Organizational Overview

Presentation - 2023

The National Reentry Network for Returning Citizens

www.thenationalreentrynetwork.org  202-584-1000
Vision and Mission

Vision

Our vision is to reinvest in safe and healthy communities, create more living wage jobs, permanent housing, and economic self-sufficiency for returning citizens.

Mission

Our mission is to build a strong, national network comprised of individuals returning from incarceration who support each other’s reintegration. We use a client-centered approach to identify basic needs and to create a continuum of care that can address barriers to reentry, promote restorative practices, and reduce recidivism.
Our Values
We Believe In ...

- The empowerment of returning citizens to have control over their own futures.
- The power of networking among returning citizens to ensure successful reentry.
- In prevention and alternatives to prison (reducing crime and recidivism).
- We support the full reentry of returning citizens into the civic, economic, and family structures upon their release.
- In redemption and second chances (forgiveness, love and new life).
- That it is imperative to support organizations led by returning citizens and to elevate their leadership.
- That impacted citizens should have an equal and valued voice at policy making tables.
History

The NRNRC was created by and for returning citizens as a volunteer organization. At the time, we focused on drug use, addiction, and voting rights.

Our Board of Directors is established, and we began to offer services at their recommendation. We then become a nonprofit 501 (c)(3) organization.

The Ready4Work Program and Peer Navigator Program are created and implemented. These programs assist returning citizens in finding employment and navigating the challenges of reentry.

We are currently in our 13th year of providing reentry services in DC. We have developed and implemented a variety of services that address the barriers to reentry, and continue to do so today.

2010  2016  2019  Present
Accomplishments

- 85% Job Placement
- Voter Registration and Education
- 13 years sustained performance
- Ban the Box
- D.C. Jails and Justice Task Force
- Record Sealing and Expungement
Accomplishments - Ballot Initiatives

- Fare Evasion
- Restore the Vote
- Second Look Amendment
- Who Pays
- CCA Contract
- N.E.A.R Act
- $15 Minimum Wage
- Initiative Four
- Initiative 77
This model uses a mustard-seed approach to engage the community to determine their needs and address instances of harm. Returning citizens are trained in circle-keeping, and work with the community to build trust and relationships.

**Signature Programs**

**Ready4Work**
Our 5-week job readiness program gives returning citizens the skills to succeed in the workforce and find long-term employment. Returning citizens learn how to write resumes, interview skills, workforce culture skills, become financially literate, and more.

**Reintegration Circles**
Within these reintegration circles, the returning citizens meets with a support network to create a plan for successful reentry.

**Supportive Reentry Housing Initiative**
In partnership with S.O.M.E., we offer returning citizens housing for up to 3 years after participation in our Peer Navigator or Ready4Work programs.

**Community-Led Prevention Model**
This model uses a mustard-seed approach to engage the community to determine their needs and address instances of harm. Returning citizens are trained in circle-keeping, and work with the community to build trust and relationships.
Addressing barriers to reentry is an important part of our work, as it ensures long-lasting positive change for returning citizens. We have advocated for the elimination of barriers to reentry; most notably, decreasing the use of hiring practices that exclude returning citizens.

Signature Programs cont.

**Peer Navigator**
A formal mentorship program between a member of the community who has experienced reentry and a current returning citizen. The mentee is guided towards stability and creates their own goals and direction throughout 12 months.

**Build Wealth DC**
Men and women participate in this program where they are assisted in transitioning out of poverty over a 3–5 year period.

**Family Reunification**
Assist in family reunification through family engagement activities such as involving family members in planning and decision-making, facilitating visits of children and participating in family team meetings.

**Barriers to Reentry Advocacy**
Addressing barriers to reentry is an important part of our work, as it ensures long-lasting positive change for returning citizens. We have advocated for the elimination of barriers to reentry; most notably, decreasing the use of hiring practices that exclude returning citizens.
Advocacy

- **Safe & Free DC Program**
  We support the 18 bills contained in the Solutions for a #SafeAndFreeDC legislative agenda and are committed to advancing true safety and freedom for all in our own work, collaborations, and the movement at large.

- **DC Jails and Justice Task Force**
  In partnership with the Council for Court Excellence and the Vera Institute of Justice, an independent advisory committee was formed. This Task Force is dedicated to redefining and reinventing our local approach to corrections, ensuring that our jail is one part of a just and equitable overall system.

