



Illustration by Benedetto Cristofani

REENTRY PROGRAMMING & PARTNERSHIPS

It Takes a Community



Illustration: Ella Byworth for Metro.co.uk

Today's Panel:

- Dennis Aldridge – Avery County Commissioner
- Phillip Barrier – Avery County Manager
- Ashley Wooten – McDowell County Manager
- Danny Hampton – Freedom Life Executive Director
- Jason Wallace – Freedom Life Jail Liaison



Illustration by Benedetto Cristofani

Overview:

- Why should reentry be a priority?
- How can reentry happen effectively?
- What are existing community barriers/resource needs?
- What is the greatest barrier across the nation and state?
- Frequently Asked Questions?

Why Prioritize Reentry?



Why Prioritize Reentry?

It is a matter of life or death

- Within two weeks of release, justice involved are 40 times more likely to die of an overdose than general population
- With Heroin, this increases to 74 times more likely
- Even after 1 year, overdose deaths remained 10-18 times higher

American Journal of Public Health, July 2018



Why Prioritize Reentry?

It is a matter of recidivism

- 95% of people who enter prison will return to our communities
- 49% NC recidivist arrest rate within two years of release in 2019
NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory commission, April 2022
- Some data shows 70% are arrested again within 5 years
Hope Marshall, "Reentry Means Leaving Prison and Never Going Back," April 2023
- This does not include rearrest rates for people being released from jail



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Recidivism affects us all!

Why Prioritize Reentry?

It is a matter of future generations

- 1 in 14 NC children will experience having a parent incarcerated

Hope Marshall, "Reentry Means Leaving Prison and Never Going Back," April 2023

- 70% of people who dropped out of high school had a parent incarcerated

Cornell University Study, Cornell Chronicle, Susan Kelly, March 2019

- 45% of Americans have had a family member spend time in jail or prison for one night or more

Cornell University Study, Cornell Chronicle, Susan Kelly, March 2019



Why Prioritize Reentry?

I know what you're thinking...

"Reentry is not a big deal in our community."



Why Prioritize Reentry?

I know what you're thinking...

"Reentry is not a big deal in our community."

I have come to learn, "**IT IS!**"



Why Prioritize Reentry?

Individual lives, families, and futures are at stake, including the health of our communities as a whole.



A Story of Lived Experience

Jason Wallace



Illustration by Benedetto Cristofani

How Can Reentry Happen?



How Can Reentry Happen?

- Together
 - “It takes a community working together to make a difference.”

