

**Project Name:** Tarrant County Reentry Initiative Charter  
**Initial Date of Project:** March 10, 2006  
**Executive Steering Committee Chair:** Commissioner Roy C. Brooks, Pct. No. 1  
**Advisory Committee Chair:** TBD

### **Project Charter**

The charter and bylaws are developed and supported by the Tarrant County Administrator's Office and ratified by the Tarrant County Commissioners Court upon the recommendation of the Reentry Council Executive Steering Committee. This charter serves as the governing instrument for the Tarrant County Reentry Initiative. It defines the scope of the project, the management structure, and the roles and responsibilities of its membership. Project groups and teams operate in many different ways depending on project objectives, technical needs, resource requirements and, availability. This document establishes the manner in which these groups and teams are structured by defining the functions, expectations and accountability of team members. These guidelines minimize the risk that the project will be derailed as the result of error, misunderstanding or miscommunication.

### **Reentry Council Executive Steering Committee**

The Tarrant County Reentry Council Executive Steering Committee is APPOINTED BY TARRANT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT and is chaired by a Tarrant County Commissioner. It is subject to the rules of the Tarrant County Boards and Commissions Policy. The committee consists of county, city, state and federal executives, elected officials, educational officials and community representatives throughout Tarrant County. This group is not considered a *de facto* working group, but its members are identified as champions of the Tarrant County Reentry Initiative and can offer significant resources and support as needed (See Attachment A for a list of recommended membership). The Tarrant County Reentry Council Executive Steering Committee will serve as an advisory committee regarding the policies and procedures outlined in this document.

### **Tarrant County Reentry Council Advisory Committee**

The Tarrant County Reentry Council Advisory Committee (RCAC) is established by its membership and functions as an advisory group to the TARRANT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT. The RCAC leadership consists of a chair (and a co chair (as needed)), elected by simple majority of the RCAC membership. The RCAC membership consists of reentry subcommittee chairs. The Tarrant County Reentry Council Advisory Committee is responsible for:

- Assuring that the Tarrant County Reentry Initiative remains a countywide collaborative effort between local government, community agencies and organizations, nonprofits, the private sector, community leaders and faith-based organizations.

- Providing the Tarrant County Administrator with insight and/or recommendations for guiding principles, planning strategies, and resources to further the purpose and mission of the Tarrant County Reentry Initiative.
- Reviewing and providing feedback regarding all programs and/or project work plans contained within the Tarrant County Reentry Initiative.

### **Mission**

To facilitate the collaboration of Tarrant County community groups, public health officials, treatment providers, educational institutions, legislators, human services groups, housing officials, workforce development groups, faith-based organizations, families, former inmates, victims advocates, law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, courts and correctional agencies to develop a planning strategy for the effective reintegration of ex-offenders, thereby reducing recidivism, supporting victims and promoting public safety in Tarrant County.

### **Goals**

The goal of the Tarrant County Reentry Council Advisory Committee is to provide input and feedback in regard to all activities related to the implementation and management of the Tarrant County Reentry Initiative as related to the following:

- Linking reentry program participants to sustainable employment through effective training, education and employer development thereby meeting offender, community and employer needs;
- Assessing the availability of external funding sources for reentry programs and projects;
- Attaining external funding for reentry programming and projects;
- Linking reentry program participants to adequate transitional housing;
- Linking reentry program participants to mental health treatment and services;
- Linking reentry program participants to substance abuse treatment and services;
- Supporting and/or recommending proposed legislation, policies and practices that will facilitate the successful reintegration of formerly incarcerated persons;
- Linking reentry program participants to trained mentorship;
- Development of a Tarrant County mentorship curriculum;
- Linking reentry program participants to positive peer networks;
- The identification of resources available in the Tarrant County community that can increase the capacity of organizations to provide services for formally incarcerated persons and their families; and
- Educating the general public regarding the significance of, and need for, strategies and programs that address the needs of persons in reentry.