- **Unlock the Box**
  We are a part of a coalition of organizations and movement leaders who partner with state and local campaigns across the United States with the common goal of ending the use of solitary confinement for all people.

- **Evaluating the public**
  We work to educate the public on the consequences of our current criminal legal system and the process of political advocacy. We participate in community conversations where a variety of information and opinions are shared.

- **Changing the narrative**
  We work to advocate for change in the narrative that is placed upon returning citizens and justice-involved individuals. We elevate stories of success through our Black Table Talk publications.

- **Changing the Language**
  We work to advocate for change in the language used to refer to justice-involved individuals and returning citizens in legislation and society. We spread awareness on how language can create bias and prejudice against these communities.

- **Policy and legislation**
  We advocate for and play a part in the passing of policies and legislation that advances the rights of returning citizens and eliminates barriers to reentry.
Ready4Work

Evidence-based 5-week cohort that prepares returning citizens for the workplace. The curriculum includes:

- Resume and interview preparation
- Financial literacy
- Job placement and coaching
- Emotional intelligence and conflict resolution skills
- Teambuilding
- Leadership development
- Entrepreneurship
Supportive Reentry Housing

- The Supportive Reentry Housing Initiative assists Returning Citizens with stable housing, employment, and a variety of other programs offered by The NRNRC
- In partnering with S.O.M.E, the Housing Initiative is able to provide individuals with housing for up to 3 years.
- Individuals are re-evaluated every 12 months.
Process of Gaining Reentry Housing

**Step 1**
Participate in intake assessment pre/post-release of 60-90 days to determine eligibility.

**Step 2**
Provide documentation. If individuals do not have their ID, Social Security Card, Birth Certificate, and Proof of Residency or Homelessness, we will assist in obtaining them.

**Step 3**
Residents must participate in certain TNRNRC programs, case management, and gain employment.

**Requirements**
- Participate in all Group Sessions Sponsored by The NRNRC.
- Participate in Case Management Services as well as completing a Life Goal Plan.
- Possess gainful employment, participate in Ready4Work program or a Training/Apprenticeship Program.
Reintegration Circles

- Offer a space for returning citizens to connect with their personal support network and work towards achieving stability.
- Circle Keeping promotes restorative justice, violence intervention and reconciliation in relationships, builds community, and creates healthy communication among members.
- Circles meet in prison and after release to offer a continuum of care.
- Certified facilitators are trained to run Reintegration Circles to meet the needs of those involved.
Community-Led Preventative Model

The CLPM uses restorative practices to help rebuild community by focusing on ways harm can be reduced and repaired. The root cause of harm is examined and relationships are built through the process of circle keeping.

1. **Identify harm in the community**
   
   NRNRC will collect data and lead community circles to identify types of harms happening in our community.

2. **Select and Train Engagement Team**
   
   Our model trains returning citizens from DC in circle keeping practices. A CLPM requires that those closest to the problem drive the solution.

3. **Hold Community Building Circles**
   
   NRNRC brings community members together to discuss community needs and build trust and understanding about the CLPM, circle keeping, and alternative ways to heal from conflict.

4. **Create a Referral Pathway**
   
   NRNRC will partner with community stakeholders to develop ways that businesses and community members can reach out to the Engagement Team.

5. **Ecosystem of Care**
   
   Partners commit to pursuing progress at the rate of relationships, allowing time for the Engagement Team to establish trust in the community. The program develops collective understanding of the individual roles community members play in supporting a CLPM.
Peer Navigator

Guidance and support is provided by a mentor who has successfully navigated reentry.

Mentors serve as trusted navigators addressing the barriers of returning home.

Promotes a healthy lifestyle of stability and helps returning citizens accomplish their goals.

The returning citizen and mentor are required to connect for 2–4 hours per week over a 12-month period. A continuum of care is provided after the end of the formal mentorship.
Family Reunification

- Increasing the frequency of visits leading up to reunification.
- Early and diligent search for extended family members and use of kinship.
- Participate in family team meetings to facilitate reunification efforts. This includes family group conferencing and family group decision making.
Partners and Affiliates

16 Partners and 24 Affiliated Groups and Committees

- Faith-based organizations
- MORCA
- Public Defender Service
- S.O.M.E Housing Initiative
- DC Justice Lab
- And more!

Reentry Action Network
S.O.M.E Housing Initiative
Public Defender Service
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Thank You

For Your Attention

The National Reentry Network for Returning Citizens

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