange County LRC reports no data (likely because it was established in 2019 and the data timeframe is FY2018-2019), and Buncombe County LRC and Wake County LRC do not report data on several categories, including, in the case of Wake, the number of total active participants.⁸ As such, I exclude both Orange and Wake, because while Wake provides does provide some data points, the lack of active participants data prohibits an understanding of how relatively big or small all other statistics reported are (i.e. it is not possible to calculate proportions).

To breakdown my observations, I group them by service provision, employment outcomes, housing outcomes, and program completion. Across each rural-suburban-urban grouping, the issue of small data samples is limiting, hence why I only occasionally make cautioned observations about the groupings. Additionally, it is clear that county and LRC data have only tenuous relationships, in part because county variables are not particular to justice-involved individuals, and because LRC data categories are vague (e.g. “Employment Services”—see footnote on next page). For this reason, I articulate the weakness of these relationships where applicable.

⁸ As mentioned, a “0” for a data variable can signify that the LRC did not provide the particular service or that no participants met the particular data qualification. The fact that Wake does not include even the number of total active participants, and the fact that Buncombe does not include data on 19 of the original 29 variables suggests that those “0” entries were because of a lack of data. In general, I disregard “0” entries because of their ambiguity.

Services Provided by LRCs

Of the 12 service categories, I focus on employment, transportation, and housing—the most common except “Basic Services,” which I exclude because it was not clearly defined.⁹ The number and percentage of active participants who received these services are displayed in Figure 18.

LRC	Employment		Transportation		Housing	
	# Active Participants who Received Employment Services (FY18-19)	% Active Participants who Received Employment Services	# Active Participants who Received Transportation Services (FY18-19)	% Active Participants who Received Transportation Services	# Active Participants who Received Housing Services (FY18-19)	% Active Participants who Received Housing Services
Buncombe	111	28.2%	220	55.8%	53	13.5%
Craven-Pamlico	107	8.9%	284	23.7%	148	12.3%
Cumberland	388	43.3%	318	35.5%	62	6.9%
Durham	153	15.4%	81	8.1%	31	3.1%
Forsyth	131	84.5%	18	11.6%	23	14.8%
Guilford	155	64.6%	0	0.0%	163	67.9%
HSR	793	33.3%	183	7.7%	55	2.3%
McDowell	75	7.2%	155	14.8%	132	12.6%
Mecklenburg	249	25.6%	337	34.7%	170	17.5%
NEW	193	36.0%	241	45.0%	92	17.2%
New Hanover	182	17.8%	838	81.9%	148	14.5%
Pitt	24	5.4%	99	22.4%	87	19.7%
AVG	2561	26.4%	2561	24.4%	2561	14.5%
RURAL AVG	292	21.3%	216	22.8%	107	11.1%
SUBURBAN AVG	174	25.6%	212	37.9%	67	13.3%
URBAN AVG	174	41.6%	255	27.3%	107	23.6%

Figure 18: Number and percentage of active participants who received employment, transportation, and housing services per LRC during FY2018-2019. This table excludes Orange and Wake counties due to their lack of data. “HSR” stands for Hoke-Robeson-Scotland, and “NEW” stands for Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson.

The proportion of the three services provided by each LRC vary greatly. For example, whereas Pitt provides employment services to just over 5 percent of participants, Forsyth provides employment services to 85 percent of participants (average across councils: 26 percent). The other two services have similar variation, with 8 versus 82 percent of participants at Hoke-Robeson-Scotland and New Hanover receiving transportation services (average: 24 percent), respectively, as well as 2 versus 68 percent of participants at Hoke-Robeson-Scotland and Guilford receiving housing services (average: 15 percent).

⁹ This is a limitation across all service categories. For example, it is unclear what “employment services” consists of: Job hiring practice (i.e. interviews, resumes, etc.), vocational training, job placement, or something else. In this way, the lack of disaggregated data prohibits an in-depth assessment of LRC service data—not to mention inconsistencies with reporting.

In general, the LRC services and county demographic variables do not have strong or meaningful relationships. For more information about their correlations, scatterplots, and differences, see Appendix E. Most importantly, the variables about county employment, transportation, and housing (e.g. per capita income) are only partly helpful for understanding the contexts that justice-involved individuals are reintegrating into. For example, although per capita income may provide insight about incomes, salaries, and wages within a county, it does not provide insight about how many companies hire justice-involved individuals, what the incomes for such jobs are, and what requisite skills justice-involved individuals need to be competitive hires (i.e. whether they would need LRC services). This point, along with the fact that LRCs have unique foci and priorities, makes this particular exercise of contextualizing LRCs within their counties surface level at best.¹⁰

Nevertheless, there are some contextual observations to make about individual LRCs within their respective county or counties. For example, geographically larger counties like Buncombe and Cumberland, and counties that lack strong public transportation—particularly outside of cities—like New Hanover provide proportionately more transportation services than others. Additionally, urban counties like Mecklenburg, Guilford, and Forsyth—which have the highest median housing values and gross rents—on average provide more proportional housing services than other counties.¹¹

¹⁰ Contextualizing the LRCs within their respective counties would require an in-depth investigation into the county and LRC. For example, as I mention in the next footnote and in Section Seven and Section Eight, Durham does not provide permanent housing assistance to justice-involved individuals. Additionally, Durham County has nationally recognized service providers like TROSA which double as rehabilitation facilities and permanent housing providers (even after a client graduates the program). However, this is not true for all counties, as each county will have its own matrix of service providers. This information is more detailed and tailored than even disaggregated LRC data or more apt and descriptive county data, and thus requires in-depth studies of the individual LRCs and counties.

¹¹ The urban county average for housing services in Figure 17, while high, is still lower than it might be if Durham were excluded. As discussed in Section Seven, Durham does not assist with permanently affordable housing, perhaps contributing to their low percentage of participants who received housing services.

Wages Earned by LRC Participants

A percentage breakdown of LRC participants who gained employment, as well as the wages they earned is displayed in Figure 19. Across all wage brackets, LRCs in urban counties generally reported higher percentages of hired participants. In terms of range, whereas not even 1 percent of hired participants in Cumberland earned over \$10.00, all 28.2 percent of hired participants in Buncombe earned \$10.00 or more. Although county data does not explain why all LRC participants in Buncombe were hired with such high wages (i.e. it says nothing about employment types, employers, employer hiring practices, LRC services, etc.), it does reveal that Cumberland's poverty percentage is 5 points higher than that of Buncombe, and that Cumberland's per capita income is approximately \$7,000 less than that of Buncombe, both of which lend credence to the wage difference between the two LRCs.

LRC	% of Active Participants who Gained Employment	% Active Participants who Earned Minimum Wage	% Active Participants who Earned Minimum Wage-\$9.00	% Active Participants who Earned \$9.01-\$10.00	% Active Participants who Earned \$10.00+
Buncombe	28.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	28.2%
Craven-Pamlico	8.8%	0.2%	3.0%	3.7%	2.0%
Cumberland	44.5%	3.6%	28.8%	11.4%	0.8%
Durham	4.1%	0.1%	0.3%	2.0%	1.7%
Forsyth	17.4%	0.6%	1.9%	2.6%	12.3%
Guilford	6.3%	2.1%	1.7%	0.4%	2.1%
HSR	13.5%	0.0%	0.3%	2.0%	11.2%
McDowell	5.1%	0.0%	0.1%	2.0%	3.0%
Mecklenburg	9.6%	0.2%	0.6%	4.3%	4.4%
NEW	33.0%	0.9%	8.8%	11.6%	11.8%
New Hanover	18.8%	0.2%	10.8%	6.4%	1.5%
Pitt	10.0%	1.1%	3.4%	4.3%	1.1%
AVG	16.6%	0.8%	5.0%	4.2%	6.7%
RURAL AVG	15.1%	0.3%	3.0%	4.8%	7.0%
SUBURBAN AVG	27.5%	1.6%	10.7%	5.2%	10.0%
URBAN AVG	11.2%	0.6%	3.1%	3.1%	4.4%

Figure 19: Percentages of active LRC participants who gained employment and their wages, grouped into four brackets.

Type of Housing Secured by LRC Participants

The most common housing type secured by LRC participants was transitional housing at 7.9 percent of active participants, followed by permanent and emergency housing (Figure 20). All of Buncombe, Cumberland, Durham, Mecklenburg, and Pitt's participants moved into transitional

housing. While this may be due to county housing contexts, the county data does not provide such insight. At least 1 percent of participants from every rural LRC moved into permanent housing. In contrast, no participants from suburban LRCs moved into either emergency or permanent housing, and only in three of five urban LRCs did participants move into permanent housing. For every LRC except Guilford, between 0 and 1 percent of participants moved into emergency housing, despite nearly 68 percent of Guilford participants receiving housing services.

LRC	% Active Participants who Gained Housing	% Active Participants who Moved into Emergency Housing	% Active Participants who Moved into Transitional Housing	% Active Participants who Moved into Permanent Housing
Buncombe	11.7%	0.0%	11.7%	0.0%
Craven-Pamlico	12.3%	0.0%	7.7%	4.7%
Cumberland	5.9%	0.0%	5.9%	0.0%
Durham	3.5%	0.0%	3.5%	0.0%
Forsyth	3.9%	0.0%	1.3%	2.6%
Guilford	23.8%	20.8%	2.1%	0.8%
HSR	3.6%	0.0%	1.8%	1.8%
McDowell	13.2%	0.4%	12.2%	0.6%
Mecklenburg	18.6%	0.0%	18.6%	0.0%
NEW	7.6%	0.7%	0.6%	6.3%
New Hanover	17.9%	0.5%	10.0%	7.4%
Pitt	19.7%	0.0%	19.7%	0.0%
AVG	11.8%	1.9%	7.9%	2.0%
RURAL AVG	9.2%	0.3%	5.6%	3.3%
SUBURBAN AVG	12.4%	0.0%	12.4%	0.0%
URBAN AVG	13.5%	4.3%	7.1%	2.2%

Figure 20: Percentages of active LRC participants who gained housing, grouped by housing type: Emergency, Transitional, and Permanent.

Completion Information

The LRC with the highest percentage of active participants who successfully completed the LRC process during FY2018-2019 was Buncombe at approximately 43 percent (Figure 21). The next highest, Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson, had 25 percent of participants graduate.¹² These contrast Craven-Pamlico, which had just 1 percent of participants graduate. Tempering these differences, however, are the facts that councils may have different numbers of new enrollees that year, clients prepared to graduate, or reentry processes or timelines that impact their number of graduating participants in any given year. Notably, there are very different percentages of clients who became

¹² I use “graduate” to refer to a client who successfully completes the reentry process defined by a particular LRC.

inactive in some way (this includes all categories, even graduating). Whereas Cumberland had more than 56 percent of its participants become inactive during the year, just 6 percent of Guilford’s clients became inactive in some way. The average across all LRCs was 25 percent.

LRC	% Active Participants who Become Inactive in Some Way	% Active Participants who Successfully Completed	% Active Participants who were Non-Compliant	% Active Participants who Moved Away	% Active Participants who Dropped Out	% Active Participants who were Re-Arrested	% Active Participants who Died	% Active Participants with No Contact	% Active Participants Transferred to Another LRC
Buncombe	45.7%	42.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%	0.0%
Craven-Pamlico	14.0%	1.2%	0.3%	0.7%	0.5%	0.4%	0.0%	10.8%	0.1%
Cumberland	56.4%	23.6%	11.5%	0.1%	6.6%	1.0%	0.0%	13.6%	0.0%
Durham	11.1%	9.7%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%
Forsyth	40.0%	16.8%	1.3%	2.6%	2.6%	1.3%	0.0%	15.5%	0.0%
Guilford	5.8%	5.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
HSR	10.7%	10.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
McDowell	16.1%	6.6%	0.6%	1.7%	1.6%	0.4%	0.0%	5.0%	0.2%
Mecklenburg	20.5%	7.2%	0.7%	0.3%	0.7%	0.9%	0.0%	10.6%	0.0%
NEW	35.8%	24.6%	0.2%	2.4%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	8.0%	0.0%
New Hanover	12.6%	9.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%	0.2%	1.1%	0.1%
Pitt	33.5%	6.8%	0.0%	2.5%	0.0%	1.8%	0.5%	21.9%	0.0%
AVG	25.2%	13.8%	1.2%	0.9%	1.0%	0.7%	0.1%	7.6%	0.0%
RURAL AVG	19.1%	10.7%	0.3%	1.2%	0.5%	0.4%	0.0%	6.0%	0.1%
SUBURBAN AVG	45.2%	24.4%	3.8%	0.9%	2.2%	0.9%	0.2%	12.9%	0.0%
URBAN AVG	18.0%	9.8%	0.4%	0.6%	0.7%	0.8%	0.0%	5.7%	0.0%

Figure 21: Percentages breakdowns of how LRC participants became inactive. Participants either completed the program, were non-compliant, moved away, dropped out, were re-arrested, died, were out of contact, or transferred to another LRC. The term “inactive” encompasses all such scenarios.

Few clients overall were non-compliant; Cumberland’s 12 percent of non-compliant participants is the singular outlier. There were similarly few clients who moved away, dropped out (except Cumberland’s 6.6 percent), were re-arrested, died, or were transferred to another LRC. In terms of participants without contact, however, Pitt (21.9), Forsyth (15.5), Cumberland (13.6), Craven-Pamlico (10.8), and Mecklenburg (10.6) all had 10 or more percent of clients who were out of contact for at least two months. It is unclear why these LRCs reported higher percentages of participants out of contact, as there are no discernable differences in terms of rural, suburban, or urban classifications.

Section Six: Public Information Findings

I analyzed the public information available about LRCs via three data categories: (1) What LRCs exist; (2) their websites and what information is available on them; and (3) the values and themes communicated in their goals, missions, values, and/or motivations.

Data Category 1: Developing a List of LRCs

There are three resources that list LRCs in North Carolina: (1) A Facility Breakdown and Catchment Map of LRC Service Areas available on DPS's website; (2) a list available on the NC Second Chance Alliance's website; and (3) a list provided by the U.S. Attorney's Office of the Eastern District of NC. There are differences between each of these sources in terms of the number, names, and locations of LRCs.

DPS LRC Facility Breakdown and Catchment Map

The DPS LRC Facility Breakdown and Catchment Map starts 22 "LRC Locations" in 22 different counties on a map of NC (NC DPS, 2020). However, in fact, the list of "established LRC in catchment areas" includes 15 just distinct LRCs that provide for the 22 counties. In alphabetical order, these include:

1. Buncombe County Local Reentry Council
2. Craven/Pamlico Reentry Council (CPRC)
3. Durham County Local Reentry Council
4. Fayetteville-Cumberland Reentry Council (FCRC)
5. Forsyth County Local Reentry Council
6. Guilford County Local Reentry Council
7. Hoke/Robeson/Scotland South East Regional Local Reentry Council (HRS)
8. Jones/Onslow Local Re-Entry Resource Council
9. McDowell County Local Reentry Council
10. Nash/Edgecombe/Wilson (NEW) Local Reentry Council
11. New Hanover County LRC (LINC)
12. Orange County Local Reentry Council
13. Pitt County Local Reentry Council (STRIVE)
14. Re-Entry Partners of Mecklenburg Local Reentry Council

15. Wake County Local Reentry Council

The DPS Catchment Map does not provide contact information, websites, or any details about the LRCs except for their names, counties covered, and designated minimum-security reentry transition facility.