### **Activities**

The RCAC membership will serve as chairpersons of respective, content-specific reentry subcommittees. Reentry subcommittees will address the following substantive areas<sup>1</sup> as they relate to the successful reintegration of the formerly incarcerated:

- Employment/Vocational Development;
- Evidence-Based Practices;
- Housing;
- Mental Health;
- Health Care;
- Substance Abuse;
- Policy and Law;
- Community Support Systems;
- Faith Based Support Systems; and
- Transitional Preparation.

The advisory group subcommittee's activities and recommendations are submitted to the RCAC and may be used in the development, implementation and management of the Tarrant County Reentry Initiative.

### **Tarrant County Reentry Council Advisory Committee Bylaws**

#### **Section A: Regular Meetings**

*Regular Meetings of the RCAC:* The Tarrant County Reentry Council Advisory Committee should endeavor to hold bimonthly meetings (6 meetings per year). The annual schedule of meeting dates should be determined by the Reentry Council Advisory Committee during its first annual regular meeting.

*Regular Meetings Reentry Subcommittees:* Each RCAC Reentry Subcommittee should endeavor to meet bimonthly (6 meetings per year). The annual schedule of meeting dates should be determined by each respective subcommittee chair. In the effort to encourage public attendance at RCAC subcommittee meetings, meeting information (to include date, time and location) should be made available for posting on the Tarrant County Reentry Initiative website. Subcommittee chairs shall be responsible for maintaining a list of citizens interested in their subcommittee and assuring that these citizens are invited to each subcommittee meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> Other reentry subcommittees may be created as per the recommendation of the Tarrant County Administrator's Office.

## **Section B: Designees**

In the event of an anticipated absence, Tarrant County Reentry Council Advisory Committee members should designate a respective subcommittee member to represent them and vote at regular meetings. Any member wishing to appoint a designee is to identify the designee and formally communicate this to the designee and the Chair of the RCAC. Designees can be changed only by notifying the Chair in writing.

## **Section C: Members**

Tarrant County Reentry Council Advisory Committee (RCAC) - includes eleven (11) voting members. The membership of this committee is composed of the chairpersons from each respective reentry subcommittee (10) and, the immediate past Chair (1) of the reentry council. Members of the RCAC will elect a chair and a co-chair by simple majority.

## **Section D: Reentry Subcommittees**

The Reentry Subcommittees (cf. Attachment B) are the forum for community input regarding ex offender reentry. As such, the membership of Reentry Subcommittees should represent a countywide collaboration open to all Tarrant County residents. Members of Reentry Subcommittees may serve indefinitely. Members are not, however, voting members of the RCAC.

## **Section F: Quorum**

All actions of the Tarrant County Reentry Council Advisory Committee shall be decided by a simple majority vote. A quorum of not less than 50% of the RCAC members present is needed to vote. Designees shall be counted when determining a quorum.

## **Section G: Convening Special Meetings**

The Chair of the Reentry Council Advisory Committee may convene special meetings. However, written notice must be served at least 48 hours in advance.

## **Section H: Chair, Co-Chair and Subcommittee Chairs**

*Chair:* The Chair of the Reentry Council Advisory Committee (RCAC) is a member of the RCAC, the Presiding Officer of the RCAC, nominated by the RCAC, and is elected by a simple majority of the RCAC membership. The Chair serves for a term of one (1) year.

*Co-Chair:* The RCAC Co-Chair is a member of the RCAC is appointed by the Chair and serves on an as-needed basis. For example, in instances when the Chair cannot attend a meeting, the Co-Chair presides over the meeting.

*Reentry Council Advisory Committee (RCAC) Sub-Committee Chairs:* The Reentry Subcommittee Chairs are members of the RCAC, are nominated by the preceding subcommittee chair and are elected by a simple majority vote of the RCAC membership. The reentry Subcommittee Chair will serve for a term of one (1) year. In instances when the Reentry Subcommittee Chair cannot facilitate and/or attend a meeting, a designated representative must preside over the subcommittee.

### **Section I: Voting**

Each RCAC member has one (1) vote. Designees may vote on behalf of a member if the chair of the RCAC has been formally notified of the substitution. Under normal circumstances, RCAC subcommittee members are not members of the RCAC and have no vote.

