

# Home for Good:

## A 5-Year Countywide Plan to Improve Reentry in Philadelphia

### Extended Executive Summary

Home for Good is the Philadelphia Reentry Coalition's 5-year countywide collective action plan to improve reentry in Philadelphia. In all, more than a hundred stakeholders met over the course of six months to develop this plan.

### ABOUT THE PHILADELPHIA REENTRY COALITION

The Coalition formed after the Philadelphia County Criminal Justice Advisory Board (CJAB) voted to convene a subcommittee that would focus on countywide reentry efforts. In February 2012, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania hosted leadership from the federal, state and local levels representing the judiciary, corrections, probation, defense, prosecution and other key public stakeholders. The initial group was charged with addressing the growing concern that reentry efforts in Philadelphia needed to be better coordinated. In March of 2015, the Coalition merged efforts with Philly PRISM, a collective impact initiative formed in 2014 with similar goals of improving Philadelphia's reentry systems through stakeholder collaboration. The Coalition now includes over 20 county, 3 state, and 6 federal agencies, 6 universities, and two dozen non-profit organizations.

### The Case for Change in Philadelphia

As of June 2015, there were approximately 24,000 Philadelphians incarcerated in county jail or state or federal prison. An additional 60,000 Philadelphians were actively supervised on probation or parole.

58% of people released from county jail are re-incarcerated in county jail within 3 years.

43% of Philadelphians released from state prison are re-incarcerated in state prison within 3 years.

60.1% of people released from state prison to Philadelphia County are re-arrested within 3 years.

### OUR VISION

Every person released from jail or prison to Philadelphia succeeds and is a productive member of the community.

### OUR MISSION

The Philadelphia Reentry Coalition collaborates, coordinates, commits, and communicates to create opportunities for successful reentry using evidence-based practices, to reduce--and ultimately eliminate--recidivism.

### OUR SHARED GOAL

Reduce recidivism in Philadelphia by 25% over the next 5 years.

## What does recidivism mean?

Recidivism has varying definitions within different systems and programs. It can mean re-arrest, re-incarceration, re-booking, or re-conviction. It can focus on 6 months from release, 1 year, 2 years, 3 years, or more. The Coalition agreed that a primary indicator of progress towards our shared goal will be a reduction in the rates of re-incarceration within three years of release from prison or jail. Our goal is that the 3-year recidivism rate for people released from prison or jail in 2020 will be 25% lower than the 3-year rate for those released in 2015.

## How will we measure a reduction in recidivism and report progress toward our shared goal?

First, we will need to determine if a universal measure – such as a unified 3-year re-incarceration rate – can be calculated. Currently, re-incarceration rates maintained by the City, State and Federal prison systems underreport re-incarcerations because they do not account for re-incarcerations to external systems. The Data & Metrics Team will need to collaborate with the three corrections departments to determine if there is a way to cross-track re-incarcerations to get a more comprehensive and accurate, unified re-incarceration measure. Second, we will need to collect, track and measure all recidivism indicators (i.e., not just 3-year rates of re-incarceration) to fully understand where system changes need to occur. The Data & Metrics Team will develop a process to collect and review recidivism metrics in addition to 3-year re-incarceration rates, in order to track and report progress annually.

## OUR TACTICS

In order to achieve our bold goal, the Coalition collectively identified five tactics that will shape our overarching strategy of collaboration. Home for Good lays out specific objectives for each tactic, with corresponding actions, leads, timeline, and metrics where applicable. The five tactics that the Coalition will use are:

### 1. Strengthen Our Foundation.

The growing collaboration among numerous stakeholders working together to share knowledge and improve reentry outcomes is one of Philadelphia's greatest strengths. But there is more we must do to unify our approach to reentry. Strengthening the foundation of the Coalition will support that challenging task.

- Sustain dedicated Coalition Coordinators.
- Develop an internal communications system.
- Collaborate to support stakeholder funding opportunities.
- Build Coalition participation.
- Leverage stakeholder resources for collective benefit.

### 2. Adopt a Shared Methodology: Risk Needs Responsivity (RNR).

Research proves recidivism decreases when jurisdictions base supervision, service, and resource allocation decisions on the Risk-Needs-Responsivity principles of reentry programming. The Coalition determined that it will seek to implement all three prongs of RNR principles over the course of the next 5 years. This will require extensive training and organizational development support by the Coalition so that each and every stakeholder becomes RNR experts.

- Understand the Risk-Needs-Responsivity model.
- Learn from each other.
- Train on risk/needs assessment instrument.
- Enable stakeholders to adopt the Responsivity principle.