NC Second Chance Alliance

In contrast, the NC Second Chance Alliance website lists 14 LRCs, phone numbers for each, and website links for seven (NC Second Chance, 2018). In alphabetical order, these include:

1. Buncombe County Local Reentry Council
2. Craven/Pamlico Re-Entry Council
3. Durham County Local Reentry Council
4. Fayetteville/Cumberland Reentry Council (FCRC)
5. Forsyth County Local Reentry Council
6. Guilford County Local Reentry Council
7. Hoke/Robson/Scotland South East Regional Local Reentry Council
8. McDowell County Local Reentry Council
9. Nash/Edgecombe/Wilson (N.E.W.) Local Reentry Council
10. New Hanover County Local Reentry Council (LINC)
11. Onslow/Jones Local Re-Entry Resource Council
12. Pitt County Local Reentry Council (STRIVE)
13. Re-Entry Partners of Mecklenburg Local Reentry Council
14. Wake County Capital Area Reentry Council (CARC)

Missing from this list relative to the NC DPS Catchment Map is the Orange County Local Reentry Council. This is because the Second Chance resource was updated last on March 7, 2018, but the Orange County LRC was not established until 2019, per the Council's website. Additionally, although Second Chance highlights the Buncombe County LRC, the website link provided is to the Buncombe County Reentry *Resources Hub*, a different entity from the LRC (emphasis mine—described in greater detail below).

U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of NC:

The U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of NC (hereafter, “EDNC”)—a federal, not state entity—lists 13 LRCs covering 20 counties, phone numbers, emails, and addresses for each, and website links for six LRCs (US Attorney’s Office for the EDNC, n.d.). In alphabetical order, these include:

1. Capital Area Reentry Council
2. Carteret County Reentry Council
3. **Craven/Pamlico Re-entry Council**
4. **Fayetteville/Cumberland Re-entry Council**
5. Halifax-Northampton Reentry Roundtable
6. **Hoke/Robeson/Scotland South East Regional Reentry Council**
7. Johnston County Reentry Roundtable
8. Martin County Reentry Roundtable
9. **Nash/Edgecombe/Wilson (N.E.W.) Reentry Council**
10. **New Hanover County Reentry Council**
11. **Onslow/Jones Reentry Council**
12. **Pitt County Reentry Council**
13. Wayne County Reentry Roundtable

The seven councils which overlap with the DPS and Second Chance lists are noted in bold. Because reentry councils are one of the EDNC’s six “Reentry Initiatives,” the EDNC Attorney’s Office lists all reentry councils “across the EDNC”—not specifically state- or DPS-sponsored councils. However, this information is not made clear on the EDNC’s list, except loosely by the distinction between reentry “councils” and “roundtables” (which, given that Capital Area Reentry Council and Carteret County Reentry Council are likewise both “councils” not sponsored by DPS, is a false identifier).

The lack of cohesion between these three lists is significant because the misinformation may lead astray potential LRC clients, families, service providers, and others. For example, a justice-involved resident in Orange County looking for housing assistance who locates the NC Second Chance Alliance’s list would be unaware altogether of the Orange County LRC. This

conflicting online information limits the implementation of the LRCs because it provides unclear and inaccessible information. Indeed, even the DPS Facility Breakdown and Catchment Map—which, in theory, should be the definitive list given that it was created by DPS—is less an easy-to-read, defined list than it is a hodgepodge of information that the reader must attentively decipher. To ascertain that there are 15 LRCs from DPS’s Breakdown and Map, the reader must remove duplicates in the Breakdown or interpret a county map of NC that inaccurately implies there are 22 LRCs total, rather than 15 LRCs covering 22 counties. Not mentioned here are the similar clarity, accessibility, and accuracy concerns about the Second Chance and EDNC lists. Because of the inaccessibility of these public LRC lists, the implementation of LRCs writ large is weakened substantially in public domains (i.e. outside of the purviews of DPS, probation and parole officers, and state policymakers).

Nevertheless, because the NC DPS list is updated with the Orange County LRC—in contrast to the NC Second Chance Alliance’s list—and because it lists exclusively state-run LRCs—unlike the EDNC’s resource which includes federally-sponsored councils/roundtables—I use that list of 15 LRCs for subsequent analyses of websites, goal/mission value messaging, and referral forms.

Data Category 2: LRC Websites

All website sources are included in a separate section at the end of “References.” There is great variability in the online presence of the 15 LRCs. Four have no website, with one operating only on Facebook; four are footnoted briefly, if at all, on other institutions’ websites; five are hosted as pages on county or IA websites; and just two have independent websites. Additionally, even those with websites or social media accounts range from including five of 18 variables (excluding website and social media account) to including 14. Thus, I group the websites in six

main categories for deeper assessment: (1) No website, (2) conflicting websites, (3) unclear or incomplete websites, (4) effective websites, (5) variables missing and present on at least two-thirds of the websites; and (6) best practices. A color-coded list of the LRCs, their performance across variables, and the summary statistics for each LRC and variable is in Appendix F.

No Website

Four LRCs had no websites at all: Fayetteville-Cumberland, HRS, Jones-Onslow, and Wake County.¹³ All but one of these—excepting for Fayetteville-Cumberland, which runs a Facebook page with some information listed—have no information available online. Fayetteville-Cumberland’s Facebook page, as shown partly in Figure 22, features information on the physical address, phone number, email address, hours, and goals/mission of the LRC. Additionally, individual posts on Fayetteville-Cumberland’s Facebook page highlight particular services provided, partner organizations, sponsored activities or events, and pictures of or details about LRC’s Reentry Coordinator. Because there is only partial information provided on these categories, I code them Yellow with the description “Incomplete.”

¹³ Throughout this section, I frequently refer to the LRCs by just their county name. Unless I specify that the name refers to the county, and not the LRC, it should be default assumed I am speaking about the LRC.

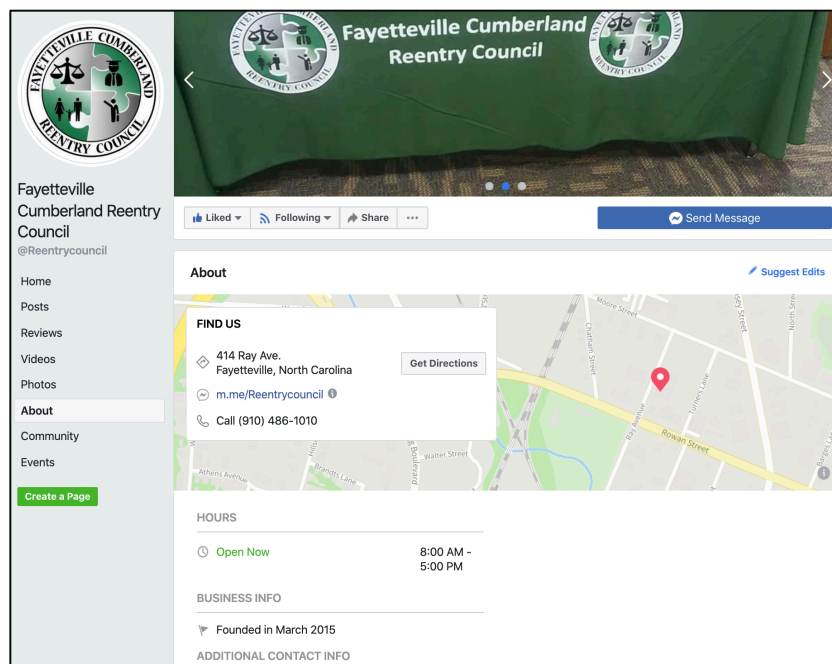


Figure 22: Screenshot of the Fayetteville Cumberland Reentry Council's Facebook page "About" section. In addition to what is seen in this image, this section includes information about the LRC, its mission, and a contact email address. Photo by author, March 2020.

Conflicting Websites

Three of the LRCs have multiple, conflicting websites that steer toward separate resources or organizations: Buncombe, McDowell, and Mecklenburg. Although a Google search of the Buncombe LRC links to the County's Criminal Justice Resource Center (the IA) page, that search result appears below "Buncombe County ReEntry Resources Hub" [emphasis mine], an entirely different entity which is non-affiliated with the LRC and collaboratively run by Code for Asheville, Psgah Legal Services, the Community Resource Council of Swannanoa, and PRC Applications. The Resources Hub aggregates resources for people with criminal records across a host of services ranging from housing to rehabilitation.

Likewise, a Google search of the New Hanover County LRC links to two websites: A Google site called the "New Hannover County Local Reentry Council" and LINC Inc.'s (the IA) home website. Although both websites list the same physical addresses and phone numbers for

contact, and therefore are clearly of the same entity, they nonetheless provide different information. For example, while the LINC site includes information about goals/mission, services provided, and partner organizations, the LRC Google site includes no such information.

This is also the case for Mecklenburg, where a Google search yields a page called “Re-Entry Services” on the County’s website, as well as an independent site called the “Reentry Partners of Mecklenburg,” a website created by a Charlotte non-profit called Changed Choices. Neither of these two mention the LRC specifically. Although the former links to the latter as a resource—but not vice versa—the Reentry Partners lists only housing and employment services, whereas the County page also lists educational/vocational training, treatment referrals, physical health supports, and pro-social supports as additional services.

Thus, a possible consequence of conflicting websites for at least Buncombe and New Hanover County is that people searching for information about an LRC or an LRC’s reentry services may not find the information or may find inaccurate information.

Unclear or Incomplete Websites

At least four websites feature information about the LRC that is unclear, incomplete, or difficult to find. For Buncombe, the County’s Justice Resource Center (“JRC”) (the IA) discusses reentry issues but makes no mention to the LRC except in a photograph caption on the second-page of a two-page brochure on “Re-entry Services,” linked under a short column named “Services Provided” near the end of JRC’s home page. Except for this hard-to-find photograph caption, a website navigator would only associate the reentry resources with the County JRC, not the LRC.

This is similar for Pitt and Mecklenburg LRC. Although a search of “Pitt County Local Reentry Council” links to Life of NC’s website (the IA), only a sub-paragraph of the “Program Services” page highlights re-entry, and only the second-to-last sentence of the paragraph mentions

the Pitt County Reentry Council. Moreover, the paragraph only mentions the LRC’s mission, services, and meeting schedule. For Mecklenburg, neither the County nor the Reentry Partners sites explicitly mention the LRC. The County page on “Reentry Services” lists goals, a mission, eligibility criteria, a referral form, and additional resources, but not the LRC—not even in the Reentry Services brochure like in the case of Buncombe’s JRC.

Finally, the website McDowell County LRC is difficult to find and decipher. The first Google search result of the LRC title is a news article about the Council from the local McDowell News, which notes that Freedom Life Ministries is the IA of the Council, describes what an IA is, and provides contact information for Freedom Life. However, while the website of Freedom Life has a page for “Inside Life” and “Outside Life” (referencing life inside and outside prison), there is no mention whatsoever of the LRC, and it is unclear if the information provided (e.g. goals, services) is relevant to McDowell LRC.

Clear, Identifiable Websites

Seven LRCs have clear and identifiable websites or webpages that appear in Google searches: Craven-Pamlico, Durham Forsyth, Guilford, Nash/Edgecombe/Wilson, and Orange. Among these, two have independent sites—Craven-Pamlico and Nash/Edgecombe/Wilson—while the remainder five have designated pages under the County or IA websites.¹⁴ For example, the first search result for Durham County LRC,

Figure 23: List of LRCs and their Green and Blue color scores, indicating the LRC or IA website or webpage includes a data variable.

LRC	Totals per LRC
Buncombe County	0 Green; 14 Blue
Craven-Pamlico	9 Green
Durham County	14 Green; 1 Blue
Fayetteville-Cumberland	6 Green
Forsyth County	6 Green; 1 Blue
Guilford County	8 Green
HRS (Hoke, Robeson, Scotland)	0 Green
Jones-Onslow	0 Green
McDowell County	0 Green; 8 Blue
NEW (Nash, Edge, Wilson)	12 Green
New Hanover County	12 Green; 3 Blue
Orange County	13 Green; 1 Blue
Pitt County	0 Green; 10 Blue
Re-Entry Partners of Mecklenburg	0 Green; 15 Blue
Wake County	0 Green

¹⁴ Linguistically, I distinguish between “site and “page” to highlight the difference between a website (the larger location on the internet) and a webpage (a particular section within a website). This is analogous to a book and a page within a book.

which provides information about 14 of 20 variables overall—the highest of any LRC, as shown in Figure 23 above—states the full title of the LRC and links to a page on the Durham County website. This page is private and has no other County resources obscuring the LRC information (Figure 24), unlike with the four other LRCs that have pages on site hosts (Figure 25).

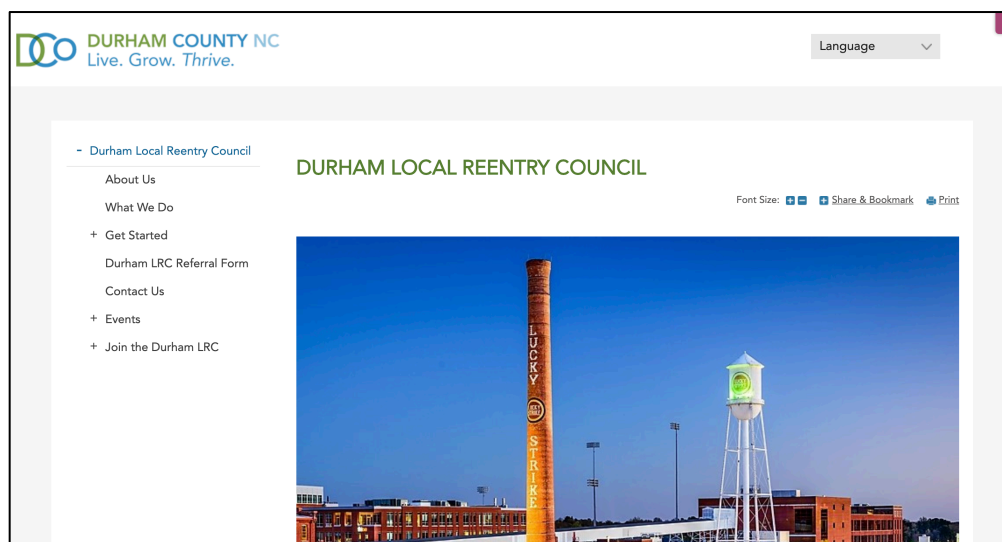


Figure 24: Screenshot of Durham County LRC’s page on Durham County’s website. The LRC has a private page without other County resources listed. Photo by author, March 2020.



