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Contra Costa County Awarded Grant to Help Reduce Recidivism

The funds will support a pilot program established last year by the county court, probation and sheriff's offices to reduce former inmates' likelihood of committing new crimes.

Posted by Laura Dudnick (Editor) , October 10, 2013 at 05:37 PM

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Contra Costa County is getting more federal money to help newly released inmates reintegrate into society and stay out of jail.

For the second consecutive year, the county has been awarded a $750,000 Second Chance Grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, county Supervisor Federal Glover announced.

The funds will support a pilot program established last year by the county court, probation and sheriff's offices to reduce former inmates' likelihood of committing new crimes, according to Glover's office.

The program emphasizes transitional services to steer inmates

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"Given the proper coping tools, most former inmates can be steered away from the antisocial behavior that put them behind bars," Glover said. "That's what we are developing in Contra Costa and that is why the DOJ is highly interested in what the county is attempting."

California's rate of recidivism -- or the number of felons released from prison who return for any reason -- hovers around 70 percent, far surpassing the national average of 52 percent, according to the supervisor's office.

"That is shamefully high, and evidence that the justice system currently in place is not working," Glover said.

The supervisor said he applied for the Second Chance Grant when it was established in 2012, after California received federal court orders to reduce the state prison population by tens of thousands of inmates.

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