

## Meeting Highlights | ANC Reentry Coalition Meeting |

3/9/26

### Key takeaways

- The Anchorage Reentry Coalition noted Application Submission for final available project funds from Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority for Reentry Coalition specific initiative, after this fiscal year there will be a complete step back from funding; final fiscal year funding reduced from \$120K to \$60K
- Coalition received COSSAP funding to launch ARRLI (Anchorage Matsu Reentry and Recovery Linkage Initiative) providing flexible financial assistance and navigation for justice-involved individuals with substance use disorders
- Partners for Progress announced DIG 2 statewide housing assistance funding through AHFC for Mental Health Trust beneficiaries released from DOC custody within 6 months
- Three new programs presented: Partners for Progress HOPE GO 5 pre-apprenticeship program, Nora Mental Health therapy services, and Tenant Success Workshop with Dr. Jennifer Bernard
- Coalition coordinator role will dissolve once Coalition project sunsets, but reentry housing services will continue at NeighborWorks Alaska with focus on direct services and maintaining already built upon resource directory and clearinghouse navigation.

### Discussed topics

#### Coalition Updates and Future Direction

Anchorage Reentry provided updates on the coalition's transition as Mental Health Trust Authority funding ends.

- **Details**
  - Anchorage Reentry: Mental Health Trust Authority stepping back from coalition funding; submitted partial budget request (\$60K instead of \$120K) for final fiscal year
  - Anchorage Reentry: Program and Planning Committee will review in April, Trust Board makes final determination in May
  - Anchorage Reentry: Coalition coordinator role will likely dissolve; will transition to Reentry Housing Officer at NeighborWorks Alaska focusing on direct services

- Anchorage Reentry: Will maintain digital resource directory, monthly newsletters, listservs, and referral services; reentry simulations will likely end but housing simulations will continue
- Anchorage Reentry: Website receives 8-15 calls/emails weekly for referrals and navigation; AnchorageReentry.org will be maintained through end of year

- **Conclusion**

- Coalition will host final in-person reentry simulation summit at end of 2026
- Core services (resource directory, newsletters, referrals) will continue through NeighborWorks
- Focus shifting from coalition coordination to direct reentry housing services

### **COSSAP Funding: ARRLI Program**

Anchorage Reentry presented the new Anchorage Matsu Reentry and Recovery Linkage Initiative funded through COSSAP grant.

- **Details**

- Anchorage Reentry: ARRLI provides flexible one-time financial assistance for justice-involved individuals with substance use disorders during reentry; covers transitional housing, transportation, treatment fees, basic necessities, identification documents
- Anchorage Reentry: Requires qualified advocate (probation officers, case managers, treatment providers, peer support specialists) to co-sign application with participant
- Anchorage Reentry: Eligibility includes justice-involved individuals currently or recently incarcerated within 9 months, struggling with SUD or co-occurring condition, preferably experiencing homelessness risk
- Anchorage Reentry: Priority populations are Alaska Native/American Indian/Indigenous and individuals 50+ years old, but not required for eligibility
- Anchorage Reentry: Using ACMUS system for data entry to capture individuals releasing into homelessness

- Michael: Asked if other communities using COSSAP funding similarly; noted 12 other awardees statewide including tribal entities, New Life Development, and Anchorage Police Department
- Anchorage Reentry: Funding available until end of summer; mostly participant costs under \$100K total
- **Conclusion**
  - Applications require both advocate and individual portions to be complete
  - Funding covers Anchorage and Matsu regions
  - Case-by-case basis with no per-person limit until grant funds exhausted

### **Partners for Progress Programs**

Partners for Progress presented two funding opportunities for justice-involved individuals.

- **Details**
  - Eric: HOPE GO 5 program is pre-apprenticeship for justice-involved youth ages 18-24; includes 4-6 weeks training and workshops, 200-hour internship placement in hospitality industry
  - Eric: Partner restaurants include Gumbo House, Glacier Brewhouse, Orso, and potentially Club Paris; goal is hire after internship completion for management/chef positions
  - Eric: DIG 2 Statewide Housing Assistance through AHFC provides housing assistance for permanent or transitional housing, security deposits, moving costs
  - Eric: DIG 2 eligibility requires Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority beneficiary status, at risk of homelessness or repeat incarceration, released from DOC within 6 months, not receiving AHFC voucher
  - Eric: Applications submitted through case managers on first-come, first-serve monthly basis; must reapply if not funded in given month
  - Joshua Adams: Open cases considered with documentation from attorney or PO stating individual unlikely to remand
- **Conclusion**
  - HOPE GO 5 provides career pathway in hospitality industry for young adults

- DIG 2 funding available statewide through coalition network
- Case manager involvement required for both programs

### **Nora Mental Health Services**

Eryne Hughes introduced Nora Mental Health as new mental health resource for reentry population.

- **Details**

- Eryne: Nora Mental Health is brick-and-mortar clinic in Midtown Anchorage plus telehealth across Alaska; founded on dignity, trust, and trauma-informed care
- Eryne: Services include individual therapy, couples/family counseling, trauma-informed therapy, psychological assessments, group therapy programs
- Eryne: Serves individuals returning from incarceration facing trauma, anxiety, depression, stress, relationship changes, employment challenges
- Eryne: Accepts all major private insurance (Aetna, Blue Cross, Multiplan, etc.), Medicare, Alaska Native corporation insurance; working on Medicaid credentialing within next month
- Eryne: Welcomes partnerships with reentry programs, case managers, probation officers, housing/employment programs; can coordinate with other providers
- Jess: Asked about insurance acceptance
- Eryne: Also serves professionals including case workers, therapists, attorneys

- **Conclusion**

- Referrals can be made through website registration form, office phone (425-216-6164), or email ([noraalaska@noramentalhealth.com](mailto:noraalaska@noramentalhealth.com))
- Located at 2702 Gambell Street, Suite 102, Anchorage
- Open to exploring therapy groups specifically for reentry populations

### **Tenant Success Workshop**

Dr. Jennifer Bernard presented the new Tenant Success Workshop pilot program.