## Risk- Needs- Responsivity (RNR) Principles

### Risk Principle

Assess Risk Level and match the intensity of interventions to level of risk for criminal activity. Static risk factors do not change and include things like a person's age or the number of previous convictions.

### Need Principle

Assess Dynamic Risk Factors, which are changeable factors that contribute to the likelihood of new criminal activity. Providing support to strengthen those areas that pose the greatest challenges can decrease the likelihood that the returning citizen will re-engage in criminal behavior. While not directly related to criminal behavior, stabilizers and destabilizers are lifestyle and psychosocial factors that influence how someone functions in the community. Stabilizers include factors such as supportive friends or family, or a high school diploma. Destabilizers are factors such as mental health challenges, housing instability, and food instability.

### Responsivity Principle

Account for returning citizen's strengths, abilities and learning styles, traumatic history, and other relevant considerations (such as additional destabilizers) when designing treatment goals. Engage returning citizens directly in the development of any case management plans.

## 3. Engage our Community.

Engaging our community is integral to reducing recidivism. Our broader community contains many important stakeholder groups--such as currently and formerly incarcerated people and their families and networks, employers, service providers, and the general public. Each has a unique perspective and contribution as part of the Coalition's work. In order to ensure the effectiveness of the programs, practices and policies the Coalition supports - and its stakeholders develop and advance - it is important that the Coalition actively engages the community in the process of our work. The Coalition cannot make change in a vacuum. Further, for the community to benefit from our collective work, mechanisms for timely and consistent communication must be established.

- Work side-by-side with people with lived experiences.
- Develop and implement an external communications strategy to increase public knowledge and inform opinion about reentry.

## 4. Engage Leaders.

Through our collective voice, we are well positioned to influence decision-makers to revise practices and policies to reduce recidivism.

- Educate leaders about policy changes that would improve the reentry system.

## 5. Align Our Efforts.

We cannot effectively reduce recidivism in Philadelphia with insufficient or poorly aligned resources, referrals, practices, and procedures. Aligning efforts involves eliminating duplication of services or efforts, merging efforts when advantageous, and the strategic allocation of resources to different parts of a system, based on where they are most necessary and/or will have the most impact – based on RNR principles.

- Conduct system mapping.
- Facilitate data sharing across key stakeholders.
- Conduct gap analyses to support the Coalition's adoption of Risk-Needs-Responsivity principles.

## MOVING FORWARD

### New Team Structure

To enable the implementation of this plan, the Coalition will be organized into teams dedicated to the primary functions necessary to complete the actions associated with each objective. For example, in order to leverage stakeholder resources for collective benefit, the Professional Development Team will work with Coalition Co-Coordinator and the Implementation Team to identify opportunities for stakeholders to train other stakeholders, and develop a calendar of trainings.

**The Implementation Team** will serve as the overarching coordinating body, tracking the progress of each of the teams against the timeline, reviewing teams' progress towards goals, and reporting back to the Coalition at its regular stakeholder meetings. The Implementation Team will identify opportunities to enhance collaboration, efficiency and effectiveness, and support the Funding Team by engaging the philanthropic community to fund the Coalition and its work. The Implementation Team will be comprised of at least 2 representatives from public agencies at the local, state, and federal level, service providers, and returning citizens. The work of the Implementation Team is supported by two Coalition Coordinators who jointly guide the work and development of the Coalition by providing strategy, operations, and administrative support.

**The Transitions Team** will look for opportunities to improve how people transition through all points of time in the reentry system, from pre-incarceration, to behind-the-walls, to immediate post-release, to long-term reintegration into the community. The team will have work groups that focus on issue areas such as housing, employment, education, and health.

**The Professional Development Team** will coordinate training and professional development opportunities for Coalition stakeholders, and facilitate collective learning.

**The Communications Team** will oversee the development and implementation of an internal and external communications strategy, without which the Coalition cannot function effectively.

**The Funding Team** will identify funding opportunities to support the Coalition and its stakeholders, facilitate collaboration among stakeholders to pursue funding opportunities in line with this plan, and create a process by which the Coalition can support individual stakeholders' funding efforts.

**The Policy Team** will oversee research and development of policy changes to improve the reentry system.

**The Data & Metrics Team** will oversee coordinating collection of metrics and data, facilitating data sharing amongst stakeholders and advising stakeholders on data related issues.

**The RNR Team** will assist stakeholders with learning about and adopting all three aspects of the RNR model.

**The Community Engagement Team** will oversee the development and implementation of a strategy to involve returning and returned citizens, and the wider community, and recognize and support the leadership of people with lived experience.

JOIN US:

For more information about the Philadelphia Reentry Coalition or to become involved,

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