**Meeting Summary for ANCHORAGE REENTRY COALITION | QUARTERLY MEETING**

**Feb 27, 2025 1:50pm-4:01pm Meeting ID: 993 5610 7921**

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**Quick recap**

The Anchorage Reentry Coalition meeting brought together various professionals to discuss reentry efforts, updates, and future plans for supporting individuals transitioning from incarceration back into the community. Presentations covered topics such as new recovery facilities, legislative updates, and the expansion of reentry services, highlighting the importance of collaboration and resource sharing among different organizations. The meeting also emphasized the need for continued funding, community involvement, and innovative approaches to address the challenges faced by individuals reentering society.

**Next Steps**

* Christina to distribute the meeting materials, recording, and chat links to attendees.
* Christina to organize and schedule the reentry simulation event for April 2025.
* Coalition members to sign up to participate in or volunteer at the April reentry simulation event.
* Christina to schedule the next coalition meeting for Thursday, May 29th from 2 PM to 4 PM as a hybrid meeting.
* Coalition members to review and provide feedback on the release ID community info sheet created by Christina.
* Interested parties to contact Teri to be added to her legislative update distribution list.
* Coalition members to consider sending emails supporting HB 35 (access to digital technology in prisons) to Representatives Rebecca Hemshoot and Robert Myers.
* Coalition members to submit resource information to Rozel and Charity for inclusion in the 907 Navigation App.
* Interested organizations to contact Emily to schedule presentations for the Wednesday shelter services meetings.
* Casey Shaw to send the DOC Reentry Unit application and fact sheet to Christina for distribution.
* Coalition members interested in conducting in-reach activities at correctional facilities to contact Kristofer Black (AK-DOC) for coordination.

**Anchorage Reentry Coalition Meeting Begins**

The Anchorage Reentry Coalition meeting begins with participants joining and introducing themselves in the chat. The host welcomes everyone and encourages introductions. Various professionals from different organizations, including Veterans Affairs, Partners for Progress, and the Department of Corrections, join the meeting. The host announces that there will be presentations and a full schedule for the day.

**Anchorage Leads Reentry Coalition Meeting**

Anchorage, the Reentry Coalition Coordinator, led a meeting discussing the coalition's agenda, updates, and future plans. She introduced herself and shared her background in criminal justice, emphasizing her passion for reentry. Anchorage also provided an overview of the Alaska Community Reentry Program Guide and the role of the Mental Health Trust Authority in funding the coalitions. She announced that the Trust Authority has decided to step back from funding all Four Statewide Coalitions (Anc, Matsu, Juneau and Fairbanks) and made the decision at the August 2024 Board Meeting to fully fund FY26 and partially fund the coalition FY27, prompting a need to explore other funding opportunities in the immediate future. Coordinator also emphasized that this information was offered in the interest of transparency and to alert the membership of the Coalitions need for alternative funding opportunities. Coordinator also emphasized that despite the hit to funding, the work will continue full force, transitioning into a brief presentation on the coalition's focus areas, including corrections, courts, community, and the workforce, and emphasized the importance of providing education, advocacy, and resources to the community.

**Release Identification Cards and Advocacy**

Anchorage discussed the new process for release identification cards, which replaced paper vouchers with hard cards issued by the Alaska Department of Corrections. The cards are temporary and expire within 180 days or when the holder turns 21. Anchorage also shared information about the Alaska Reentry Partnership's legislative fly-in in Juneau and encouraged others to participate in advocacy training. The Anchorage Reentry Coalition will continue to use the Glide app as a resource database for criminal justice-involved individuals. Laura, the director of supportive housing for NeighborWorks Alaska, expressed her appreciation for Anchorage's contributions to the coalition.

**Anchorage Recovery Center Expansion Plans**

Sam Garcia presents information about the Anchorage Recovery Center's new recovery campus, set to open in April. The campus, located on the east side of Anchorage, will offer a full continuum of care including detox, residential treatment, partial hospitalization, outpatient services, and sober living housing. The facility aims to address both substance abuse treatment and housing needs, with 60-80 beds for recovery residences and potential capacity for up to 160 people. Sam is currently hiring for various positions including therapists, RNs, peer support specialists, and case managers. Sam presents information about Anchorage Recovery Center's staffing and capacity. The facility has space for up to 160 beds but will start with 12-15 detox beds, 20 residential beds, and 30 partial hospitalization beds. Sam aims for a one-to-one staff-to-client ratio, including leadership positions. The center will support civilians with Medicaid and private insurance, as well as veterans and active-duty military.

