

Second Chance Recidivism Prevention Public Hearing

November 8, 2018

Attendees present:

Carol Ditmore, *ADOH*

Andrew Rael, *ADOH*

Karia Basta, *ADOH*

Joy Johnson, *ADOH*

Ryan Vernick, *ADOH*

Melissa Swain, *ADOH*

Toni Davis *A New Leaf (ANL)*

Michelle Alberti *A New Leaf (ANL)*

Karen Kurtz *Community Bridges, Inc. (CBI)*

Karia welcomed everyone and all introduced themselves.

Karia gave an overview of the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the new program entitled: Second Chance Rapid Re-Housing and Rental Assistance Pilot Program.

Question from ANL: So the \$6,000 assistance per person- is that just for financial assistance, or financial assistance AND housing and stabilization?

Answer: \$6,000 is the maximum, and it is for both.

Question from CBI: That includes case management?

Answer: I revise the answer as case management can bring it above the \$6,000 maximum per person.

Question from CBI: How firm is the three months duration per person?

Answer: It's pretty firm; this is a pilot program, to see if a three month assistance for housing is enough to give ex-offenders a hand-up and prevent recidivism. Other assistance programs can be brought to their attention (food stamps, etc.) but the goal of this project is to get them stable enough to care for themselves after the three months' of housing assistance.

Question from CBI: Are they coming out of prison already employed?

Answer: They should be close to it. Most of them will move into a halfway house, which can be covered for up to 13 weeks in this program, while they look for employment.

Question from CBI: Do we know anything about their mental health issues?

Answer: Most in the program are coming from incarceration due to substance abuse issues, so the Arizona Department of Corrections (ADC) will be pointing them to the halfway houses that are the best fit for their needs. The grantee of this NOFA will be setting up the system to pay for the housing, but they won't be finding where to live for the program participants. There will be no sex offenders, murderers, or arsonists in this Second Chance program.

Question from BNL: So, no convictions for murder, or all violent crimes?

Answer: No convictions for murder.

Question from CBI: So the 850 is for both groups?

Answer: The estimated 850 is for participants in the housing program piece; half of those participating in the whole Second Chance program.

Question from CBI: You are saying 10% will get a job?

Answer: They are estimating 10% will get a job almost immediately; 10% may not need assistance at all by staying with family or friends, and 80% will have to go to a halfway house while they look for a job.

Question from CBI: When will be the point of contact for the program contractor?

Answer: At the point of release.

Question from CBI: Are we supposed to pick them up and take them somewhere?

Answer: Whoever is awarded this contract, we will have an initial meeting to work out the details.

Question from CBI: Do you NOT want us to use HMIS?

Answer: HMIS is for homeless persons; it's a different tool for a different group of people and does not apply in this case.

Question from CBI: Do we know anything about the flow of people exiting- 850 is a whole year's worth, but what is it weekly, monthly?

Answer: Twenty-five are exiting prison each week, of which half would be eligible for this program.

Question from CBI: In terms of eligible costs, is any kind of move-in cost applicable?

Answer: If they aren't going to a halfway house, the program can buy them a bed, and provide a start-up box, which includes linens, kitchen items, etc.

Question from ANL: So out of the approximate 850, are they being identified randomly, and are they identifying housing as a need? Is it voluntary?

Answer: The whole Second Chance program is voluntary. They will be chosen randomly based on their ADC number.

Question from CBI: Is there a report about the first two years of the Second Chance program, or why did the Arizona Department of Housing (ADOH) decide to add the housing piece?

Answer: The Second Chance program is through ADC. Director Ditmore chaired a committee to look at the housing portion of the Governor's goal to reduce recidivism. And at this time there is not a written report.

Question from CBI: I'm just wondering if there are any findings that will help us design what we want to do.

Answer: We know that housing is a dire need, especially for this population, and the majority of them will be going to halfway houses. Even those with job training in prison, they will still have to seek employment upon exiting prison. There is no written report; our information is based on interviews and meeting with parole officers who meet with the ex-offenders after they are released, as well as corrections officers in the prisons who are supposed to help them develop a housing plan.

Question from ANL: How long is the data collection supposed to run?

Answer: The entire length of the program.

Question from ANL: Will we be collecting the one year post-release recidivism data?

Answer: That will be ADC, since they will know if a person shows up back in the corrections system.

Question from CBI: So on the 85% that will increase or maintain, what length of time are we measuring?

Answer: By the time we close them out.

Question from CBI: So, a person at the end of their 13 weeks, if a person stays in the halfway house, that is still considered a success?

Answer: Yes, since they are still housed. We will reword it.

Question from CBI: How hard and fast are the budget categories? Between the Rental Assistance and the Stabilization Services?

Answer: There is some flexibility, as long as more of the money is going into housing than anything else.

Question from CBI: The piece about the employment- is job training being considered a success, if they got into an apprenticeship?

Answer: They are being trained in the trades out at the Lewis Prison, as well as computer skills, rental training, resume writing, etc. Assisting them into an apprenticeship program will be considered a success.

Question from ANL: Will this be following traditional rapid rehousing, with Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspection, following Fair Market Rents (FMRs)?

Answer: Basically rent reasonableness- so if they come out and they are employed and we know what they will be making an hour, what can they afford, which may be over

FMR. It will need to be inspected so we know it's decent and safe. We will add the HQS inspection to the NOFA.

Question from ANL: So what you are saying is the information being loaded into socialserve.com is the halfway houses that are on the ADC-approved list.

Answer: Yes.

Question from ANL: So number one is the clients who are going to halfway houses, and number two is the 10% of those who quickly get a job and are ready to move on to permanent housing, so 75% of the 10%?

Answer: Yes.

Question from CBI: Is bridge housing allowed?

Answer: If they only need short-term temporary housing while lease documents are being drawn up, they need to go to a less-structured halfway house for the short-term. We won't be doing formal bridge housing.

Question from CBI: So the letter of intent is emailed, how is the proposal itself sent?

Answer: Send the proposals through the portal- it's in the NOFA. It tells you how to label it as well.