Figure 25: Screenshot of Forsyth County LRC’s page on the Piedmont Triad Regional Council website. The LRC pages for Guilford, New Hanover, and Orange Counties also have other host website resources included on the screen. Photo by author, March 2020.

This private feature of Durham County LRC’s webpage may be the biggest distinction between the four other LRC pages and the two LRC independent sites. As seen in the Craven-Pamlico independent site below in Figure 26, such sites display only information that is relevant to the LRC, and therefore ensure there is no potential confusion about whether the LRC is an independent entity, or what the IA for the LRC is. Otherwise, however, sites and pages are functionally equivalent.

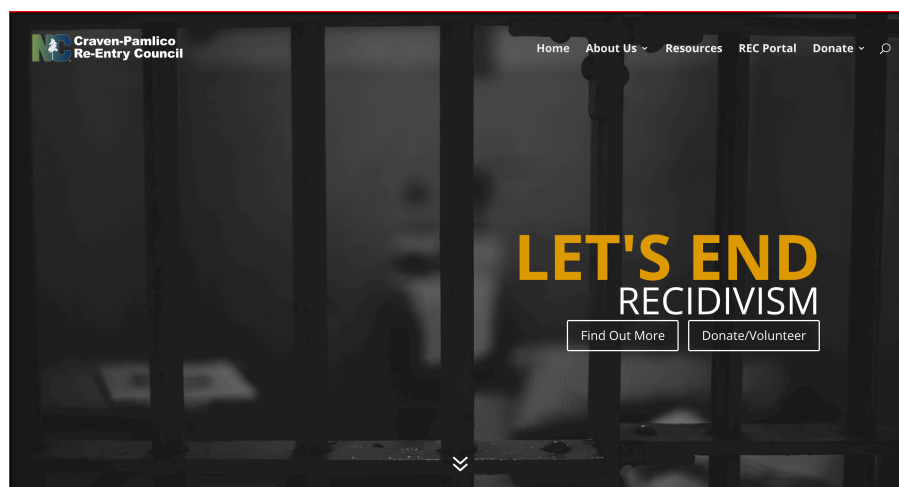
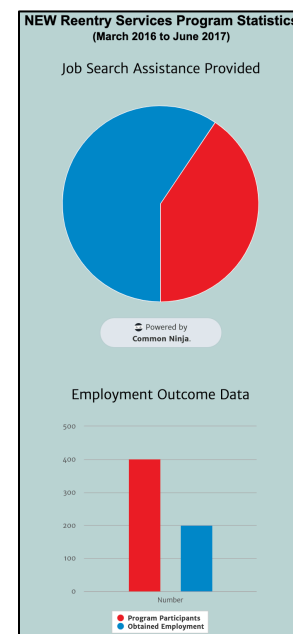
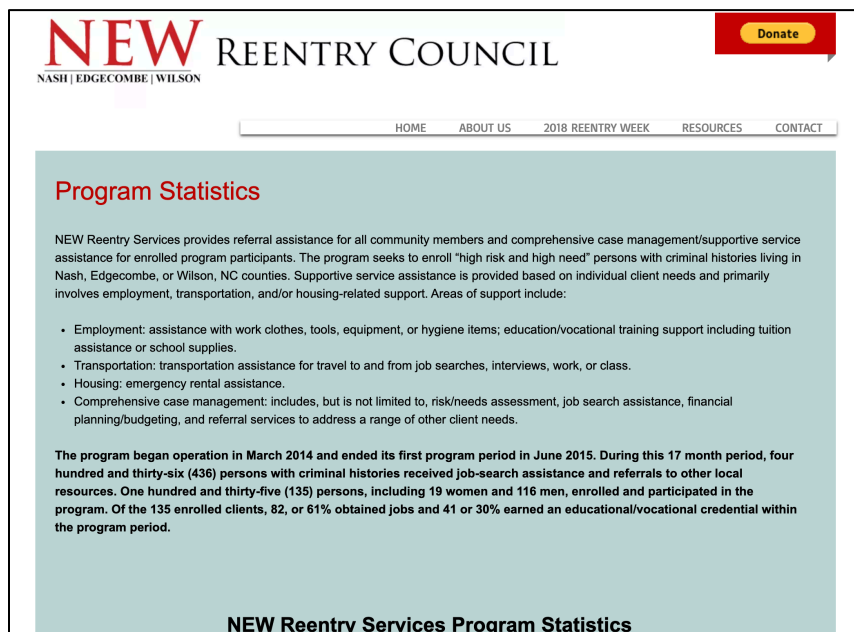


Figure 26: Screenshot of Craven-Pamlico LRC’s website, which only provides information about the LRC. Users can scroll or click the tabs for information. Photo by author, March 2020.

Variables Missing on at Least Two-Thirds of the Websites

Five of the 18 variables (excluding websites and social media accounts—this section concerns what is *on* websites) were not present on at least two-thirds (by rounding down, seven) of the 11 LRC websites: Budget (0/11), data/results (1/11), intermediary agency (2/11), activity calendar (3/11), and partnership application or information (3/11). I include both Green and Blue color scores in these counts. Addressing these five variables in order, the single LRC that includes data and results is Nash/Edgecombe/Wilson (“NEW”), as shown in Figures 27 and 28. Although NEW reports three data points—the number of enrollees, number of participants who received employment assistance, and number of participants who obtained employment or earned an

educational or vocational credential between March 2014 and June 2015—the data is five years old and does not include outcomes on issues like housing, transportation, mental health or substance abuse, or recidivism.



Figures 27 and 28: Screenshots of the text and charts included on the “Program Statistics” page of the Nash/Edgecombe/Wilson Reentry Council website. The data points are bolded. The charts concern job assistance provision and employment outcomes. Photos by author, March 2020.

In terms of IAs, both Durham and Pitt explicitly state what their IAs are, as well as describe the role of the IAs. Durham notes that an IA must “bring organizations together to facilitate the work, advocacy and the coordination of services for justice involved individuals,” while Pitt notes that an IA liaises “between the Department of Public Safety and the Pitt County Local Reentry Council” and is the “program deliverer for re-entry as well as the fiscal agent.” Of these descriptions, Pitt’s is most accurate because Durham’s description does not capture the IA’s role liaising between DPS and the LRC. Eight other LRC webpages are housed on IA websites but do not signal that these website hosts are IAs.

With activity calendars, Buncombe, Pitt, and New Hanover LRCs feature calendars, but Buncombe and Pitt’s are interspersed with non-reentry activities sponsored by their IAs. Three

other LRCs include some version of an activity calendar—Durham, Fayetteville-Cumberland, and Orange—but they, respectively, either do not have events listed, list events inconsistently on Facebook, or only list LRC and LRC committee meetings. Just three LRCs—Craven-Pamlico, New Hanover, and Durham—include a partnership application or information page. All three partnership applications ask about contact information and services provided. Additionally, Craven-Pamlico’s form includes references, how the organization heard of the LRC, and a membership fee; New Hanover’s form includes history of working with justice-involved populations, DPS clearance, service costs, and starting date; and Durham’s form includes service costs and eligibility restrictions.

Ultimately, the absence of these variables affects the inclusivity, efficacy, and transparency of the LRCs. In terms of inclusivity and efficacy, the lack of clarity about IAs, as well as the lack of information for current and future partner organizations may limit the scope of an LRC’s services and membership. It is possible that a potential member is unaware that an IA sponsors reentry support via the LRC, or that a potential member may not take the additional step to contact the LRC about completing a partnership form. Both scenarios—as well as others not outlined—would deprive the LRC of greater service capacity to meet broader county need more effectively. In terms of transparency, without budget information and data or results, navigators of the LRC sites and pages are not made aware of who helps finance reentry support, to what extent such services are available, and how effective such services have been for past participants.

Variables Present on at Least Two-Thirds of the Websites

In contrast, eight of the 18 variables (excluding website and social media accounts) were present on at least seven of the LRC’s websites: Physical address (11/11), phone number (11/11), goal/mission/vision (10/11), services provided (9/11), email address (9/11), information about

LRCs or the process of working with an LRC (8/11), governance structure (7/11), and applications or referral forms (7/11). Given that physical addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses are straightforward, and that I discuss goals in the next Data Category, I only discuss information about LRCs or working with LRCs, governance structures, and referral forms below.

Of the eight LRCs that provide information about LRCs or the process of working with an LRC, four provided information about LRCs only, two provided information about the process only, and two provided information about both. In general, information about LRCs described the premise and role of a council. For example, the Orange County LRC describes a council as “an organized network of individuals, agencies and advocates that provide support and coordination of innovative responses to the reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals.” The websites of Craven-Pamlico and New Hanover also provide information about the background history of LRCs, with the former describing the 2011 creation of LRCs, and the latter also detailing the legislative mandate for LRCs in Senate Bill 141 (SL 2012).

In terms of the process of working with an LRC, Durham’s website stands out for its clarity and descriptiveness. In the first place, Durham has a separate, “Get Started” tab with information for “currently incarcerated folks” that, similar to the other councils describing the process, explains that clients will work with the Reentry Coordinator six months prior to release to develop a “home plan” for service provision. Above and beyond the other LRCs, Durham also includes an easy-to-read four-step process list on its “What We Do” tab, pictured below in Figure 29.

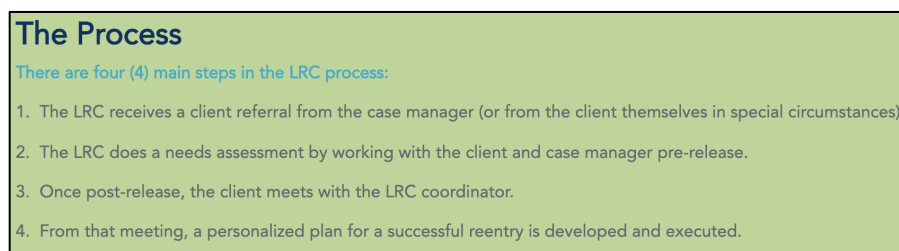


Figure 29: The four-step process of working with the Durham County Local Reentry Council. Photograph from the Durham County website, March 2020.

Of the seven LRCs with information about their governance structures, four only list their staff members (and Mecklenburg does so only in a brochure attachment), one also lists its Board of Directors, and even further, two provide information about council hierarchies—Orange and New Hanover. New Hanover’s website features two images of the *general* organizational structure of an LRC directly in the “About” page. Although Orange’s webpage does not include such images, its textual descriptions of its Executive Committee, Advisory Committee, and Sub-Committees also include document attachments that list the names and affiliations of each committee member.

Although seven LRCs feature online referral forms, three such forms are not denoted as specifically for the LRC. Whereas Durham, Forsyth, New Hanover, and Orange have LRC-specific reentry forms—a byproduct of having LRC-specific sites and pages—Buncombe, Pitt, and Mecklenburg’s referrals are more broadly for the Buncombe County Justice Resource Center, Life of NC in Pitt County, and Mecklenburg County Reentry Services. Nevertheless, there are noteworthy observations about the forms. The only commonalities across all forms is that they each ask for name and contact information. Beyond that, however, there are substantial differences in terms of inclusivity. Perhaps the biggest difference is in language and audience. Whereas five of the forms speak in third-person tense about the justice-involved individual (e.g. “is the prospective participant...”), New Hanover and Pitt speak directly to the individual (e.g. “are you justice involved?”). This difference, although ostensibly small, is a potent power shift that presupposes that the website navigator is the justice-involved individual, not that the justice-involved individual is referred by someone else. Consequently, these LRCs speak directly to the justice-involved individuals, not to someone else about them.

Of the five referral forms that do not speak to justice-involved individuals directly, Buncombe, Orange, and Mecklenburg allow for type-in responses about who is completing the form. This is relatively more inclusive than Durham and Forsyth, which provide pre-defined answers, because navigators can self-define their positionality and/or relationship to the justice-involved individual. Of Durham's seven listed answers are "Family Member" and "Self," still explicitly providing room for and recognizing the capacity of justice-involved individuals to seek out services independently. In contrast, the only of Forsyth's four answers relevant to justice-involved individuals is "Other," not making space for justice-involved individuals and/or their families, hence why Forsyth's form is the least inclusive of the other six on this language aspect.

At least two other aspects demonstrate inclusivity. First, although Pitt and Mecklenburg ask about incarceration history, and Durham and Forsyth ask if the client is currently in custody, Orange, Buncombe, and to an extent, New Hanover, skip directly to asking what services the client needs, de-emphasizing criminality and emphasizing reintegration.¹⁵ Second, of the four forms asking about gender, Orange allows a self-write-in (the most inclusive), Pitt includes "Gender Neutral" along with the male-female binary, New Hanover includes "Transgender – Male to Female" and "Transgender – Female to Male" along with the binary (perhaps the third most inclusive),¹⁶ and Mecklenburg includes only the binary. Once again, although gender may appear an inconsequential, demographic question of the forms, it nevertheless signals inclusivity,

¹⁵ New Hanover asks only if the individual is "justice involved." Although this question is still about criminal history, it does not center "prison," the crime an individual was convicted for, whether the client "serve[d their] time," or other language that fail both to acknowledge the injustices of the carceral system, and to utilize a future-oriented frame.

¹⁶ Although by no means am I an expert on gender studies, I offer two analytical notes about the inclusiveness of these four options. First, while the inclusion of transgender options is positive, there are other gender identities that the options do not provide space for, including gender fluid, genderqueer, and non-binary. Second, the language of "Transgender – Female to Male," and vice versa, is redundant and can be posed simply as "Trans man" and "Trans woman," suggesting perhaps that the inclusion was perfunctory.

openness, and an intentionality to be welcoming that translates to people identifying outside and inside the gender binary.¹⁷

Standout Features on Websites

Nearly every LRC website or webpage included features that were distinctive and/or contributed to some aspect of learning about or engaging with the LRC and/or reentry.¹⁸ Grouped into five categories, these include:

- Features to promote *learning about reentry* (in NC and generally):
 - [Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson](#), [New Hanover](#), and [Pitt](#) link to diverse resources for extra reading and learning about reentry in NC or in general: DPS’s Reentry Programs and Services, the North Carolina Justice Center, NC’s Reentry Action Plan , videos about best practices in reentry, “Reentry MythBusters” prepared by the Federal Interagency Reentry Council, a document entitled “Eight Ways to Prepare for a Loved One’s Reentry” prepared by the Prison Fellowship, a Reentry Guidebook for Veterans, and a study by the American Psychological Association on reentry challenges and social inequality.
 - [Craven-Pamlico](#) and [Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson](#) define key reentry terms (e.g. “recidivism,” “risk”).