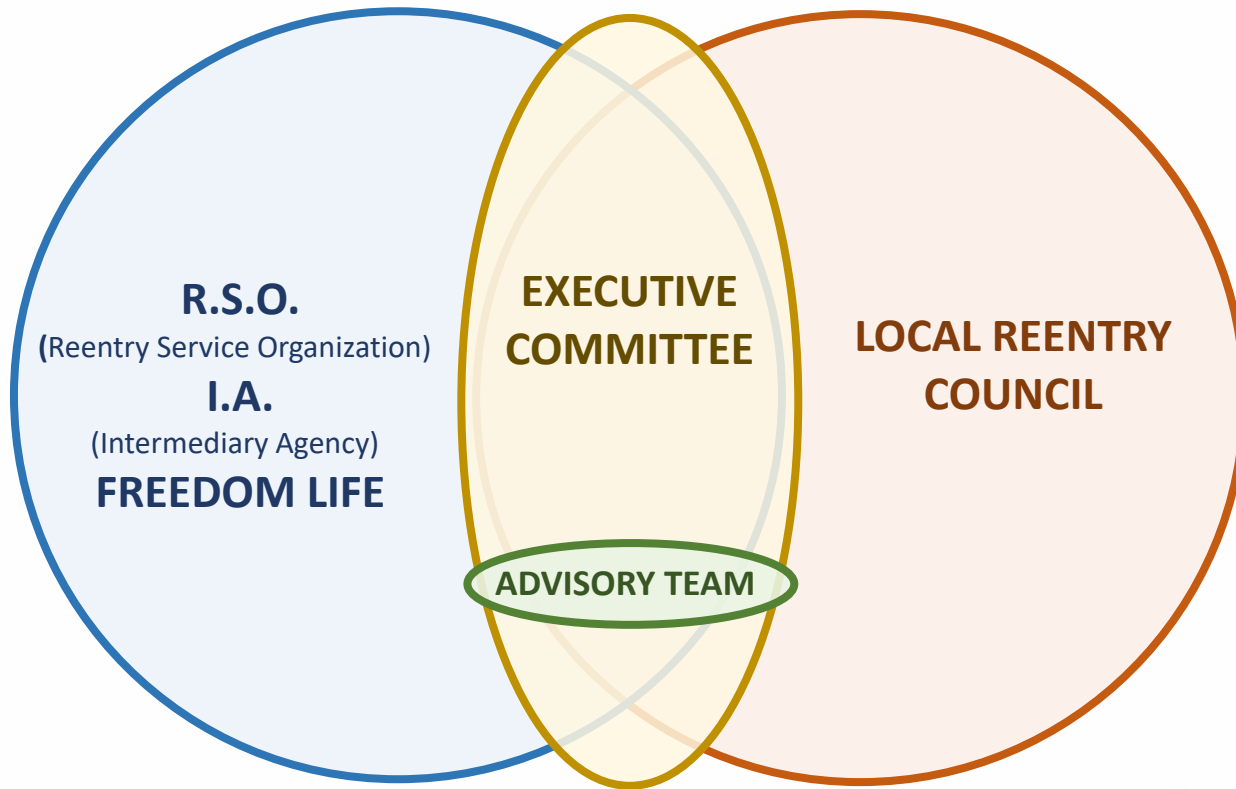


How Can Reentry Happen?

- Partnership/Collaboration Development
 - Reentry Council concept & formulation
 - Reentry Service Organization formulation



Reentry Council Model



McDowell & Avery

How Can Reentry Happen?

- Reentry Needs Identification
 - Identify personal reentry needs of reintegrating individuals



Needs Faced by Justice Involved People

- Short term/long term housing needs/issues
- Basic needs like food, clothing, hygiene, medicine, etc.
- Lack of transportation and no driver's license
- Obtaining S.S. Card, ID, and other needed legal documentation
- Medical, dental, eye, health/insurance issues
- Mental/emotional health issues
- Substance use disorder/addiction issues
- Social agency issues to resolve
- DSS Child Services/Child custody issues
- Jobs and job readiness
- Career direction
- Education/training/certification needs
- Legal/Social ordinances, expectations, barriers
- Unresolved legal issues
- Financial stress including fees, debts, taxes, childcare issues, and managing finances overall
- Family/Dysfunctional Relationship issues
- Lack of or incapacity for positive peer relationships or helpful people/mentors to turn to for direction/accountability
- Unresolved wrong thinking, criminogenic conditioning, character issues, institutionalization and other risk/need factors
- Overall risk needs assessment/life planning
- Case management life planning/support and resourcing
- Mentoring
- Spiritual (for individuals seeking)



How Can Reentry Happen?

- Reentry Needs Identification
 - Identify personal reentry needs of reintegrating individuals
 - Identify reentry barriers and resources/resource development needs within the community



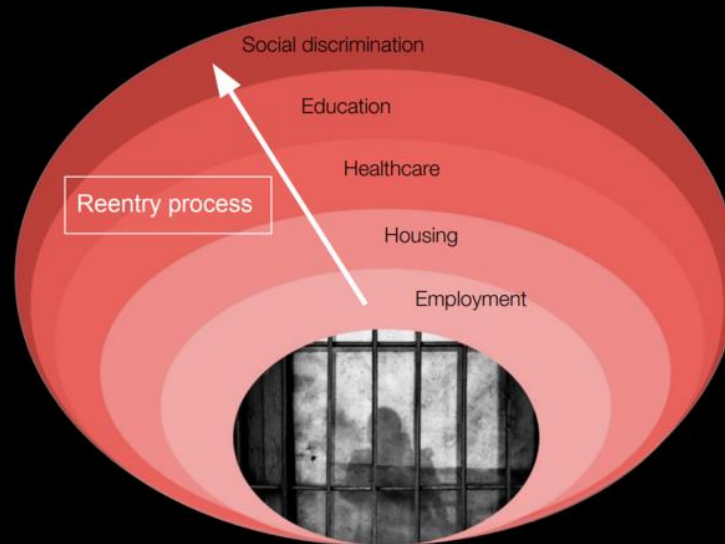


What Are Community Barriers?

