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**LEGAL SERVICES OF NEW JERSEY PUBLISHES SPECIAL NEWSLETTER
PREPAINING FORMER OFFENDERS FOR THEIR “SECOND CHANCE”**

EDISON — In underscoring April as national Second Chance month, Legal Services of New Jersey (LSNJ) has published a special newsletter focusing on many of the key services, needs and resources for individuals facing a second chance or re-entry after being involved in the criminal justice system.

The bilingual publication, “Looking Out For Your Legal Rights,” may be viewed online at www.lsnjlaw.org.

The publication offers what amounts to a tutorial on what individuals, after leaving jails or prisons, can expect and deal with during their return or “re-entry” to community life.

That includes the need to be aware of and how to deal with the major causes of drivers’ license suspensions, how to handle bank levies for past debts, staying up to date on the latest applicable expungement law changes, determining what to do in identity theft situations that might erroneously implicate the victim of the theft in subsequent crimes, as well as other situations that might affect the past offenders’ reintegration or second chance.

The five most common types of driver license suspicions involve driving violation, unpaid parking tickets, failure to pay insurance surcharges, failure to carry insurance, and criminal code violations. The newsletter article explains what steps need to be taken to get suspensions lifted.

The article notes that a change in the law this past January simplified and hastened the expungement process, as well as setting protections so that the past histories of expungement applicants are not used at least from the outset to deny them employment, education and housing opportunities.

It is made clear that people seeking a name change have to follow certain steps if they have a prison record.

People who are incarcerated for 90 days or more should know they are entitled to a string of benefits and service upon their release. That includes help with completing applications for Medicaid, Social Security, food stamps and New Jersey's WorkFirst help programs.

More information and help is available from the LSNJLAW Hotline at www.lsnjlawhotline.org or calling 1-888-576-5529.

Legal Services of New Jersey (LSNJ), located in Edison, heads the state's Legal Services system, a network of six independent nonprofit corporations, and has been providing free essential legal aid in civil matters to low-income people through offices in all 21 counties for 55 years. Since its inception, LSNJ has provided representation in nearly 9 million cases.

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