¹⁷ This concept of universality is important in many fields, not just Gender, Sexuality, and Feminism. For example, the concept of “Universal Design” in Disability Studies posits that people who are able-bodied also benefit from inclusive and accessible spatial design (not just physical accessibility)—not just people with disabilities.

¹⁸ Note that while I was diligent and comprehensive in my record-keeping of features, it is possible I occasionally overlooked an LRC that indeed had one of these features. This list is likely not exhaustive. The point is not which LRCs have additional features, but what the features are and why they are useful.

- Features to *highlight and to make reentry resources accessible*:
 - New Hanover has two interrelated features: A map that geographically pins the locations of resources across the county, and a filter search bar that would map and list the resources that fit particular criteria submitted by the navigator.
 - New Hanover and Orange have crowdsourced resource listings where community members and/or organizations can add a resource to the existing list.
 - Buncombe includes the logos of its partners that, when clicked, link to the partners' websites where navigators can read about their services in more detail, learn about information like their missions, contact the partners directly, and more.
 - New Hanover links to local resources in the community (e.g. emergency housing providers).

- Features to help *grow the LRC*:
 - Buncombe, Craven-Pamlico, McDowell, and New Hanover have newsletter or mailing list subscription options where users can provide contact information to stay up to date on the LRC.
 - Buncombe, Guilford, and New Hanover have social media sharing options where users can select which social media platform they wish to share the LRC site or page on. Users are then exported to the selected platform with the site or page pre-linked in a draft post. Note: This feature is distinct from buttons that link to the social media accounts of the LRC or IA.
 - Craven-Pamlico, McDowell, and Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson have “donate” buttons allow for direct donations. However, in the case of McDowell, because this button

is on the IA's website without the option for users to specify their donation destination, it is unclear if donations are collected by the IA or LRC.

- Durham has an information page for correctional case managers that describes the LRC, links to the client referral page, and restates the LRC's contact information.
 - Craven-Pamlico and Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson have information pages for volunteers.
- Features to *bolster content persuasiveness and engagement level*:
 - Buncombe, Fayetteville-Cumberland, McDowell, Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson, Orange, Craven-Pamlico, and Mecklenburg have at least one photograph or video on their website.
 - Fayetteville-Cumberland has several Facebook posts that personalize the LRC staff through photographs, personal profile tags, and frequent textual name references.
 - New Hanover has a small box on its homepage with recent Tweets from its @LocalReentry Twitter account (there have no new Tweets since November 2019).
 - Guilford has a customized logo (which includes an artistic design beyond just the LRC's name) used for branding.
 - McDowell, Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson, and Mecklenburg have anecdotes or success stories that describe not only the positive impact of the LRCs, but also the process of working with an LRC and some of the participants' feelings throughout the process.
 - Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson has an external quotation from former U.S. President George W. Bush that captures at least part of the LRC's philosophy on leveraging a "second chance."

- Durham and Forsyth pose questions to the navigator that encourage reflection and engage attention for the subsequent paragraph(s).
- Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson has two interrelated features: A separate page on their site devoted to a resource fair event and block party, and photographs from both.
- Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson, New Hanover, and Pitt have areas where users can contact the LRC without ever leaving the LRC website or webpage.
- Orange and Pitt list their public LRC meeting days and times (further, Orange also provides meeting details for its Executive Committee, Advisory Committee, and all of its Sub-Committees).
- Pitt has recorded videos of its LRC meetings on YouTube (these are not presently linked to the LRC's website, however).
- Features to *enhance user convenience*:
 - Buncombe, Orange, and New Hanover have interactive Google Maps next to their physical addresses and contact information that pinpoint the location of their LRC.
 - Craven-Pamlico has a scroll-to-top button along the scroll bar that a user can click to return to the top of the page.
 - Guilford and Mecklenburg have print buttons that users can press to print all or a particular part of a webpage.
 - Guilford has a font size adjustment button that user can use to enlarge or shrink text on the webpage.
 - New Hanover and Pitt have search bars that users can type keywords into to find relevant results on the websites.

- New Hanover has a Frequently Asked Questions page about topics like parole and probation, expungement, LRCs, and more.
- Guilford and Mecklenburg have feedback buttons on the home pages that, when clicked, prompt message boxes where users can leave comments (Mecklenburg’s prompt also includes a thumbs-up or thumbs-down option above the message box).

Data Category 3: Value-Messaging of Goals

A color-coded annotation of the goals, values, missions, and/or motivations listed on 11 of the LRC or IA websites or social media accounts is attached in Appendix G. I identify four factors driving the LRCs, and four thematic motifs across the goals. Beginning with the four factors, these include: (1) To help justice-involved citizens; (2) to mitigate recidivism; (3) to promote public safety; and (4) to save money and/or resources.

Ten of the 11 LRCs convey a humanitarian, person-first approach, whether it be by stating that their goal is to help formerly incarcerated people in their reentry process, by recognizing the traumas of prison, or by appreciating the difficulties involved in reentry. The first language type of helping incarcerated individuals involves verbs like “to assist,” “to help,” and “to connect.” It defines the support as assisting with “a successful transition,” connecting “individuals with services and support,” or assisting “returning individuals and their families.” Some goals or missions, on the other hand, use verbs like “to assist” but subsequently use language of reform when describing the people returning from prison: “to assist ... in becoming *productive* citizens” or “to help ... become *law-abiding citizens*” [emphases mine].

The second language type of trauma observes the negative impacts of the criminal justice system on individuals: “[L]ifelong impacts on the health, safety and well-being of individuals, families, and neighborhoods,” or “impacted by poverty, trauma, mental illness and/or substance

use disorders.” The third language type of difficulties highlights the challenges of reentry. Examples include language or phrases like “victimization”; “health and behavioral health symptoms, hospitalization, suicide, homelessness”; “barriers” or “more than 900 state and federal laws that deny... a wide range of privileges ... based on a criminal record.” In total, there are 26 instances of this empathetic language oriented toward supporting people returning from prison.

Other key factors justifying LRC reentry work are recidivism reduction, public safety, and cost-effectiveness/resource efficiency. With recidivism, eight of 11 LRCs mentioned recidivism, law adherence, or stability as a driving factor for their work: “[W]e strive to reduce recidivism,” “to make communities safer by reducing recidivism,” “impact recidivism in a positive way,” or “to reduce the likelihood of additional criminal behavior.” Recidivism and criminal activity prevention are referenced by LRC goals 10 times overall.

Second, with public safety, the three instances are from three separate LRCs. They frame reentry support as an opportunity to mitigate the prevalence of crimes like assaults, burglaries, and drug use, and therefore an opportunity to promote greater public safety: “[T]he outcomes of inadequate transition planning include the compromise of public safety,” “to enhance public safety,” and “increase public/community safety.”

Finally, with costs and resources, the three instances across three LRCs emphasize the financial savings accrued by lowering the costs of incarceration and crime, as well as the importance of utilizing community resources more completely and impactfully. The examples are: “to save taxpayer dollars by lowering the direct and collateral costs of incarceration, “to bring the many resources of our community ... together,” and “to maximize the use of existing resources and services.”

There are also four noteworthy themes that spanned the council goals, including: (1) The concept of “community,” (2) language of “return,” (3) reformist language, and (4) the notion of “success.” I argue that these four are intimately interwoven themes that generate a metaphorical binary between an imagined, peaceful “community” and “criminal” people in prison who must “return back into” and “successfully” become “productive” members of the community. The concept of community, mentioned 16 distinct times by nine different councils, is described as an idyllic, harmonious collective—referred to as “*the community*” [emphasis mine]—in relation to people returning home who are not “law-abiding” and live “in a state of crises.” The invented, utopic “community” is contrasted with un-“stable” and un-“healthy” people returning from prison. Because the “community comes together to help,” the people returning from prison who “cannot turn their life around into new capacity and direction by themselves” must reenter “successfully” and become “productive citizens” or “productive members of society.” The language of “return” and phrases like “*back into society*” [emphasis mine], mentioned nine times by six councils, add to this dichotomous othering by painting over the structural inequalities within “society” that fuel prison sentences in the first place. A return to “community” is portrayed as positive, connecting, and impossible without assistance. Indeed, on five occasions by five councils, people in prison are portrayed to be reckless or incapable actors in need of reform, driving “the community’s” commitment to ensuring a “successful” (a phrase mentioned six times by five councils) reentry.

Section Seven: DPS and LRC Interview Findings

Interviews with LRC staff provided a unique opportunity to evaluate the LRCs' implementation effectiveness on four main data points that are not publicly available—funding and sources, partner organizations, participant referrals, and data priorities. These data points are useful for assessing the inclusivity, transparency, and efficacy of the LRCs. I address my principal findings on each of the four data points below, as well as three unexpected findings.

Funding and Sources

In terms of funding, all eight LRC staff disclosed that the \$150,000 for single-county LRCs and \$225,000 for multi-county LRCs that DPS provides is woefully insufficient. In poignant testimony to this point, a staff member at Craven-Pamlico relayed how comprehensively the LRC strategized to select the Eastern Carolina Council of Government (ECCOG) as its IA because as non-profit entities, Councils of Government cannot accept profits, thus ensuring the administrative fees paid to IAs annually—reportedly, around \$33,000—would be reinvested back into the LRC as unrestricted funding to be used for mass marketing. Indeed, so inventive was Craven-Pamlico's use of IA selection as a money-acquisition tool that they advised Cumberland to follow suit, to which Cumberland recently transitioned from having the city police department as its IA to now having ECCOG. While this simplified account inevitably obscures nuances (e.g. that a police department may be a poor IA for an LRC because it is responsible for arresting people in the first place), it remains a salient truth that LRCs lack sufficient funding to meet their needs.

To make up for this lack of funding, many LRCs have turned to a wide variety of sources. At least three of the LRC staff explicitly mentioned that DPS intends for the LRCs to become self-sustaining entities—hence why funding is “renewable at the pleasure of DPS for each year” according to one interviewee. As such, several LRCs either have or are petitioning for money from

their home counties, from federal grants, or even from donations: Buncombe currently has a \$15,000 from the County; McDowell has a federal grant through the Second Chance Act, and Wake is currently applying for a Department of Justice grant; and McDowell also regularly asks for donations from community- and faith-based organizations in its network.

This lack of funding quantity and source diversity is important because it limits the service provision and growth capacity of the LRCs. After paying for staffing, LRCs like Buncombe and Wake are left with just \$15,000 for services, often having to pay providers fees like \$600/month for a client's housing. Not only does this dramatically limit how many cases these LRCs can take on (e.g. Craven-Pamlico works with over 300 clients currently and has a wait list just as long), but it also means that LRCs like Durham spend a lot of extra time coordinating which of their partners have the resources or grant funding to provide particular services free of charge. These consequences are especially challenging for LRCs in urban counties where wage requirements for staff (i.e. \$15.00 minimum wage) and cost of living are relatively high, yet DPS funding is unchanged. Contrast the 90-10 staffing to service allotment of Wake County LRC—located in the most populous county among the LRCs—to the 50-50 staffing to service allotment of McDowell County LRC, located in the third *least* populous county among the LRCs.

Partnerships and Service Provision

Although most LRCs like Durham and Wake were transparent about having 30-60 members (with certain exceptions like McDowell's approximately 100 partners) in their networks, it appeared that just a few of these are main partners. Two examples of this are Craven-Pamlico and Mecklenburg. Craven-Pamlico's relationship with the County led to its relationship with Craven Community College (CCC) and Religious Community Services (RCS), both of which receive funding from the County. The triad between the LRC, CCC, and RCS satisfies most of the

LRC's reentry needs. With all three entities sharing a free space at RCS, the LRC can provide educational and vocational training, a daily soup kitchen, clothing and hygienic needs, a job readiness bootcamp, and emergency shelter to hundreds of clients without needing other partners—which they do for service like substance abuse and mental health, employment training, and housing placement.

Similarly, Mecklenburg, despite having about 40 members in its membership, meets most of its service needs exclusively through the County's "Reentry Services." As one of the original five LRCs in the state, Mecklenburg LRC used its early DPS funding to create Reentry Services through the County, an entity that directly *provides* services like housing and rehabilitation to justice-involved individuals, unlike the LRC which only *coordinates* services among its partners. As a duo that functionally acts as one entity, the LRC frequently refers clients to Reentry Services, which has a separate, \$765,000 budget. According to Hope Marshall, the Reentry Coordinator for the LRC who is also the Reentry Manager for Reentry Services, "the County [Reentry Services] does housing, stabilization services, and cognitive-based therapy" for all returning individuals, and any other services are "referred out to partners on the Council." Thus, as in the cases of Craven-Pamlico and Mecklenburg, although LRCs may *have* dozens of partners, it appears that they generally rely on a core few to meet their clients' service needs.

Across the LRCs, there were consistencies in what services LRCs are effective at providing, and what services they struggle with. Several LRCs like Mecklenburg, Craven-Pamlico, and Wake—whose IA is the Capital Area Workforce Development Board—reported being effective at employment training. Mecklenburg hosts several job trainings each year; Craven-Pamlico sponsors a 10-day soft skills boot camp for job readiness (during and after which 37 percent of participants gain employment and 87 percent start applying for jobs, getting interviews,

and/or working on GEDs); and Wake's vocational trainings have resulted in students in community college, four-year college, professional school, culinary school, and electrical school. Additionally, McDowell reported success with transportation, providing over 25,000 client miles through volunteer drivers, and coordinating between junk yards and auto repair shops to provide used cars to clients for cheap, short-term use.

On the other hand, a majority of the LRCs struggle to provide housing, and specifically affordable housing to participants. Durham is unable to assist with permanent housing altogether; Mecklenburg can rarely find housing elderly people, sex offenders, and men with children; and although Wake has five housing partners, they all have 90-day wait lists with no openings. While housing unaffordability may particularly impact urban LRCs, even rural LRCs like Scotland and McDowell have housing difficulties: Scotland has just two housing partners locally, and McDowell LRC is *building* apartment buildings in the next three years because there is an insufficient number of beds in the county. In this way, the larger, county-wide policy issues constrain LRCs, too, such that they have unmet need that requires more housing—and specifically, affordable housing.

Referrals and Participants

The bulk of LRC participants are referred by probation and parole officers, followed by clients leaving state prison, followed by community referrals (i.e. self, family, church). This is true for Buncombe, Craven-Pamlico, McDowell, New Hanover, Scotland, and Wake (where *all* participants are currently referred by probation because of a restart of the LRC that occurred on February 19, 2020).¹⁹ On the other hand, Hope Marshall at Mecklenburg noted that approximately

¹⁹ Note that I do not have information on referrals from Durham County LRC. I interviewed Durham first and, upon doing so, changed which questions I ask to include referral data.