What Are Community Barriers?

Structural and social barriers to reentry

- 95% of people incarcerated return to society at some point
- Approx 650,000 people are released from prisons each year



Factors within the community that hinder or prevent reintegrating people from having the resources or support needed for sustainable success.

What Are Community Barriers?

- McDowell Reentry Council Identified Barriers & Action Teams Formed to Address Them
 - Housing, Transportation, Employment, Legal, Substance Use/Mental Health, Advocacy & Awareness, Family Wellness



What Are Community Barriers?

- Avery County Reentry Council Identified Barriers & Action Teams Formed to Address Them
 - Housing, Transportation, Employment, Legal, Substance Use/Mental Health, Advocacy & Awareness, Family Wellness, Community Networking



What Are Community Barriers?

- Nationally and Statewide Most Significant Barrier...
 - HOUSING
 - “Each year, more than 600,000 people return to society from prison – and 1 million people cycle in and out of our nation’s jails. Research shows that restrictions on housing for formerly incarcerated people can lead to a dangerous cycle of reincarceration.”

VERA Institute of Justice, “Finding Housing is Hard—but for People Leaving Prison and Jail, it’s Almost Impossible” August 2018





Photo Credit: Elizabeth Thompson

Reentry Housing Project McDowell



Photo Credit: Elizabeth Thompson

Reentry Housing Project McDowell

- Desperate need for long-term reentry transition housing
- Partnership between McDowell County, City of Marion, Freedom Life, McDowell Reentry Council
- Project will provide 44 long-term reentry transition apartments for justice involved people engaged in reentry programming through Freedom Life
- Property & Apartments ownership will be Freedom Life with programming/operational oversight in partnership with McDowell Reentry Council Housing Team



Photo Credit: Elizabeth Thompson

Reentry Housing Project McDowell

- Funding for the Project is through a \$250,000 grant with the Dogwood Health Trust Foundation and a \$5,000,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
- Future Grants will also be pursued through NC Housing Finance Agency and ARC Funding



Photo Credit: Elizabeth Thompson

Reentry Housing Project Avery



Photo Credit: Elizabeth Thompson

Reentry Housing Project Avery

- Currently no short-term or long-term reentry transitional housing available in Avery County
- The Avery Reentry Council, in partnership with Avery County Government and Freedom Life Avery are developing plans for both immediate short-term and long-term transition housing
- County property has been identified to set aside and be used for both short-term and long-term reentry transitional housing



Photo Credit: Elizabeth Thompson

Reentry Housing Project Avery

- A \$350,000 Grant has been received through the Dogwood Health Trust Foundation and a \$950,000 CDBG has been received to start developing short-term housing
- Additional grants will be written to build subsequent phases of short-term and long-term transition housing
- The property and housing will be owned by Avery County and designated to reentry housing by the county. Programming and operational oversight will be provided through Freedom Life Avery and the Avery Reentry council.

Frequently Asked Questions



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- If you build reentry housing, will it not bring more justice involved people into our county?



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- If you build reentry housing, will it not bring more justice involved people into our county?
- Won't people say, "not in my backyard," if you try to build reentry housing?



Frequently Asked Questions

- If you build reentry housing, will it not bring more justice involved people into our county?
- Won't people say, "not in my backyard," if you try to build reentry housing?
- Why put money and resources into the reentry population that made their choices and caused the problems they have, when there are other "people in need" within our community that could benefit greatly from the same money and resources?



Q&A





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The image features a white background with a dark blue border. In the top-left and bottom-right corners, there are clusters of blue squares of various sizes and shades, ranging from light blue to dark blue, creating a modern, geometric pattern. Centered in the white space is a dark blue rectangular box containing the text "THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING!" in white, bold, uppercase letters.

**THANK YOU FOR
ATTENDING!**