**Alaska Impact Alliance, 907Navigation App Live Demonstration**

Rozel and Charity then introduced the 907 Navigation App, a free resource developed by the Alaska Impact Alliance to help strengthen families and reduce the need for child protective services. The app provides access to various community resources, eligibility calculators, and system navigation tools, with content being continuously updated.

**Partners Reentry Center Program Overview**

Joshua and Eric from Partners Reentry Center present an overview of their program for individuals releasing from incarceration. The program is a 4-5 month commitment focusing on employability and sobriety, with three phases: initial goals, job search, and stability. Participants must be capable of passing a UA, commit to sober living, and be able to obtain full-time work or renew pre-existing social security. The program offers various support services including hygiene vouchers, bus passes, and assistance with obtaining ID and food handler cards. As participants progress, they gradually take on more financial responsibility for their housing, preparing them for independence.

**Juneau/Legislative Update**

Teri Tibbett then provided a legislative update, focusing on the Access to Digital Technology in Prisons bill (HB 35) and the operating and capital budgets. She encouraged attendees to support the bill by sending emails to the bill's sponsors.

**Akeela: Mental Health and Substance Use Services**

Ericka discussed the various programs and services offered by Aquila, a mental health and substance use treatment center. She highlighted the flagship Aquila House, a residential facility for men and women, and the Stepping Stones program, a residential center for women with children. Ericka also mentioned outpatient services, including intensive outpatient programs, and after-hours assessments. She emphasized the focus on engagement and retention, as well as the development of community partnerships. Ericka also mentioned the availability of beds and the process for after-hours assessments. Ericka discussed the various community activities and events organized by the team over the past year, including the Mud Factor race, the Float for Hope event, and the Recovery Garden. She also mentioned the new client council and its efforts to raise funds for recovery activities. Megan asked a question about wait lists, which Ericka clarified had been answered.

**Restorative and Reentry Services, Homelessness and Shelter Update**
Cathleen and Emily from the Restorative and Reentry Services team then presented about their work, including their contracts with the mayor's office, the Anchorage Safety Center, and the In Our Backyard Tiny Homes. They emphasized the importance of community involvement and offered their services for presentations and discussions. They also encouraged others to attend their weekly Wednesday meetings. Cathleen and Anchorage discussed the importance of connecting and collaborating within the community to improve health. They highlighted the need to track individuals with criminal justice involvement and their correlation with homelessness. Cathleen also mentioned the potential for second chance employers within the shelter system to help people reintegrate into society.

**Department of Corrections, Health and Rehabilitation Services**

Anchorage introduced the Department of Corrections, Health and Rehabilitation Services' Reentry Unit, with Casey Shaw and Kristopher Black presenting their roles and services. Casey highlighted the unit's statewide reach, providing services such as bus passes, clothing, transitional housing, phones, and tattoo removal. he also mentioned the unit's new location and plans for future expansion. However, he noted that their budget has been put on hold, limiting their current spending. Casey Shaw explains that their Department provides housing assistance for people who have served at least 30 days and been released within the last year, offering two months of rent in a transitional house. The application process involves filling out a form with basic information and service requests, which is then evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Kristofer discusses the reentry unit's expanded role, which now includes education and vocational services within institutions. He mentions ongoing projects such as tablet information at Highland, internet connectivity at Palmer, and partnerships with various organizations.

**Close Out Remarks**The Coordinator, noting the end of the meeting time, announced plans for Second Chance Month in April, including a reentry simulation event tentatively to be hosted at Neighborworks Alaska. Asked attendees to keep eye out for emails setting that up. The next meeting date was announced, May 29th from 2pm-4pm and will be HYBRID. Attendees will be able to attend in person and online. Bottom of Form