Durham Local Reentry Council Minutes

September 18, 2024

Ontario Joyner, LRC Coordinator, began the meeting by welcoming everyone and thanking them for their time and participation. All attendees introduced themselves.

Mr. Joyner introduces the house rules and the purpose of the LRC. Mr. Joyner also explains that LRC aims to make positive connections with community members to serve and provide opportunities and resources for people returning from incarceration. The LRC’s main goal is to reduce recidivism and provide ample support for justice-involved individuals in Durham. Mr. Joyner introduces the subcommittee structure of housing, employment, and other supportive services.

1. **Partner Presentation**

***Alliance and Disability Advocates –* Sharif Brown, Director of ADA Reentry**

The Center for Interim/Independent Living is a federally funded program for individuals with disabilities. The five (5) core principles of this program are as follows:

1. Referrals: Information is obtained from community resources to ascertain pertinent data regarding a person’s post-incarceration situation and disability circumstances.
2. Peer Support: This program aids in managing the disabilities of post-incarcerated individuals.
3. Independent Living Skills: This program assists people with disabilities in all aspects of everyday functional skills i.e. self-grooming, performing household chores, preparing meals and performing day-to-day activities **except for** **the removal of clothing.**
4. Advocacy: This program will systemically advocate for the rights of the post-incarcerated disabled with regards to having appropriate structural accommodations i.e. wheelchair access to restrooms, sidewalks, parking facilities etc.
5. Transitional Services: Transitional services are provided for individuals to relocate from group homes to private dwellings.

The Alliance and Disability Advocates are equipped to reacclimate disabled individuals back into society with the necessary resources and skills needed to become self-functioning parts of society after incarceration.

The Individualized Reentry Plan (I.R.P.) is designed to provide this target population with everything that was lost during incarceration including assisting with obtaining SSI/SSD benefits, nutrition assistance benefits, housing, and will work with the Department of Health to address mental health concerns.

The Individualized Reentry Plan:

* Has a 98% success rate and only a 2% recidivism rate
* Accepts anyone with a disability for an indefinite amount of time (the client determines their end date with the program
* Accepts direct referrals from community resources and via their website: [(adanc.org)](https://adanc.org/)
* Serves local, state and federal prison populations and is currently obtainable in eight (8) North Carolina counties

Under the umbrella of the Alliance of Disability Advocates (ADA), there is a ‘Targeted Unit Program’ which entails the following:

* There are 12 properties in Durham County where landlords will hold a certain number of apartments open for people who are receiving Social Security Income (SSI) benefits. These apartments usually offer discounted utility charges.
* While the client is not allowed to have contact with the landlord directly, a program advocate will supply information to the landlord in order for the landlord to perform background checks on potential renters (per the landlord’s requirements – not ADA’s).
* There is a wait list for these apartments due to the high demand. Clients are encouraged to apply for as many apartments as possible to cut down on the waiting time for occupancy.
* A program advocate will walk clients through this process by assisting them in every way possible i.e. if their SSI benefits are interrupted and by making sure their disability needs are met by each dwelling.

***Hope Renovations – Sara Campbell, Vice President-Training***

Hope Renovations is a non-profit organization that provides trades training specifically for women. This is a 9-week program that offer women the following services:

* Training in all aspects of construction, repairs and renovations
* Paid internships with on-the-job-training
* Transitional assistance in becoming part of the workforce:
  + Resume writing
  + Interviewing Skills
  + Networking opportunities
* Supportive services i.e. childcare and transportation

In addition to providing training in the construction industry, Hope Renovations provides Aging-in-Place opportunities where women are employed/contracted to make older homes ‘livable’ for the aging population in seven (7) counties. Persons 55+ years of age are eligible to receive this service.

Please visit their website: [www.hoperenovations.org/trades-training](http://www.hoperenovations.org/trades-training) for more detailed information

1. **LRC Updates:**

Mr. Joyner stated that LRC is now fully staffed and introduced two (2) new hires, Antoan Jeffries, Employment Case Manager and Rasheda Royster, Housing Case Manager. Mr. Jeffries and Ms. Royster were well received by all and provided background and contact information to everyone.

Mr. Joyner reported:

* In August LRC held an Entrepreneur Seminar in partnership with the local library, LRC’s Employment Subcommittee and four (4) local business owners, to give employment options to clients
* LRC will participate as vendors at two (2) resource fairs: One being the Butner Federal Prison in partnership with the PROUD Program and the other at Orange Correctional Facility
  + LRC will sponsor a resource fair sometime in December that will be open to the public as well as clients
* Clients Served - September:
  + received 87 referrals
  + completed 44 intakes
  + 17 clients gained employment with an average salary of $16.05
  + 4 clients enrolled in GED classes at Durham Tech; 1 client enrolled in a carpentry class; 9 clients enrolled in Kramden Institute where upon completion of the computer literacy program, they will receive a refurbished laptop
  + 5 clients enrolled in the on-site employment class
  + 1 client completed a Vehicle Inspection Certification Course at Durham Tech

1. **Subcommittee Update:**

* Drew reported that once a week, the Supportive Services Subcommittee have been providing food boxes to clients, mostly those in transitional housing. The committee is looking for volunteers to help distribute these food boxes.
* The Employment Subcommittee is looking to provide information on entrepreneurship employment alternatives for clients and is looking for business owner participation in future endeavors

1. **Meeting Dates:**

LRC Meeting - November 20th @ 3pm

Housing Subcommittee Meeting – November 13th @ 2pm

Employment Subcommittee Meeting – November 14th @2pm

Supportive Services Meeting – November 12th @ 2pm

1. **Adjournment – Ontario Joyner**

Mr. Joyner thanked all for attending the meeting and for their services to the community and adjourned the meeting.

**Attendees:**

Ontario L. Joyner - ojoyner@dconc.gov - 919-560-7589

Quanesha Archer- Step Up - qmarcher@dconc.gov

Kristi Riley - Durham LRC Case Manager - 919-560-0016 - [kristi.riley@durhamnc.gov](mailto:kristi.riley@durhamnc.gov)

Dorothy Gatling – Eckerd/PROUD - [dgatling@eckard.org](mailto:dgatling@eckard.org)

Channel Chance – Union Baptist Church – [channelchance49@gmail.com](mailto:channelchance49@gmail.com)

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Sandra Lassiter – Welcome Home – [Sandra.lassiter@durhamnc.gov](mailto:Sandra.lassiter@durhamnc.gov)

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