- **Details**

- Jennifer: Two-module workshop funded by Sail Craig Award; helps previously incarcerated find private housing after state services end
- Jennifer: Module 1 covers rental applications, lease agreements, overcoming barriers, tenant rights; participants leave with tenant portfolio including resume and documents
- Jennifer: Module 2 covers budgeting, credit building, communicating with landlords, path to homeownership; emphasizes rebranding and putting best foot forward
- Jennifer: Completed two classes in Anchorage with first cohort graduate; scheduling same workshop in Matsu Valley in April
- Jennifer: Background includes 27 years as real estate broker, landlord experience, business professor at UAA Matsu campus; dissertation research examined barriers to housing for ex-offenders
- Michael: Asked if available virtually for other communities statewide
- Jennifer: Open to offering virtually; willing to partner with case managers in communities around state
- Demetria: Expressed interest in collaboration with Department of Labor job centers; requested updated flyers for Anchorage Midtown Job Center
- Kristofer: Suggested conversations about curriculum integration with employment services

- **Conclusion**

- Participants receive certificate and portfolio upon completion
- Workshop targets 10-15 individuals per session, two 2-hour modules
- Virtual delivery being explored for statewide access
- Contact: [jdbernard@alaska.edu](mailto:jdbernard@alaska.edu)

## **United Way Landlord Housing Partnership**

Karlo Mercene shared landlord incentive and risk mitigation funding opportunities.

- **Details**

- Karlo: Landlord incentive payments of \$1,000-\$1,500 for signing 6+ month lease with client coming out of homelessness who faces housing barriers
  - Karlo: Additional \$500 available if tenant remains housed after 6 months
  - Karlo: Requests submitted by case managers with lease copy, housing inspection proof, landlord W9; requires client receive 6+ months case management
  - Karlo: Risk mitigation funding reimburses landlords for tenant damages exceeding security deposit; requires photos, lease copy, repair receipts
  - Anchorage Reentry: Clarified case managers initiate incentive process, but can inform landlords about available supports during housing search
  - Karlo: Risk mitigation can be used before or after tenant moves out
- **Conclusion**
    - Forms available online: Landlord Incentive Request and Risk Mitigation Form
    - Case managers should introduce supports early in housing search process
    - Contact: [kmercene@ak.org](mailto:kmercene@ak.org)

### **UAA Writing Program at McLaughlin Youth Center**

Shane Castle introduced himself and offered support for reentry individuals attending UAA.

- **Details**
  - Shane: Associate Professor teaching UAA writing classes at McLaughlin Youth Center since fall 2021
  - Shane: Several students from McLaughlin have matriculated to regular UAA classes; at least 4 students transitioned successfully
  - Shane: Students very nervous and uncomfortable navigating university system and classes; emphasized all students feel this way
  - Shane: Willing to talk with reentry individuals interested in UAA, provide non-judgmental support, make introductions to appropriate resources
  - Anchorage Reentry: Asked about FAFSA support; Shane clarified case managers at McLaughlin handle most navigation but can connect people to scholarship experts

- Jess: Noted need for more youth reentry supports
- **Conclusion**
  - Available as sympathetic contact for justice-involved individuals considering UAA
  - Contact: [sdcastle@alaska.edu](mailto:sdcastle@alaska.edu)
  - Highlights gap in transition support for youth aging out of juvenile system

## **Department of Corrections Updates**

Kristofer Black and Casey Shaw provided updates on DOC reentry services and in-reach events.

- **Details**
  - Kristofer: Multiple in-reach events scheduled at facilities including Goose Creek, Spring Creek, Highland; mix of career-focused and resource-focused events
  - Kristofer: Events structured as resource fairs with 100-200 people; interested organizations should reach out to be added to invitation list
  - Casey: Funding in full swing providing full array of services including housing assistance
  - Casey: Conducting smaller regular in-reach events at ACC, PCC, Goose Creek; adding Point McKenzie and Matsu Pretrial to rotation
  - Casey: Occasionally brings other organizations (usually CITC) to in-reach; open to other organizations joining with proper clearance
  - Lorinda: Asked about open vs. closed cases for various funding programs
  - Kristofer: DOC funding has no barrier for unsentenced, sentenced, or discharged individuals; can help with most services though housing difficult for those returning to prison
- **Conclusion**
  - Organizations interested in facility in-reach should contact [kristofer.black@alaska.gov](mailto:kristofer.black@alaska.gov) or [casey.shaw@alaska.gov](mailto:casey.shaw@alaska.gov)
  - Regular smaller in-reach events proving successful with good feedback
  - Open case status not barrier for DOC services

## **Department of Labor Reentry Simulation Training**

Anchorage Reentry announced upcoming reentry simulation events for DOL staff training.

- **Details**

- Anchorage Reentry: DOL requested coalition host two reentry simulations in one day at AHFC building in April
- Anchorage Reentry: Part of DOL's one-stop academy; appears to be internal training for employees with reentry-specific focus
- Anchorage Reentry: Soliciting volunteers to work booths and stations, not to participate in simulation
- Demetria: Confirmed DOL interest in reentry training for staff going into facilities statewide

- **Conclusion**

- Invitations for volunteers will be sent soon; training aims to prepare DOL staff for working with justice-involved population