**CoC Community Response Forum Meeting**

**10:30 AM - 11:30 AM**

**Amityville Community Resource Center**

**Room 207**

Introductions & Welcome

Special Guest: Carly Sommers, Nassau Suffolk Law Services

**Theme: Criminal Justice/Re-Entry**

Contact Information:

Phone Number: 631-232-2400 ext. 3311

***(PLEASE DO NOT GIVE THIS NUMBER TO CLIENTS)***

Email: csommers@nsls.legal

Topics Discussed:

Certificate of Good Conduct

* A Certificate of Good Conduct (CGC) does not give you a legal fact finding that you are reformed after a conviction. Fact finding is done by a judge or jury. **(Gives you a presumption of rehabilitation by the department of parole)** The CGC removes some of the [Collateral Consequences](https://www.nycourts.gov/courthelp/Criminal/collateralConsequences.shtml) of a criminal conviction. The CGC does not allow you to apply for certain jobs, licenses, public office, housing or other rights that you lost when you were convicted. But, having a CGC is not a guarantee that your application will be granted. And, even if you have a CGC, you still have to say that you have a criminal conviction when you fill out a job application. You are eligible to apply for a CGC if you have been convicted of 2 or more separate felonies

Certificate of Relief from Disabilities

* A way to remove certain [Collateral Consequences](https://www.nycourts.gov/courthelp/Criminal/collateralConsequences.shtml) of a criminal conviction. Having the CRD can remove bars to applying for jobs, licenses, public housing and more. If it has been more than 10 years since you were convicted of a crime, you may be able to ask the Court to seal your records

Parole vs. Probation

* People can be in local county jail and then be placed on probation but are still incarcerated. For probation people are not sentenced to up state prison.

3 Levels of Sex Offenders

* Lowest, moderate risk, highest risk

Bail Reform

* Cash bail is not eliminated. Judges can require bail but must now require 3 types of payment. 1, cash, 2, secured bond (bail bond) or 3 unsecured bond (“I promise to pay…”)

Open File Discovery (Discovery Reform)

* New York State passed sweeping criminal justice reform legislation, including discovery reform, requiring prosecutors to disclose their 6th amendment evidence to the defense earlier in case proceedings. This came into effect January 1, 2020.

The 8th Amendment

* “Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.”

Re-Entry and Mental Health

* Re-Entry overlaps with mental health

Sealing Law

* Allows people who have been convicted in no more than two cases (only one of which can be a felony case) to apply to **seal** certain conviction(s) from **New York**, if it has been at least 10 years since their sentencing or release from jail or prison.
* Sex offender (can never be sealed)
* Violent felonies (can never be sealed)

Landlord Challenges

* Background checks, section 8 voucher (level 3 sex offender cannot obtain section 8 voucher)

Employment

* NYS – Can say no to employment if at risk to public at large (i.e. Sex offender working at daycare)

Resume Building

* Change wording in resume to not indicate any criminal history
* Encourage people to be honest, and not lying. If you have a criminal conviction and you lie about it you can be terminated for falsification of records.
* Suffolk County does not have ban the box so employers can ask individuals if they have a criminal record on job applications

Services Provided by NS-Law Services

* Workshops from NS-Law Services (work with Parole Office, Probation Office, Suffolk County Sherriff’s Office

Resources

* Employment Opportunities for Incarcerated (Department of Labor – State and Suffolk County)
* Fact Sheet – Re-Entry/Criminal Justice Focused (Thanh)