

Meeting Minutes of the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Courts and Justice-Involved Populations Subcommittee February 14, 2023, Approved

Attendees:

Amber Blakenship, Stephanie Bond, Deb Harris, Sam Hess, Judge James Rowe, Ashley Shaw, Stephanie Thornton (co-chair)

Opening:

Stephanie Thornton (co-chair) provided welcome and opening remarks of this meeting of the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment, Courts and Justice-Involved Populations Subcommittee. The meeting was called to order at on Tuesday, February 14, 2023 and was conducted by Zoom conference. A quorum was present to approve January meeting minutes. Stephanie made the motion to approve the minutes and Judge Rowe seconded the motion. The purpose of this meeting was to review 2023 implementation planning and KPI outputs for the Courts Section of the State Plan.

Agenda Items:

Guest Speakers:

- Ashely Shaw (CORE)
 - CORE's focus is to build awareness among employers. They have developed a safe and healthy drug free workplace toolkit that sits on the WV Chamber of Commerce website for employers to utilize. Additionally, they are hosting employer webinar series.
 - She discussed soft skills (dependability, communication) as a barrier to re-entry of the workforce. CORE has developed online trainings to targeted to these skills to retain employment.
 - Ashley noted transportation in rural communities and an increased need for vision assistance as additional deficits.
- Deb Harris (Jobs & Hope)
 - Deb echoed Ashley in suggesting barrier as a strategy to re-entry to the workforce. She mentioned solutions provided by Jobs & Hope as MotivCare for

transportation to appointments, school, and work; bus passes; gas mileage reimbursement; car donation programs; Keys to Success Program for used cars.

- Additionally, they are developing a campaign to sign up to drive for MotivCare to decrease the gap in the driver workforce.
- Jobs & Hope provides dental and vision insurance for participants.
- Other barriers include background checks. There is a process for non-criminal offense expungement in partnership with a dedicated attorney from legal aide.
- Bills have entered the legal process to unify individuals who have gone through treatment for reunification with their children.
- A recovery friendly workplace initiative is in the works, using models from other states as examples, that include incentives to hire individuals in recovery.
- Deb noted housing as a recognized barrier that a strategy does not exist to meet the need.

2023 Implementation Planning and Review of KPI Outputs:

- Goal 2, Strategy 2: Stephanie noted that they should continue to partner with Jobs & Hope and the WV Chamber of Commerce to advance KPIs. Additionally, she noted looking at New Hampshire's recovery friendly workplace initiatives. Amber mentioned distributing flyers created by Jobs & Hope detailing wage reimbursements for employers at job fairs. Stephanie added that capitalizing on linking people through peer navigators on the onset of the re-entry process or to peer recovery coaches while in sober living, that could count towards Jobs & Hope.
- Goal: Making sure individuals leaving corrections have access to therapeutic programming or treatment appointments. Stephanie noted that in DOCR, Cheryl Chandler, heads the inmate's program and re-entry and may be useful as speaker at the meeting. Stephanie will reach out to invite Cheryl for the March meeting.

Additional Business:

- Judge Rowe noted it may be of use to hear from a representative at the Chamber of Commerce or Workforce to discuss employment. Amber noted she may have a contact from her speed hiring event and Stephanie will explore contacts at the Chamber.
- Amber mention H.B. 2471 was sent to the floor for a vote that will re-instate the suspended driver's license for unpaid fees and fines.

Adjournment:

All members will reach out to their respective contacts for March's subcommittee meeting. Stephanie closed the meeting by thanking all subcommittee members for their attendance and participation. Stephanie made the motion to adjourn the meeting and Amber seconded the motion. The subcommittee will meet again on Tuesday, March 14th at 10 am.