50 percent of their clients come from state prisons, 25 percent from probation officers, 15 percent from community referrals, and 10 percent from federal prisons and local jails. Crucially, interviewees noted that community referrals are principally from individuals who found the LRC's website online and reached out. This adds credence to the importance of having clear, identifiable information available on websites, as discussed at length in Section Six. Along with Mecklenburg, McDowell, New Hanover, and Scotland also mentioned receiving clients via information on the website. Indeed, the New Hanover staff member estimated that 30 percent of their participants reach out through their website.

Because many of the LRCs are already at, near, or over their client capacity, they are not doing a lot to increase their participants. All of the LRCs regularly conduct outreach and promotion efforts in nearby prisons. For example, Mecklenburg visits the 10 most proximate state prisons each year (there are 57 state prisons in all), and separately visits its two largest feeder prisons twice per month. Beyond prison advertisement, however, LRCs are doing little other promotion efforts. Several of the LRCs mentioned working to develop their relationships with probation and parole officers, and Craven-Pamlico reported redeveloping its website in the last year.

Data Priorities and Length of Participant Contact

In terms of data prioritization, cost reduction and recidivism stood out as two significant priorities for the LRCs. For these respective priorities, Craven-Pamlico and Mecklenburg are good case studies. The staff member at Craven-Pamlico LRC—which is trying to transition to County, not state or DPS, supervision—noted that the LRC yielded a \$6.3 million return for the County last year by reducing the County's collateral costs of incarceration such as homelessness, crime, and policing. Articulating and prioritizing this impact is notable particularly because the staff

member recalled the data point without reference or delay, implicitly (and later, explicitly) suggesting that cost efficiency is a priority for the Council.

With recidivism, one of the 13 criteria that Mecklenburg uses to evaluate its services, Mecklenburg found that 29 percent of those who were referred to the LRC process but did not participate were reconvicted after two years, compared to just 8 percent for those who were referred and completed the process. In addition to Mecklenburg, Buncombe and Wake named recidivism as their biggest criterion to determine successful reentry. In general, the LRCs that prioritize recidivism rates only assist clients secure stability immediately after release, later searching the client's name in prison databases two or three years later to ascertain recidivism statistics. On the other hand, LRCs like McDowell, a small rural county that is highly interconnected, prioritizes "life sustainability," not just short-term sustainability for recidivism reduction, and so works with clients for up to three years.

Unexpected Findings:

There were three findings from interviews that were unexpected. First, the list of LRCs from the DPS Catchment Map in Section Three, the three public lists in Section Six, and the DPS Excel Spreadsheets list in Section Five are all inaccurate. From my interview with a DPS staff member, I learned that there are currently 17—not 15 or 14— LRCs across North Carolina. The *deviations* between this list and all other public or private lists are denoted with starred brackets: Buncombe, Craven-Pamlico, Durham, [*Hoke*], [*Robeson*], Mecklenburg, McDowell, Nash-Edgecombe[**], New Hanover, [*Scotland*], Pitt, [**]Cumberland, Forsyth, Wake, Wilson, Guilford, and Orange. Specifically, Hoke-Robeson-Scotland split by consensus into three LRCs due to differences in needs and uneven distribution of returning individuals; Onslow-Jones disintegrated because the IA's Executive Director, who was leading the LRC, was ill and the

council had financial troubles; Fayetteville-Cumberland became Cumberland alone because of a lack of cohesion with the shared IA (Fayetteville is in the process of identifying a new IAs); and Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson became two separate councils, Nash-Edgecombe and Wilson, because Wilson had the resources and desire to be its own council (the two still share resources and cross-refer clients).

Additionally, Brent Bailey, the Local Reentry Coordinator for Buncombe County LRC, observed that because LRCs are funded by state officials, and because they collaborate with county commissions, they “package [reentry] in terms of public safety or reducing recidivism” instead of first and foremost prioritizing the importance of supporting justice-involved individuals. That is, a councils’ goals and missions may be reframed according to the audience. While this does not negate the fact the messaging may not be inclusive toward justice-involved individuals, it does suggest that the Councils might “double talk” such that they sell reentry in terms of costs or safety to policymakers yet internally care most about the dignity of the clients they serve. This is true for Buncombe, which states on its website that its goal is “to reduce recidivism,” yet privately, prioritizes recidivism reduction because it means providing effective support to individuals affected by an unjust carceral system.

Finally, at least three of the LRCs were intentional about seeking media coverage to promote their council. Mecklenburg reported doing “several TV shots, working with the newspaper,” and more, not only to recruit potential participants, but also to “highlight the need for housing” and raise awareness of unaffordability—the service area that the Council struggles the most with. Similarly, Scotland and McDowell received coverage from local newspapers either by writing articles or by inviting press to events. As councils in rural counties, such coverage is critical because alternative outreach methods are less effective in rural contexts (e.g. social media), and

many people read the local newspapers. Although I did not include news media coverage in my analysis of the LRCs' implementation accessibility, inclusivity, transparency, and efficacy, it appears this mode of public information sharing may be important.

Section Eight: Conclusion and Discussion

In this research project, I set out to understand how effective the implementation of NC's LRCs has been thus far. Implementation is important because it is one of four stages of the policy making process, a crucial element to the political science subfield of political institutions (Kingdon, 2014). Using four criteria—accessibility, inclusivity, transparency, and efficacy—I operationalized implementation to include public information online and internal LRC mechanics. To analyze these four criteria, I used LRC participant demographics and outcomes data from DPS [inclusivity and efficacy], deconstructed the LRC websites and webpages [accessibility, inclusivity, and transparency], and conducted interviews with eight LRC staff members at eight LRCs and one DPS staff member [inclusivity, transparency, and efficacy]. I score the LRCs on each of the relevant data sources (participant data, websites, or interviews) using a scale of low, moderately low, moderately high, and high.²⁰ In the following subsections, I deconstruct these assessments according to the relevant data sources (participant data, websites, or interviews). Unless otherwise noted, I average the data source scores to generate a composite criterion score.

Overall, I argue that LRC accessibility is low, inclusivity is moderately low, transparency is low, and efficacy is moderately high.

Criterion 1: Accessibility [Websites]—Score: Low

The accessibility²¹ of LRC public information is low. In the first place, there are three conflicting lists of LRCs available online. Of these, even the DPS list of LRCs—which should be

²⁰ Of course, this scale and scoring process as a whole is subjective and vague. I use the scoring only to articulate how the various nuances of LRC accessibility, inclusivity, transparency, and efficacy interact with one another overall. That is, the scoring provides a helpful, albeit simplistic, metric to evaluate the LRCs.

²¹ Defined as the extent to which information about the councils is easy to locate, clear and simple to understand, and provides a satisfactory baseline knowledge about LRCs to anyone who reads it (i.e. the information is scaffolded).

definitive and clear given that DPS oversees LRC implementation—is difficult to decipher, requiring that navigators count *distinct* LRCs associated with a list of minimum-security reentry facilities, and interpret a map that highlights counties covered by LRCs, not individual LRCs (three LRCs are multi-county). Even more, DPS’s list of LRCs is inaccurate and out of date. As an interview with a DPS staff member revealed, there are 17 LRCs in NC, not 15 as the online DPS list indicates. The list falsely includes Hoke-Robeson-Scotland as one LRC when in fact the three counties have three separate LRCs; Fayetteville-Cumberland as an LRC when in fact it is just Cumberland; Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson as one LRC when in fact Nash-Edgecombe and Wilson are two separate LRCs; and Jones-Onslow as an LRC when in fact the LRC shut down in 2019. Based purely on displaying a clear, accurate public list of LRCs, LRC accessibility is bad.

The websites of the listed LRCs also have accessibility issues. Four LRCs had no websites whatsoever, three had multiple conflicting websites, four had only webpages related to reentry on their IA’s website (and of these, only one IA website made explicit reference to the LRC, while others like Buncombe made reference to the LRC only in a photo caption in an attached document), five had their own webpage on their IA’s website, and two had independent websites of their own. Of the website and webpages, just four provided information about the LRCs, two about the process of working with an LRC, and two about both. Generally speaking, however, this information was generic and unclear except for a couple of cases like Durham, which featured a separate tab for “currently incarcerated folks” and a clear image of the four-step process of working with the LRC.²² Ultimately, these accessibility concerns matter because people who are justice-involved but unaffiliated with the LRCs depend on public information to find support.

²² Outside of the LRCs, the only other source of information about the LRCs is DPS’s website, which briefly outlines the history of LRCs and links to the Reentry Action Plan for additional information.

Because websites are the only data source to assess accessibility, the LRCs score low.

Criterion 2: Inclusivity [Participant Data, Websites, Interviews]—Score: Moderately Low

The inclusivity²³ of LRC *participant data* is high. The data show that the LRCs serve a wide range of high-need participants. More than half of all participants are people categorized as high risk of reoffense; more than 60 percent of clients are Black (versus approximately 47 percent of all people in NC state prison); the ages of participants ranges from 17 to 105; and approximately 20 percent of clients are female (versus just 10 percent of all people in NC state prison). Moreover, the fact that several LRCs like Mecklenburg advertise their services in nearby prisons at least monthly demonstrates a commitment to supporting vulnerable people who may not know about the LRC, who may need greater support upon release, or who may be in prison for the third or fourth time.

. The inclusivity of LRC public information is moderately low. Although 10 of the 11 LRCs with goals, visions, missions, or motivations listed on their websites have people-first approaches that center on “helping” or “assisting” justice-involved individuals—more so than the number focusing on recidivism (8), public safety (3), or cost or resource efficiency (3)—the language used by most councils is not dignifying and injustice- and trauma-informed. Specifically, several LRCs use language of “community,” “return,” reform, and “success” in a way that creates an othering metaphor of the idealized community contrasted against the returning criminal who lives “in a state of crises” and depends on the community to become a “productive citizen.” This language

²³ Defined as the extent to which the LRCs are welcoming of all persons in their messaging, able to provide support to all who need and/or request it, and intentional about reaching out to communities that might not otherwise know of the LRC.

may not be dehumanizing,²⁴ but it *is* othering and demeaning. For this reason, although it is difficult to define precise criteria for quantitatively and qualitatively “inclusive” language, the value-messaging of LRC goals is moderately bad. The response from Brent Bailey, the Reentry Coordinator of the Buncombe County LRC, is poignant here—that this messaging may simply be double talk, with goals framed one way publicly for policy makers and another way privately for justice-involved individuals. Nevertheless, councils like Mecklenburg and New Hanover reported receiving approximately 15 and 30 percent of their client referrals from their website, respectively, meaning many justice-involved individuals, families, or community members still read the public framings first. Thus, double talk or not, the messaging is not as inclusive as it could be.

The referral forms on LRC websites are also somewhat exclusive in their messaging. In the first place, just seven of 11 websites overall have referral forms. Of these seven, only New Hanover and Pitt speak directly to the justice-involved individual (e.g. “are you...?”), while the other five assume the person completing the form is someone else (e.g. “is the prospective participant...?”). However, it is true that four of these five include either write-in boxes or “family” and “self” submissions, explicitly making room for justice-involved individuals or families (all except Forsyth). Separately, just Orange, Buncombe, and New Hanover exclude questions about criminal records or histories, emphasizing immediately what services the individual is in need of. Although few, by de-emphasizing criminality and emphasizing support, these three forms prime individuals to be respected people whom others care about, not criminals.²⁵ Finally, four of the

²⁴ In reference, again, to one of the Women and Incarceration Working Group’s recommendations submitted in a 2018 report of recommendations from various working groups of the State Reentry Council Collaborative. The Working Group’s recommendation specifically suggested that “the language used on NCDPS’s website to describe those incarcerated ... evolve to language that addresses injustices without dehumanizing the people described” (SRCC, 2018).

²⁵ Similar to how psychological studies about male and female children show that if female children are primed to think about the fact that they are female before an examination, they perform worse on the exam because of internalized, sexist notions that females are less capable, intelligent, and successful than males.

forms ask about gender to varying degrees of inclusivity. Orange does so most inclusively with a write-in option, yet Mecklenburg includes only a male-female binary option. Thus, because not all LRCs have referral forms, and because a minority of those that do are inclusive in total and on individual criteria, the LRCs are moderately exclusive on their referral forms.

Finally, based on interviews, LRC inclusivity is moderately low insofar as councils are unable to meet county needs completely. Craven-Pamlico is a good example of this point. Although Craven-Pamlico reported that they are serving approximately 300 people, they still have at least 300 additional people waiting for services. Nearly every LRC reported similar barriers on the number of clients they could support at one time, having to turn away dozens of potential participants despite growing quickly. This service limitation—stemming from a lack of capacity in terms of finances, services, partners, and more—severely limits the inclusivity of the LRCs.

Scores of high, moderately low, and moderately low average out to moderately high.

Criterion 3: Transparency [Websites, Interviews]—Score: Low

The transparency²⁶ of LRC websites is low. Neither the Local Reentry Council booklet from DPS nor any of the datasets referenced were publicly listed; all required private requests to DPS (which also involves barriers). Online, no LRCs provide information about their budget, just one website provides *outdated* employment information about past data or results (along with one Facebook featuring sporadic information), and just five provide information about partner organizations (three of which are on IA host sites, where it is unclear if partners are specific to the LRC). Even in the case of LRC governance structures, a data point that seven LRCs provide information on, information is limited. Four LRCs list only their staff members (Mecklenburg does

²⁶ Defined as the extent to which the LRCs provide information about their governance structures and hierarchies, partnerships and service capacities, funding sources and budget allocations, priorities and motivations, and participant outcomes.

so in a brochure attachment, no less); one also lists its Board of Directors; and just two describe council hierarchies. Additionally, even LRC sites that list services include general, unclear service categories like “employment” or “basic needs.” Thus, it is unclear who comprises and makes decisions for the LRC (especially in Advisory and Executive Committees); how and by what processes such decisions are made; who funds LRCs and how much; how much service capacity LRCs have (because finances, partners, and services are not included in detail); and whether an LRC is independent or accountable to another entity’s interests.

On the other hand, the internal transparency of LRC implementation is high. During interviews, every LRC willingly disclosed how much money they receive, from where, and with what obligations, if any. LRCs were forthcoming about their data priorities. Craven-Pamlico was upfront about their concern for cost efficiency and high financial savings, at least in part because it is trying to receive county instead of state sponsorship. Additionally, Mecklenburg was open about its prioritization of recidivism reduction, likewise providing handy statistics to point to without pause.

However, because, the internal transparency of LRCs hinges on individuals contacting the LRCs (or at least asking transparency-related questions during the one on one meetings of the beginning of the reentry process), I weigh it substantially less than public information. Thus, I score LRC transparency as low.

Criterion 4: Efficacy [Participant Data, Interviews]—Score: Moderately High

The efficacy²⁷ of LRCs with respect to participant data is high; the councils are effective with the clients they serve. Nearly 20 percent of all active LRC participants between FY2018-2019

²⁷ Defined as the extent to which LRCs fulfill the service needs in their counties and facilitate successful reentry for their participants.

gained some form of employment, with half earning \$9.01 or more.²⁸ In terms of housing, nearly 12 percent of participants secured some form of housing, with the majority moving into transitional housing. And in terms of program completion, almost 15 percent of participants successfully completed the LRC process in the year.