### **Section J: Parliamentary Authority**

Robert's Rules of Order, revised, govern all committee meetings, except in instances of conflict between the Rules of Order and the Bylaws of the Steering Committee or a provision of law.

### **Section K: Amendment of Bylaws**

Any and all proposed amendments to the Bylaws are to be submitted to the Commissioners Court as recommended by the executive steering committee. Amendments shall be effective after approval and shall continue until such time as the Commissioners Court deems it necessary or proper to terminate such.

## Attachment A

These are recommendations for the Tarrant County Reentry Council Executive Steering Committee. The recommendations are subject to the approval of the Commissioners Court.

1. Member of U.S. Congress
2. U.S. Attorney Northern District of Texas
3. Member of the Texas Legislature
4. Texas Department of Criminal Justice Parole Division Regional II Director
5. Tarrant County Judge
6. Tarrant County Administrator
7. Eighth Administrative Judicial Region, Presiding Judge
8. Tarrant County Sheriff
9. Tarrant County District Attorney
10. Fort Worth Police Chief
11. Arlington Police Chief
12. Tarrant County College District, Chancellor
13. Texas Wesleyan University, President
14. University of Texas at Arlington, President
15. Texas Christian University, Chancellor
16. Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County, Director
17. United Way of Tarrant County, CEO

## **Attachment B**

This is a list of the reentry subcommittees that are part of the RCAC. The descriptions appearing beneath each subcommittee title are not meant to be comprehensive or definitive in nature. It is expected that each subcommittee will develop its own agenda for activities related to its respective content area and that the subcommittees will collaborate on their efforts.

### **Employment/Vocational Development:**

The Employment/Vocational Development Subcommittee is responsible for identifying strategies, programs, partnerships and activities that can effectively increase the number of employers in Tarrant County willing to hire persons recently released from incarceration and, identifying strategies, programs, partnerships and activities that can effectively increase the number of formerly incarcerated persons that are successfully hired in Tarrant County.

### **Evidence-Based Practices:**

The Evidence-Based Practices Subcommittee will gather information on existing techniques, strategies, assessment tools, educational curricula and motivational curricula that have evidence of success in their application with persons during reentry from institutionalization. This subcommittee will provide recommendations for augmenting the Tarrant County Reentry Initiative based on their findings.

### **Housing:**

The Housing Subcommittee is responsible for identifying strategies, programs, partnerships and activities that will increase the number and quality of housing resources available for the reentry population of Tarrant County.

### **Mental Health:**

The Mental Health Subcommittee is responsible for identifying strategies, programs, partnerships and activities that will help to assure that the reentry population of Tarrant County has unencumbered access to available mental health services within Tarrant County.

### **Substance Abuse:**

The Substance Abuse Subcommittee is responsible for identifying strategies, programs, partnerships and activities that will help to assure that the reentry population of Tarrant County has unencumbered access to the substance abuse services and therapeutic treatment available within Tarrant County.

### **Policy and Law:**

The Policy and Law Subcommittee is responsible for developing proposed legislation, policies and practices that will facilitate the reentry of formerly incarcerated individuals and protect the community while creating a mechanism for implementing recommended changes.

**Faith-Based Support Systems:**

The Faith-Based Support Systems Subcommittee is responsible for assuring that the Tarrant County Reentry Initiative includes partnerships and collaborations with the faith-based communities of Tarrant County and their endeavors to provide services and support for the reentry population of Tarrant County.

**Transitional Preparation:**

The Transitional Preparation Subcommittee is responsible for identifying strategies, programs, partnerships and activities that will successfully prepare inmates (prior to release from incarceration) for the reentry process.

**Community Support Systems:**

The Community Support Systems Subcommittee is responsible for identifying strategies, programs, partnerships and activities help address the social service needs of the reentry population of Tarrant County.

**Health Care:**

The Health Care Subcommittee is responsible for identifying strategies, programs, partnerships and activities that will help to assure that the reentry population of Tarrant County has unencumbered access to all health services available within Tarrant County.