



# Austin/Travis County Reentry Roundtable Newsletter

June 2011

## Greetings!

I hope your summer has gotten off to a great start. At the Austin/Travis County Reentry Roundtable (A/TCRRT) our committees will spend much of the summer developing work plans for the next fiscal year, which starts in October. Likewise, our Planning Council will begin a strategic planning process to guide the future work of the A/TCRRT as a whole. We need fresh perspectives, so come join us!

## Looking Ahead: Projects for the Next Year

The A/TCRRT has several projects on the horizon and may add more where there is the need and momentum in the community. Here are some that are already in the works:

- Organizing evidence-based trainings for professionals in the reentry field
- Hosting a community-based resource fair for people involved in the justice system and providing support for the monthly Travis State Jail Resource Fairs
- Keeping the community up to date on developments in reentry through a new, improved website for the A/TCRRT and publishing a quarterly newsletter

## Policy Reform: Update on the 82nd Legislature



The A/TCRRT was well represented at the 82nd Legislature by a core group of committed volunteers who are passionate about improving reentry. The 82nd Legislature was by all accounts one of the most difficult in recent memory with budget reductions looming over every decision made. Criminal justice programming was subject to deep cuts just as almost every other area of state spending. How the proposed cuts affect reentry will be seen soon and is something the A/TCRRT's Policy Reform Committee hopes to examine. In addition to the budget, the Legislature passed new laws that affect reentry. To see what the A/TCRRT has been following, click [here](#).

## Support Systems Committee Launches

The new Support Systems Committee met this month to begin taking a closer look at the reentry needs in our community. By and large, the committee is concerned about the resources available to people involved in the justice system and ensuring that they have the information needed to navigate existing resources. Even beyond that, the committee is interested in developing and augmenting supports that will prevent future crime and victimization. As the committee moves forward, it will examine what gaps exist and focus attention on creating a community that promotes successful reentry.

## Housing Planning for a Reentry Population

The A/TCRRT continues its housing planning work for a reentry population through a combined effort with ECHO (Ending Community Homelessness Coalition.) In the past three months work has focused on the following initiatives:

- Safeguarding state funding for the Homelessness Housing and Supportive Service Program (HHSP) that was threatened by cuts to the state budget.
- Participating in community input regarding the [City of Austin's initial draft of their Boarding Home \(HB 216 Boarding Homes\) Model Standards](#). The A/TCRRT provided [written comments](#) in response.
- Providing advocacy around legislative bills regarding housing for persons with a criminal background.
- Monitoring creation of permanent supportive housing (PSH) for a reentry population.

More information about the A/TCRRT's housing planning work can be found [here](#).

To get involved with the housing work connected with the A/TCRRT and ECHO, contact Darla Gay, the A/TCRRT Housing Issue Area Leader ([darla.gay@co.travis.tx.us](mailto:darla.gay@co.travis.tx.us)) or Jo Kathryn Quinn, the ECHO Housing Work Group chair ([jkquinn@caritasofaustin.org](mailto:jkquinn@caritasofaustin.org)).

## Offender Workforce Development Program

One in every 83 adults in Travis County is in state prison or the Travis County Jail. Of those individuals with criminal histories, many face ongoing obstacles to finding gainful employment. To improve the odds of successful reintegration, Travis County Criminal Justice Planning's Offender Workforce Development Program (OWDP) cultivates a comprehensive system to promote the hiring of persons with a criminal history. OWDP offers quarterly Employment Specialist Trainings. They also organize the Reentry Employment Collaboration and the Employer Advisory Council. For individuals with a criminal history, OWDP provides weekly orientations and one-on-one consultations and mock interviews. More information about OWDP is available by contacting Mary Moran, (512)854-6497 or [mary.moran@co.travis.tx.us](mailto:mary.moran@co.travis.tx.us).

The Austin/Travis County Reentry Roundtable wants, needs, and IS you! Find out more about how you can [get involved](#).

Sincerely,

Jeri Houchins  
Administrative Director  
(512) 873-4959

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

### In This Issue

[Looking Ahead](#)  
[New Legislation](#)  
[Support Systems](#)  
[Housing Planning](#)  
[Offender Workforce Development](#)

### Quick Links

[Travis County Reentry Guide](#)  
[A/TCRRT Planning Council Membership Calendar](#)  
[More About Us](#)

## Planning Council Member Promoted to Reentry Position in the Federal Bureau of Prisons

Planning Council Member, Janice Brueggman-Taylor, is now the Bastrop Reentry Coordinator at the Federal Correctional Institute in Bastrop. She will be responsible for providing clear direction for the development of reentry initiatives, assigning tasks, monitoring and recognizing performance of staff and will be responsible for the administration of reentry efforts.

Congratulations, Janice!

### Announcements

#### Policy Reform Committee Meets Monday, June 27

The Policy Reform Committee will review legislation from the 82nd Legislature and begin to set its objectives for the upcoming year.

Date: Monday, June 27  
Time: 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.  
Location: Carver Library Meeting Room 4  
1161 Angelina Street

#### Support Systems Committee

Date: Tuesday, July 19  
Time: 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.  
Location: Department of Family and Protective Services, 701 W. 51st St. Room 360 W

#### Evidence Based Practice Committee

Date: Friday, August 5  
Time: 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
Location: 6th Floor Conference Room in the Executive Office Building (411 W. 13th St.)

## HUD Urges PHAs to Give Ex-Offenders a Second Chance

[Read the letter](#) that HUD sent to the Executive Directors of Public Housing Authorities reminding them of federal policy and urging them to remember the importance of family reunification and stable housing for ex-offenders.