However, the efficacy of LRCs based on interviews is moderately low. On one hand, most LRCs reported success reducing recidivism. For example, during the first two years post-release, 8 percent of Mecklenburg LRC participants who were referred to the LRC and who completed the process are reconvicted, compared to 47 percent for people released from prison in general.

Yet on the other hand, an LRC is limited dramatically by its county context and finances. For example, being in a rural county, McDowell must worry not only about service provision, but also service *capacity*, having to construct apartments for the next three years because McDowell County lacks affordable housing. Additionally, LRCs like McDowell and Mecklenburg have drastically different funding restrictions and budgets, despite similar percentages of people completing their programs. McDowell's service-staffing budget ratio is approximately 50:50, yet Mecklenburg's is about 90:10 because they must pay staff significantly higher wages (due to different wage standards and costs of living). In terms of budgets, whereas McDowell has just \$150,000 from DPS, Mecklenburg has that, plus the County Reentry Services' \$765,000 budget to draw upon if needed because the LRC and Reentry Services operate fluidly. Although LRCs are moderately effective with their clients, their inability to fulfill their county needs limits their efficacy.

A score of high and moderately low averages to moderately high.

²⁸ Note that these statistics concern the overall LRC population (including newly enrolled clients who have just begun the LRC process) and are therefore not relative to each client enrolment year.

Potential Avenues for Future Research

In terms of data sources, I relied on quantitative evidence from datasets and websites, as well as qualitative evidence from LRC and DPS staff. Notably absent, however, was qualitative evidence from LRC participants and/or justice-involved individuals themselves. For example, although LRCs appear to be quantitatively effective at promoting successful reentry, it is unclear if this is the case qualitatively: Do participants report high satisfaction with the LRC process?

In terms of public information, I focused on LRC websites in general. Yet there are at least two findings worthy of deeper investigation. First, New Hanover and Mecklenburg reported 30 and 15 percent of clients reaching out to the LRCs after seeing their websites, respectively. What is it about these websites, LRCs, and/or counties that yield such high LRC website exposure? New Hanover and Mecklenburg both provided information on 15 of 18 relevant variables on their websites (excluding website and social media presence)²⁹—tied with Durham for the highest scores out of all LRCs. Do people who contact these LRCs upon seeing their websites highlight particular reasons why they did so (i.e. accessible websites or features, inclusive language, etc.)? Second, during interviews, several LRCs reported focusing on news media outreach. During my research process, I observed several news articles about particular LRCs, but excluded them from my analysis. Future research, therefore, could evaluate these articles—for their language inclusivity, their audiences reached, their impact on the number of people who reached out to the corresponding LRCs, and/or other aspects.

In terms of internal LRC information, nearly every LRC reported different budgets and spending priorities. A cost-benefit analysis of budget efficiency and/or whether budget allocations align with LRC stated values is noticeably lacking. Is McDowell's strategy to spend substantial

²⁹ New Hanover received a score 12 Green and 3 Blue, compared to Mecklenburg's 15 Blue.

money to build apartments a worthwhile investment? Was Craven-Pamlico's decision to spend the approximately \$33,000 that its IA reinvested (because it is a non-profit entity and could not accept IA fees) on mass marketing an efficient use of resources?

In general terms, there are at least three additional areas in which research would be particularly valuable. First, in my analysis of the LRCs, I did not meaningfully discuss differences between probation/parole, jails, prisons, or other client referral sources. However, with the 2011 Justice Reinvestment Act, the numbers of people on probation/parole and jails has skyrocketed while the number of people in prisons has plummeted (NC DPS, 2016). A nuanced assessment of these different participant sources would likely reveal nuances in LRC service needs and outcomes according to each source (because, for example, jail sentences are often much shorter than prison sentences, and therefore may disconnect an individual from their community less so).

Second, as mentioned in Section Five, the context of an individual LRC is deeper than just county demographic data. The data points about employment, transportation, and housing that I referenced did not capture so many nuances about the state of employment, transportation, and housing for justice-involved individuals in each county. For example, as mentioned in Footnote 9, a county like Durham has its own unique matrix of housing providers—both quantitatively and qualitatively—that affect the nature of the LRC's housing services. Thus, research on an LRC and its context, as well as analytical comparisons between LRCs and contexts, would greatly bolster evaluations of the strengths and limitations of an LRC's inclusivity and efficacy.

Finally, in light of DPS's goal of expanding LRCs to all 100 counties in NC, it is crucial to better understand the creation and launching of LRCs. What early actions or decisions, if any, affect the LRC's implementation? Should LRCs develop committees and partners through community forums like with Craven-Pamlico—which allowed the LRC structures to evolve as

seen fit by the community members—or through solicitations like with Durham—which kept LRC structures more rigid? What factors are important for LRCs to build capacity and scale quickly? Although some LRCs like Mecklenburg are long-established, others like Orange or Scotland were launched in 2019 and restarted in 2020, respectively, and therefore are ideal for this type of study.

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<https://worldpopulationreview.com/states/ban-the-box-states/>.

World Population Review. (2020). *Population of Cities in North Carolina*.
<https://worldpopulationreview.com/states/north-carolina-population/cities/>.

All LRC and IA Websites and Webpages

Buncombe:

- County Justice Resource Center (IA) page: <https://www.buncombecounty.org/law-safety/community-initiatives/justice-resource-center.aspx>.
- Resources Hub: <http://www.buncombereentryhub.org/>

Craven-Pamlico:

- LRC site: <https://cpreentrync.org/>

Durham:

- County (IA) page: <https://www.dconc.gov/government/departments-a-e/durham-local-reentry-council>

Forsyth:

- Piedmont Triangle Regional Council (IA) page: <https://www.ptrc.org/services/forsyth-county-reentry-council>

Guilford:

- Page on County (IA) site: <https://www.guilfordcountync.gov/our-county/sheriff-s-office/reentry-program>

McDowell:

- Freedom Life Ministries (IA) site: <https://freedomlifeministries.org/>

Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson:

- LRC site: <https://www.ncreentry.org/new-reentry-services>

New Hanover:

- LRC site: <https://sites.google.com/lincnc.org/lrc/home>
- Page on LINC (IA) site: <http://nhcreentry.org/>

Orange:

- Page on County (IA) site: <https://www.orangecountync.gov/1977/Local-Reentry-Council>

Pitt:

- Life of NC (IA) site: <http://lifeofnc.org/program-services/>

Mecklenburg:

- County Reentry Services (technically separate from LRC, but functionally the same—see Section Six, Data Category 2, “Unclear or Incomplete Websites” subheading): <https://www.mecknc.gov/CriminalJusticeServices/Pages/ReentryServices.aspx>
- Reentry Partners: <http://charlottereentry.org/>

Appendix A: Interview Script and Questions

“Hi, my name is Kevin Solomon and I am senior undergraduate at Duke researching the implementation effectiveness of North Carolina’s Local Reentry Councils (LRCs) for my Political Science honors thesis. I want to evaluate the similarities and differences of the councils in terms of three guiding questions: (1) What public information is available online about councils? (2) What are the internal structures of the councils (this information is available to councils, the Department of Public Safety (DPS), and case workers)? And (3) how effective is the council at serving their population and why? I ask these research questions because I hope to learn about and potentially help promote effective reentry in North Carolina.

If possible, I would love to ask you talk with you to learn more about [specific council(s)]. Would you be willing to speak with me for approximately 30-60 minutes?”

Interview Questions for LRC Staff:

1. LRC Creation and Organization

- a. When was [specific council] formed?
- b. What was the process of forming [specific council]?
- c. What is the intermediary agency for [specific council]?
- d. What relationship does this intermediary agency have with [specific council]?
- e. Who, if anyone, is responsible for overseeing [specific council’s] websites and public information resources?
 - i. Follow-up: How does this person determine what information to include?
- f. When did you begin working at [specific council]?
- g. How did you hear about your position at [specific council]?
- h. What are your current responsibilities working at [specific council]?

2. Governance Structure

- a. How many staff members are employed full- and part-time by [specific council], respectively?
 - i. Follow-up: In your opinion, does [specific council] have sufficient staff to execute its objectives? Why or why not?
- b. What are the roles of each staff member at [specific council]?
- c. What is the staff management structure at [specific council] (i.e. vertical vs. horizontal)?
- d. Who, if anyone, is responsible for overseeing [specific council’s] work (i.e. a board of directors or DPS)?
 - i. Follow-up if there is an executive individual/group: How does this person/group oversee [specific council’s] work?
 1. Follow-up: In your opinion, is this executive oversight helpful in accomplishing [specific council’s] objectives? Why or why not?
 - ii. Follow-up if there is NOT an executive individual/group: In your opinion, does the lack of an executive individual/group overseeing [specific council’s] work limit [specific council’s] effectiveness? Why or why not?

3. Funding and Budget

- a. How much funding does [specific council] receive per year?
 - i. Follow-up: In your opinion, is this amount of funding sufficient for [specific council's] objectives? Why or why not?
- b. What are the sources of [specific council's] funding?
- c. How is [specific council's] funding spent annually?

4. Partner Organizations

- a. How many partner organizations are in [specific council's] network?
- b. How many partners are there in each of [specific council's] supportive services?
 - i. Follow-up if there is unequal partner distribution(s) between/across categories: Why are there more partners providing [particular service category] than [particular service category]?
- c. What are the names of the partner organizations in each supportive service category?
- d. What is the process for an organization to join [specific council's] partnership network?
- e. How does [specific council] decide whether to accept or deny a potential partner?

5. Scope and Provision of Services

- a. In what ways do justice-involved residents (JIRs) get in contact with [specific council]?
 - i. Follow-up: How many JIRs have contacted [specific council] via each method you just described?
- b. By what process does [specific council] decide whether to accept or deny a JIR?
- c. How many JIRs has [specific council] served since its inception?
 - i. Follow-up: What is the overall demographic breakdown of these JIRs – both in terms of identity and justice background (i.e. direct release, probation/parole, released within 1-5 years, released 5+ years ago)?
- d. How many JIRs is [specific council] currently serving?
 - i. Follow-up: What is the overall demographic breakdown of these JIRs – both in terms of identity and justice background (i.e. direct release, probation/parole, released within 1-5 years, released 5+ years ago)?
- e. What is the JIR case management process at [specific council]?
 - i. Follow-up: Who oversees this process at [specific council]?
- f. What relationship, if any, does [specific council] have with particular jails and prisons?
- g. What relationship, if any, does [specific council] have with particular parole and probation officers?
- h. What supportive services does [specific council] provide?
 - i. Follow-up: In your opinion, does [specific council] provide sufficient services to JIRs? Why or why not?

6. Assessment/Evaluation

- a. What is [specific council's] vision and/or mission?
- b. What is [specific council's] definition of successful reentry?

- i. Follow up: How did [specific council] create this definition?
- c. What criteria does [specific council] use to measure successful reentry in each supportive service category?
- d. What data does [specific council] record in terms of evaluating reentry?
- e. In your estimation, what percentage of JIRs served has [specific council] supported in successfully reentering society?
 - i. Follow-up if 100%: Why is [specific council] effective at promoting successful reentry?
 - ii. Follow-up if not 100%: Why do you estimate this percentage? What could [specific council] do better to provide 100% successful reentry?
 - 1. Follow-up if not discussed: Are there particular supportive service areas in which [specific council] is failing to promote successful reentry? Why or why not?

Interview Questions for DPS staff:

1. **DPS-LRC Relationship**

- a. Who, if anyone, is the point of contact with the LRCs?
 - i. Follow-up: What are this person's tasks and responsibilities?
- b. What is your job and responsibilities when it comes to the LRCs?
- c. In what ways, if at all, does DPS facilitate information sharing and connections between LRCs?
- d. Does DPS provide feedback or suggestions to LRCs based on its data analysis or state-wide oversight? Why or why not?
 - i. Follow-up: In your opinion, is the current LRC structure effective? Why or why not?
 - 1. Follow-up: What would you do to improve or change the LRC structure to maximize effectiveness?
- e. Does DPS set any guidelines or restrictions on LRCs – for example, on who can and cannot be their partner organizations?

2. **LRC Structures**

- a. By what process does DPS determine the budget allocations for each LRC?
 - i. Follow-up: Why is the \$150,000 the standard allotment for an individual LRC?
 - ii. Follow-up: Do some LRCs have greater financial needs than others? Why or why not?
- b. What is DPS's overall budget availability for LRC allocations? In other words, could DPS provide more funding to LRCs if there was demonstrated need?
 - i. Follow-up: In your opinion, does DPS provide sufficient funding for LRCs to meet their objectives? Why or why not?
- c. What, if anything, does DPS do to support councils in need of assistance (beyond financial support)?

- d. In your assessment, are there some LRCs that are more effective than others? Why or why not?
 - i. Follow-up: What makes an effective LRC?
- 3. Data Collection**
- a. How does DPS collect data about the implementation and effectiveness of the LRCs?
 - i. Follow-up: When is such data collected?
 - b. What is the process by which DPS decides which metrics to request data from LRCs on?
 - i. Follow-up: In your opinion, do these metrics provide an adequate picture of LRC effectiveness? Why or why not?
 - 1. Potential follow-up: What metrics do you believe are missing?
- 4. Geography**
- a. By what process was it decided where the first and current LRCs would be located?
 - i. Follow-up: According to what criteria were these decisions made?
 - b. In the longer term, does DPS hope to expand LRCs to reach more counties? Why or why not?
 - i. Follow-up: Will the location decision process and criteria be the same in the future? Why or why not?

Appendix B: Additional Information about Returning Individuals Per County

Figure B1 tracks the number of people released from state prison to the LRC counties of residence, as well as the relative percentage the total number of people released from state prison (25,049) between March 1, 2019, and February 29, 2020. This data is from DPS's database. Because this data concerns county of *residence*, and not county of release, it is possible that the data is somewhat unreflective of release volumes.

Within the aforementioned year, the LRC counties that received the highest number of people released were Wake, Mecklenburg, Guilford, and Forsyth, accounting for 6.0, 5.0, 4.2, and 3.6 percent of all people released from prison, respectively. Although the rural counties generally have fewer released citizens, all nine of the rural counties except for McDowell are part of multi-county LRCs. Collectively, Craven-Pamlico received 351 released individuals (1.4 percent of all released individuals), Hoke-Robeson-Scotland received 637 released individuals (2.6 percent of all released individuals), and Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson received 1,138 released individuals (4.6 percent of all released individuals).

Counties of Residence	Total # Released	% of People Released Statewide
Buncombe	671	2.7%
Craven	301	1.2%
Pamlico	50	0.2%
Cumberland	931	3.7%
Durham	679	2.7%
Forsyth	910	3.6%
Guilford	1,063	4.2%
Hoke	149	0.6%
Robeson	371	1.5%
Scotland	117	0.5%
McDowell	297	1.2%
Mecklenburg	1,259	5.0%
Nash	469	1.9%
Edgecombe	375	1.5%
Wilson	294	1.2%
New Hanover	697	2.8%
Orange	120	0.5%
Pitt	553	2.2%
Wake	1,506	6.0%

Figure B1: Number of people released, and relative percentage of all people released (25,049) from state prison between March 1, 2019 and February 29, 2020 by LRC county of residence. Color-coded by rural-suburban-urban classifications. Data from DPS Research and Planning.

This data conflicts with that of Figure B2. In Figure B2, the three LRCs with the highest number of clients are Hoke-Robeson-Scotland, Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson, and Mecklenburg. Although this appears understandable considering the first two are tri-county combinations and the third has the second largest population of all LRC counties, Figure B1 suggests different hypotheses. Even as tri-county LRCs, Hoke-Robeson-Scotland and Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson both received fewer released individuals than Wake, and Hoke-Robeson-Scotland received still fewer than Guilford. It is possible, then, that either not all released individuals chose to participate in

LRC services, that the county of residence data of Figure B1 is unreflective of county of release data (which is not recorded by DPS), or that certain LRCs like Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson have more capacity to serve residents than do counties like Wake, even if a county like Wake receives more released individuals overall (which there is mild evidence for, as mentioned briefly in Section 7). On the other side of the spectrum, the three LRCs with the fewest number of clients are Orange (established in 2019), Cumberland, and Forsyth. Likewise, Figure B1 data points contradict those of Figure B2, suggesting one or more of the three potential explanations is likely to be true.

LRC	# Clients	% of Total
Buncombe	215	5.61%
Craven-Pamlico	300	7.83%
Cumberland	49	1.28%
Durham	255	6.66%
Forsyth	68	1.77%
Guilford	239	6.24%
Hoke-Robeson-Scotland	892	23.28%
McDowell	218	5.69%
Mecklenburg	435	11.35%
Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson	520	13.57%
New Hanover	116	3.03%
Orange	49	1.28%
Pitt	242	6.32%
Wake	233	6.08%

Figure B2: Number and percentage of participants by LRC between FY2018-2019.

In general, it is impossible, with the data available, to determine which of these hypotheses is true. Interview findings with DPS and LRC staff lend at least partial credence to the notion that LRCs have different capacities, but this answer is by no means definitive.

Appendix C: Ethnicity Data for FY2018-2019 LRC Participants

The following chart—split in half for readability—displays (1) the number of participants per LRC for which ethnicity data was recorded, (2) the percentage of each ethnicity per LRC, and (3) the total number and percentage of ethnicities across the 14 LRCs. The shortened terms “Euro,” “E. Euro,” “N. Amer.,” and “Scand” stand for European, Eastern European, North American, and Scandinavian, respectively.

Part 1 of Data Chart

LRC	# Data Available	% Hispanic/Latino	% Euro./N. Amer./Australian	% Slavic (E. Euro.)	% Asian
Buncombe	209	1.91%	72.73%	0.00%	0.00%
Craven-Pamlico	211	2.37%	28.91%	0.00%	0.00%
Cumberland	0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Durham	230	1.74%	17.39%	0.00%	0.00%
Forsyth	65	1.54%	20.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Guilford	165	4.85%	35.15%	0.00%	0.00%
Hoke-Robeson-Scotland	803	0.50%	12.20%	0.12%	0.12%
McDowell	70	4.29%	82.86%	0.00%	0.00%
Mecklenburg	297	0.34%	21.55%	0.00%	0.34%
Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson	479	1.25%	16.28%	0.00%	0.21%
New Hanover	105	1.90%	48.57%	0.00%	0.00%
Orange	40	2.50%	40.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Pitt	236	0.42%	19.92%	0.00%	0.00%
Wake	107	0.93%	32.71%	0.00%	0.00%
TOTAL	3017	1.36%	25.56%	0.03%	0.10%

Part 2 of Data Chart

LRC	% Oriental	% Nordic/Scand.	% African	% Pacific Islander	% American Indian	% Unknown	% Other
Buncombe	0.00%	0.00%	19.62%	0.00%	2.39%	2.39%	0.96%
Craven-Pamlico	0.00%	0.00%	63.98%	0.00%	0.00%	3.32%	1.42%
Cumberland	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Durham	0.00%	0.00%	75.22%	0.00%	0.43%	4.35%	0.87%
Forsyth	0.00%	0.00%	52.31%	0.00%	0.00%	26.15%	0.00%
Guilford	0.00%	0.00%	28.48%	0.00%	2.42%	26.06%	3.03%
Hoke-Robeson-Scotland	0.00%	0.00%	51.93%	0.00%	28.27%	3.36%	3.49%
McDowell	0.00%	0.00%	8.57%	0.00%	0.00%	4.29%	0.00%
Mecklenburg	0.00%	0.00%	52.19%	0.00%	1.01%	23.23%	1.35%
Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson	0.00%	0.21%	77.87%	0.00%	0.42%	3.76%	0.00%
New Hanover	0.00%	0.00%	42.86%	0.95%	1.90%	3.81%	0.00%
Orange	0.00%	0.00%	52.50%	0.00%	0.00%	5.00%	0.00%
Pitt	0.00%	0.00%	72.88%	0.00%	0.42%	5.08%	1.27%
Wake	0.00%	0.00%	60.75%	0.00%	0.93%	4.67%	0.00%
TOTAL	0.00%	0.03%	55.82%	0.03%	8.15%	7.36%	1.56%

Appendix D: Raw LRC Aggregate Outcomes Data

Because the Excel sheet of aggregate LRC participant outcomes includes 29 columns plus an additional three that I added (the three data categories that I added, as well as totals for each category, are highlighted in blue), I break it into segments according to the five types of information provided: Number of participants (Segment 1), services provided (Segments 2 and 3), employment outcomes (Segment 4), housing outcomes (Segment 5), and completion outcomes (Segment 6). The LRCs are color-coded with the same rural (green), suburban (orange), urban (blue) classifications from the NC Rural Center as in Figure 8 in Section Five. If a cell has a “0,” it can mean that no such service was provided by an LRC, or that no such data was reported to DPS by an LRC. This data, in contrast to the figures of percentages in Section Five, is the compiled raw data reported by individual LRCs each month during FY2018-2019.

Segment 1 of LRC Outcomes Excel:

LRC	Number Newly Enrolled (During FY18-19)	Total # Active Participants by end FY19 (including # newly enrolled)
Buncombe	198	394
Craven-Pamlico	242	1199
Cumberland	1289	897
Durham	196	995
Forsyth	69	155
Guilford	241	240
HSR	830	2383
McDowell	1235	1045
Mecklenburg	315	972
NEW	555	536
New Hanover	126	1023
Orange	0	0
Pitt	113	442
Wake	200	0
TOTAL	5609	10281

Segment 2 of LRC Outcomes Excel:

LRC	# Active Participants who Received Employment Services (FY18-19)	# Active Participants who Received Documentation Services (FY18-19)	# Active Participants who Received Childcare Services (FY18-19)	# Active Participants who Received Life Skills Services (FY18-19)	# Active Participants who Received Vocational Services (FY18-19)	# Active Participants who Received Transportation Services (FY18-19)
Buncombe	111	0	0	0	0	220
Craven-Pamlico	107	3	2	0	24	284
Cumberland	388	0	0	168	34	318
Durham	153	0	0	0	27	81
Forsyth	131	29	3	9	32	18
Guilford	155	108	37	40	105	0
HSR	793	4	0	0	19	183
McDowell	75	28	0	11	4	155
Mecklenburg	249	25	0	53	97	337
NEW	193	12	0	0	12	241
New Hanover	182	66	3	508	41	838
Orange	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pitt	24	0	0	0	0	99
Wake	235	0	0	150	5	370
TOTAL	2796	275	45	939	400	3144

Segment 3 of LRC Outcomes Excel:

LRC	# Active Participants who Received Education Services (FY18-19)	# Active Participants who Received Mentorship Services (FY18-19)	# Active Participants who Received Basic Needs Services (FY18-19)	# Active Participants who Received Housing Services (FY18-19)	# Active Participants who Received a Mental Health Referral (FY18-19)	# Active Participants who Received a Substance Abuse Referral (FY18-19)
Buncombe	0	0	162	53	0	0
Craven-Pamlico	92	0	490	148	6	5
Cumberland	0	2	176	62	76	9
Durham	2	0	25	31	1	0
Forsyth	50	0	23	23	24	7
Guilford	78	11	191	163	83	97
HSR	9	0	55	55	0	6
McDowell	7	621	93	132	40	40
Mecklenburg	28	3	136	170	86	81
NEW	18	0	23	92	56	42
New Hanover	73	400	112	148	36	51
Orange	0	0	0	3	0	0
Pitt	0	0	68	87	0	0
Wake	4	6	450	99	1	0
TOTAL	361	1043	2004	1266	409	338

Segment 4 of LRC Outcomes Excel:

LRC	# Active Participants who Gained Employment of Any Wage	# Active Participants Hired Earning Minimum Wage	# Active Participants Hired Earning Minimum Wage-\$9.00	# Active Participants Hired Earning \$9.01-\$10.00	# Active Participants Hired Earning \$10.00+
Buncombe	111	0	0	0	111
Craven-Pamlico	106	2	36	44	24
Cumberland	399	32	258	102	7
Durham	41	1	3	20	17
Forsyth	27	1	3	4	19
Guilford	15	5	4	1	5
HSR	322	0	6	48	268
McDowell	53	0	1	21	31
Mecklenburg	93	2	6	42	43
NEW	177	5	47	62	63
New Hanover	192	2	110	65	15
Orange	0	0	0	0	0
Pitt	44	5	15	19	5
Wake	184	0	124	38	22
TOTAL	1764	55	613	466	630

Segment 5 of LRC Outcomes Excel:

LRC	# Active Participants who Gained Housing of Any Type	# Active Participants who Moved into Emergency Housing	# Active Participants who Moved into Transitional Housing	# Active Participants who Moved into Permanent Housing
Buncombe	46	0	46	0
Craven-Pamlico	148	0	92	56
Cumberland	53	0	53	0
Durham	35	0	35	0
Forsyth	6	0	2	4
Guilford	57	50	5	2
HSR	85	0	42	43
McDowell	138	4	128	6
Mecklenburg	181	0	181	0
NEW	41	4	3	34
New Hanover	183	5	102	76
Orange	2	0	0	2
Pitt	87	0	87	0
Wake	182	0	114	68
TOTAL	1244	63	890	291

Segment 6 of LRC Outcomes Excel:

LRC	# Active Participants who Became Inactive In Some Way	# Active Participants who Successfully Completed (reentry plan completed with proof from service providers, etc.)	# Active Participants who were Non-Compliant (client refused follow case plan & made no progress toward goal)	# Active Participants who Moved Away	# Active Participants who Dropped Out (Quit)	# Active Participants who were Re-Arrested	# Active Participants Died	# Active Participants with No Contact (for 2-3 months)	# Active Participants who Transferred to Another LRC
Buncombe	180	168	0	0	0	0	0	12	0
Craven-Pamlico	168	14	4	8	6	5	0	130	1
Cumberland	506	212	103	1	59	9	0	122	0
Durham	110	97	1	1	0	0	0	11	0
Forsyth	62	26	2	4	4	2	0	24	0
Guilford	14	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HSR	254	251	0	1	0	2	0	0	0
McDowell	168	69	6	18	17	4	0	52	2
Mecklenburg	199	70	7	3	7	9	0	103	0
NEW	192	132	1	13	0	3	0	43	0
New Hanover	129	99	0	0	0	16	2	11	1
Orange	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Pitt	148	30	0	11	0	8	2	97	0
Wake	491	234	0	0	0	4	0	253	0
TOTAL	2627	1416	124	60	93	62	4	858	10

Appendix E: Correlations Between LRC Services and County Demographics

The correlation coefficients between the number of LRC participants who received employment, transportation, and housing services, and the corresponding employment-, transportation-, and housing-related variables for the respective counties (see Figure 10) are below in Figures E1-3.³⁰ Although all of these variables may not be accurate or good indicators of the county needs (e.g. mean travel time to work), at least some are relevant and worthwhile analyzing (e.g. housing and rent costs).

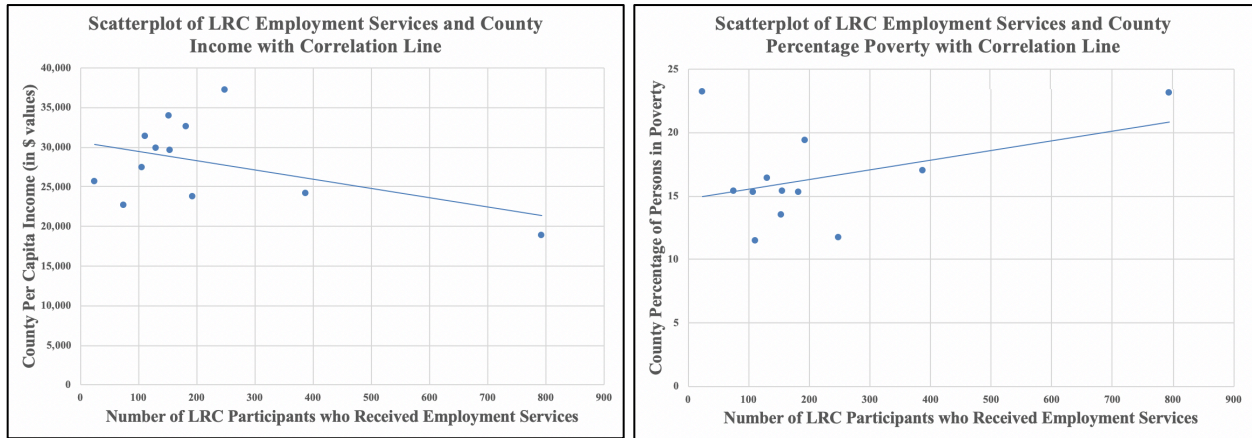
Correlation Coefficients Between Employment-Related Variables	County Per Capita Income	County % Persons in Poverty
# LRC Participants who Received Employment Services	-0.45	0.41
Correlation Coefficient Between Transportation-Related Variables	County Mean Travel Time to Work	
# LRC Participants who Received Transportation Services	-0.21	
Correlation Coefficients Between Housing-Related Variables	County Median Value Owner-Occupied Housing Units	County Median Gross Rent
# LRC Participants who Received Housing Services	0.15	0.11

Figures E1-E3: Correlation coefficients between the number of LRC participants receiving employment, transportation, and housing services and the corresponding employment, transportation, and housing county data points referenced in Figure 10.

Except only moderately for employment variables, there were not meaningful linear relationships between LRC and county data. Scatterplots of the employment variable relationships are displayed in Figures E4 and E5. County per capita income and LRC employment services had a negative correlation of 0.45, meaning that counties with low incomes had relatively high numbers of LRC participants receiving employment services, and vice versa. In contrast, poverty percentages in a county had a positive correlation of 0.41 with LRC employment services, such that counties with low percentages of people in poverty had low percentages of LRC participants receiving employment services, and vice versa for high statistics. For at least income data, the relationship makes sense intuitively—in a county with low per capita income, employment services help participants earn higher wages, yet participants would not need such services as much in a county with high per capita income (e.g. in Wake County, where companies typically pay \$15.00+). Like with other variables, it is possible that a county poverty percentage is a poor indicator of employment prospects for justice-involved individuals: The variable does not speak

³⁰ Because the LRCs span multiple counties in three cases and I collected only *individual* county demographic data in Figure 10, I averaged the county data for Craven-Pamlico, Hoke-Robeson-Scotland, and Nash-Edgecombe-Wilson counties to allow for easy correlations.

to the number of companies hiring people with criminal histories, to hiring competitiveness, or to the types of jobs and skillsets required most in a county.



Figures 21 and 22: Scatterplots charting the relationship between the numbers of LRC participants receiving employment services and the county per capita incomes and poverty percentages, respectively. The trend lines represent Correlation Lines.

Appendix F: Color-Coded Excel of LRC Websites

Because the Excel file is extensive, I break it up into five segments to include all data categories. The key for the colors is included below. I include the total Green and Blue color counts for each data category at the bottom of each category, and the color totals for each LRC on the right side of Segment 5. Text is included in individual cells if the data category or LRC information required elaboration (e.g. it was the social media data category or the LRC received a Yellow code for that category) or if the information was useful for my analysis.

COLOR KEY	
	Yes, the LRC has this
	The Intermediary Agency or related third-party has this
	This is not explicitly included ("Unclear") or components are missing ("Incomplete")
	No, the LRC does not have this

Segment 1 of LRC Websites Excel:

LRC	Website?	Social Media Accounts? (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
Buncombe County	County Justice Resource Center (JRC); mention LRC in brochure photo caption	County Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, & YouTube
Craven-Pamlico	Independent LRC website	Facebook
Durham County	Page about LRC on County website	County Facebook, Twitter, & YouTube
Fayetteville-Cumberland		Facebook
Forsyth County	Page about LRC on Piedmont Traid Regional Council (PTRC) website	PTRC Facebook, Twitter, & LinkedIn
Guilford County	Page about LRC on County website	At least 1 Facebook post about the LRC from the Sheriff's Office
HRS (Hoke, Robeson, Scotland)		
Jones-Onslow	Link from news article is faulty	
McDowell County	Freedom Life Ministries website; no mention of LRC	Freedom life Facebook, YouTube
NEW (Nash, Edge, Wilson)	Independent LRC website	Some Facebook posts about the LRC from the Sheriff's Office
New Hanover County	Two sites: (1) Independent LRC Google site; and (2) page about LRC on Leading Into New Communities (LINC) website	Google site has Twitter; LINC has various accounts
Orange County	Page about LRC on County website	County Facebook, Twitter
Pitt County	Life of NC website; paragraph about LRC in "program services" page	Life of NC Facebook
Re-Entry Partners of Mecklenburg	Two sites: (1) County "Reentry Services" page (no mention of LRC); and (2) Reentry Partners of Charlotte	County—Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, & Pinterest; Reentry Partners—Facebook
Wake County		
Totals per Data Category	7 Green; 4 Blue	3 Green; 7 Blue

Segment 2 of LRC Websites Excel:

LRC	Physical Address?	Phone?	Email?	Fax?	Hours?
Buncombe County					
Craven-Pamlico					
Durham County					
Fayetteville-Cumberland	On Facebook	On Facebook	On Facebook		On Facebook
Forsyth County					
Guilford County					
HRS (Hoke, Robeson, Scotland)					
Jones-Onslow		Freedom Life (Inter. Agency) phone on news article			
McDowell County					
NEW (Nash, Edge, Wilson)					
New Hanover County					
Orange County					
Pitt County					
Re-Entry Partners of Mecklenburg					
Wake County					
Totals per Data Category	8 Green; 4 Blue	8 Green; 4 Blue	7 Green; 3 Blue	3 Green; 2 Blue	4 Green; 3 Blue

Segment 3 of LRC Websites Excel:

LRC	Intermediary Agency?	Governance Structure?	Goal(s), Vision, Motivation?	Eligibility?
Buncombe County	Unclear; housed by County JRC			
Craven-Pamlico				
Durham County	Explicit mention of Criminal Justice Resource Center			
Fayetteville-Cumberland		Incomplete; only a Reentry Coordinator is identifiable	On Facebook	
Forsyth County	Unclear; housed by PTRC	Unclear; only lists a Reentry Coordinator	Unclear; questions loosely about goals	
Guilford County	Unclear; housed by Sheriff's page			
HRS (Hoke, Robeson, Scotland)				
Jones-Onslow	Freedom Life described in news article		Stated in news article	
McDowell County	Unclear; housed by Freedom Life			
NEW (Nash, Edge, Wilson)	Unclear; housed by NCCAA			
New Hanover County	Unclear; housed by LINC		Only on LINC page	
Orange County	Unclear; housed by County			
Pitt County	Explicit mention of Life of NC			
Re-Entry Partners of Mecklenburg	Unclear; housed by County	County	Both, but Reentry Partners explains website intention	County
Wake County				
Totals per Data Category	1 Green; 1 Blue	6 Green; 1 Blue	6 Green; 5 Blue	3 Green; 2 Blue

Segment 4 of LRC Websites Excel:

LRC	Services?	Partner Organizations?	Partnership App/Info?	About LRCs or Process?	Application/ Referral Form?
Buncombe County					
Craven-Pamlico	Incomplete; empty "resources" tab on site			LRCs	Incomplete; "must be logged in" for intake form
Durham County				Both	
Fayetteville-Cumberland	Incomplete; mentioned in some Facebook posts	Incomplete; mentioned in some Facebook posts			
Forsyth County	Just says "case management"			LRCs	
Guilford County					
HRS (Hoke, Robeson, Scotland)					
Jones-Onslow					
McDowell County					
NEW (Nash, Edge, Wilson)				Process	Interest form is just for determining eligibility
New Hanover County	Only on LINC page	Only on LINC page		Both	
Orange County				LRCs	
Pitt County		Incomplete; says "see list of reentry partners," but no such list		LRCs	
Re-Entry Partners of Mecklenburg	Both, but Reentry Partners lists housing and job resources	Both, but Reentry Partners lists resources/organizations		County—Process	County
Wake County					
Totals per Data Category	4 Green; 5 Blue	2 Green; 3 Blue	3 Green	6 Green; 2 Blue	4 Green; 3 Blue

Segment 5 of LRC Websites Excel:

LRC	Activity Calendar?	Additional Languages?	Budget?	Data, Results?	Totals per LRC
Buncombe County		Arabic, French, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Ukrainian			0 Green; 14 Blue
Craven-Pamlico					9 Green
Durham County	Incomplete; no events listed in 2020	More than 100 other languages	LRCs		14 Green; 1 Blue
Fayetteville-Cumberland	Incomplete; some activities on Facebook			Unclear; mentioned in some Facebook posts	6 Green
Forsyth County					6 Green; 1 Blue
Guilford County		More than 100 other languages			8 Green
HRS (Hoke, Robeson, Scotland)					0 Green
Jones-Onslow					0 Green
McDowell County					0 Green; 8 Blue
NEW (Nash, Edge, Wilson)					12 Green
New Hanover County					12 Green; 3 Blue
Orange County	Incomplete; lists committee & LRC meetings	Google Translate button			13 Green; 1 Blue
Pitt County					0 Green; 10 Blue
Re-Entry Partners of Mecklenburg		Spanish, French, German, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, Vietnamese			0 Green; 15 blue
Wake County					0 Green
Totals per Data Category	1 Green; 2 Blue	3 Green; 2 Blue	0 Green	1 Green	

Appendix G: Color-Coded LRC Goals

If titles like “goal,” “vision,” “mission,” or others are within quotations, they are pulled verbatim from the LRCs or LRC Intermediary Agencies (hereafter, “IA”). If, however, titles are outside of quotation marks, they are my own categorizations. Not all listed examples are from the LRCs directly—for example, Buncombe County includes the goal of the Justice Resource Center, the LRC’s IA and webpage host. I note “website” if the information is taken from the LRC’s independent site, “webpage” if it is from a page hosted on another institution’s website, and the name of the particular social media platform if it is from the LRC’s social media account.

In the key below, the number in parenthesis counts the number of unique LRCs or IAs that feature language from the respective categories, not the total count of each category type (e.g. if a term like “community” is listed three times in an LRC’s mission, it is counted just once for that LRC), whereas the total number is the total count. There are 11 LRCs or IAs that list a goal, vision, mission, and/or motivation on websites or social media.

Color Key	
<u>Reasons to Focus on Reentry:</u>	
Help Justice-Involved Citizens	(10) [total: 26]
Recidivism/Law Adherence/Stability	(8) [total: 10]
Public Safety	(3) [total: 3]
Cost Savings/Resource Efficiency	(3) [total: 3]
<u>Patterns in Language/Wording:</u>	
Community	(9) [total: 16]
“Return”/“Back into”	(6) [total: 9]
Reform	(5) [total: 5]
Notion of Success	(5) [total: 6]

Buncombe County: Justice Resource Center website (IA)

“Why it Matters: Involvement in the criminal justice system can carry lifelong impacts on the health, safety and well-being of individuals, families, and neighborhoods. Many individuals with justice involvement are also impacted by poverty, trauma, mental illness and/or substance use disorders. We provide services and seamless linkage to community resources.”

“Goal: We strive to reduce recidivism in terms of failure to appear, new arrest, and parole violation with individuals postconviction/post-incarceration through increasing access to employment, housing, transportation and education.”

Craven-Pamlico Counties: LRC website

“Vision: We believe that those returning to society should have a healthy, stable transition. When a community comes together to help, we are also building a better community.”

“The **goals** of our council are to make **communities** safer by reducing **recidivism** and **victimization**; to assist those who **return from prison and jail in becoming productive citizens**; and to **save taxpayer dollars** by lowering the direct and collateral cost of incarceration.”

Durham County: LRC webpage

“Durham’s **vision** for reentry is to provide opportunities for justice involved individuals to **successfully connect as productive members of society**. Through active partnerships with our stakeholders, the Local Reentry Council will contribute to safer **communities** and an **enhanced quality of life** for justice involved citizens.”

“The Durham Local Reentry Council’s **mission** is to demonstrate a holistic and systematic approach that seeks to **reduce the likelihood of additional criminal behavior** by providing unwavering **community** support for justice involved citizens.”

“The **goal** of the Local Reentry Council is **to connect individuals with services and support to assist them in a successful transition and to build capacity at the local level to reduce recidivism.**”

Fayetteville-Cumberland: LRC Facebook page “About” section

“**Mission:** to empower, support, and encourage individuals with past criminal records and those reentering the **community** from incarceration by strengthening and utilizing resources. We seek to reduce the barrier, stigma and challenges that individuals face when transitioning home.”

Guilford County: LRC webpage

Motivation: “Just about all jail inmates will leave correctional settings and **return** to various **communities** throughout Guilford County. Inadequate transition planning can put jail inmates, **who entered the jail in a state of crises, back on the streets in the middle of the same crises.** The outcomes of inadequate transition planning include the **compromise of public safety**, increased disability secondary to health and behavioral health symptoms, hospitalization, suicide, homelessness, new criminal offenses, and **rearrests**. With most inmates being released within a very short period, often without notice, jails present unique challenges to transition planning.

Mission: “The Guilford County Reentry Council is a new **community** organization that exists to assist formerly incarcerated or currently incarcerated with transitional planning. We act as a liaison between the client and services such as substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, housing assistance, etc.”

McDowell County: Freedom Life Ministries website (IA)

Mission: “At Freedom Life we are committed to the pursuit and celebration of both reentry and recovery as much as we are committed to helping men and women who have faced incarceration **successfully** navigate through the transitional needs and transformational opportunities of reentry.

... there are many justice-involved people across our state and within our own community here in McDowell County that need our help. Men and women reintegrating into society from jail or prison face many barriers including food, clothing, housing, jobs, transportation, mental health needs, medical health needs, substance misuse/addiction vulnerabilities, spiritual life needs, etc. Many are released who have lost everything and literally have nothing but the clothes on their back. In addition to these barriers, there are more than 900 state and federal laws that deny North Carolinians a wide range of privileges and rights based on a criminal record. Many have been estranged from their families or cannot return to their families because of the very conditions existing there that led to their own criminal behavior.”

Goals: “Freedom Life seeks to partner with our community in addressing the complex needs of men and women who are currently or have faced incarceration. Just as our clients cannot turn their life around into new capacity and direction by themselves, neither can we as a single nonprofit organization help them change their lives alone. At Freedom Life, we know it takes a community working together to make a difference in peoples lives.”

Vision: “We seek to bring the many resources of our community and the many needs of our justice involved clients and their families together. Through providing case management, mentoring, pastoral care, needs resourcing, and agency networking, clients of Freedom Life are able to receive the holistic help they need to address literally every need in their lives and in the lives of their families. This is true of their practical needs such as housing and jobs, their mental health, emotional health, relational health, and physical health needs, and also their spiritual health needs.”

Nash-Edgecombe Counties: LRC website

“Mission: The NEW Reentry Council brings together all stakeholders to offer assistance and resources to help individuals with criminal backgrounds become law-abiding citizens and to enhance public safety.”

New Hanover County: LRC webpage

Mission: “Here to help returning citizens successfully reenter the community.”

Orange County: LRC webpage

“Mission: The Local Reentry Council’s mission is to reduce recidivism, increase public/community safety, create a network of individuals and organizations assisting returning individuals, maximize the use of existing resources and services; and develop innovative responses to address gaps in resources and services.”

Purpose: “The Local Reentry Council’s purpose is to coordinate resources in the community in an effort to provide assistance for returning individuals and their families that will facilitate a successful transition from incarceration back into society or help reduce barriers that are faced by those who have been justice-involved.”

Pitt County: Life of NC website (IA)

Mission: “The Pitt County re-entry program is dedicated to helping previously incarcerated individuals make a successful transition from prison/jail back into the community. The LRC is a council made up of the designated stakeholder from across the Greenville/Pitt County Community that collectively can impact recidivism in a positive way.”

Mecklenburg County: County website (IA)

“Mission: The mission of Mecklenburg County Re-Entry Services is to facilitate seamless transition of participants while promoting employment stability, service engagement and continuing education.”