

Kings County Re-Entry Task Force



K C R T F

“Brooklyn will help you come home”



Meeting of November 19, 2014

Minutes

Meeting Date:	Wednesday, November 19, 2014	
Meeting Time:	1:00 PM – 2:30 PM	
Meeting Location:	Counseling Services – EDNY Conference Room 210 Joralemon Street, 3 rd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201	
Attendees:	<p>Christopher Owens (KCDA*-BYDRP) <i>- Mr. Owens has been designated as the District Attorney’s representative on the KCRTF</i></p> <p>Michelle Yon (NYSDOCCS**) <i>- Ms. Yon has been designated as the DOCCS representative on the KCRTF when Bureau Chief Joyce Joyner is unable to participate</i></p> <p>Margaret Chretien (NYSDCJS***) Dr. Vanda Seward (KCRTF) Norma Fernandes (KCRTF) Gregory Russell (KCRTF) Michael Davenport (KCDA-BYDRP) Hailey Nolasco (KCDA-BYDRP) Sharon Richards (KCDA-GRASP) Cynthia Aker (KCDA-HR)</p>	<p>Wendy Hersh (Acces-VR) Michele Nelson (CSEDNY) Charles Bryant (DOE FUND) William Glenn (DOE FUND) Naatiffah Costello (HELP-PSI)</p> <p><i>Guests:</i> Larry Menzie (NYCC/QCC) Patricia Brown (NYCDOH) Balmain Rosegreen (NYSOMH)</p>
	<p><i>* KCDA – Kings County District Attorney’s office</i> <i>** NYSDOCCS – New York State Department of Parole and Community Supervision</i> <i>*** NYSDCJS – New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services</i></p>	
Co-Chairs:	<p>Christopher Owens, Director, Bureau of Youth Diversion & Re-Entry Programs, KCDA Michelle Yon, Assistant Parole Services Program Specialist, NYSDOCCS</p>	

ITEM #	ITEM	DESCRIPTION AND ACTION ITEMS
1	Call to order	The meeting was called to order by Mr. Christopher Owens at 1:00 pm.
2	Opening Remarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Michelle Yon started off the meeting by welcoming all meeting participants and having them each introduce themselves. This is Dr. Vanda Seward’s first meeting serving as Coordinator of KCRTF. This is also Ms. Sharon Richard’s last meeting as she will be leaving the KCDA to begin working for Hunter College School of Social Work. Ms. Carrie Cohen will be representing GRASP going forward.

3	Presentation of Minutes: September 24 Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Owens presented the minutes from the September 24, 214 meeting and asked if there were any concerns or modifications. The Minutes were approved by acclamation.
4	Introductions	Meeting participants introduced themselves.
5	Coordinator's Report	<p><i>SUMMARY OF PRESENTATION:</i></p> <p>Dr. Seward updated meeting participants on various nuances that were discussed at the September 24, 2014 meeting.</p> <p><i>New Referral Process</i></p> <p>Most recently Dr. Seward, Mr. Owens, and Ms. Yon had the opportunity to meet with the Regional Director of the Brooklyn Parole Office (Ms. Mary Smith) to discuss new referral processes. They have fine-tuned the process; the KCRTF will soon begin receiving referrals approximately 120 days before an individual's release date. During the 120 days, the KCRTF will be able to review the packet of information that will be provided by DOCCS, which will include the following: the individual's needs, risk score, and any conditions the Parole Board and Parole Officer have set for the individual. Through this, the KCRTF will be better able to serve the individual – connecting her or him to the right services more efficiently.</p> <p><i>Community Resource Bank</i></p> <p>Dr. Seward also discussed the importance of a Community Resource Bank. It is essential to the Task Force to have a Community Resource Bank that is "offender friendly." The KCRTF population is different from ComALERT in the sense that the KCRTF serves <u>all</u> formerly incarcerated persons (sex offenders, arsonists, mentally ill, et, al.) without any exclusion. Due to this, it is important for the resources utilized by the KCRTF be willing to provide the necessary tools to help reintegrate former offenders back into society.</p> <p>Dr. Seward encouraged meeting participants to connect the KCRTF to resources they feel fit in with our mission. She is willing to visit agencies that are in line with the work of the KCRTF and offer free training to those who are willing to work with the population but are not familiar with it. Once new resources are received, the KCRTF will confirm that these organizations are permissible and not "blacklisted" by NYSDOCCS.</p> <p><i>Task Force Participation Proposal</i></p> <p>Furthermore, Dr. Seward proceeded to discuss a Task Force Participation Proposal. The KCRTF is looking into creating Membership, Public Education, and Community Advisory Committees. The membership group will work to bring information from the streets into the agency. The Public Education Committee will work to increase outreach and help the public's perspective regarding formerly incarcerated individuals. The needs of our population are capricious and there is always new information on best practices in servicing formerly incarcerated persons. For this reason, a group of experts is needed to serve as an Advisory Committee to keep the KCRTF current.</p> <p><i>Sex Offender Training</i></p> <p>The KCRTF has been approved to host training on how to engage with sex offenders. This training will take place in January and will target KCDA staff, vendors, and substance abuse staff.</p> <p><i>Internet Presence</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The internet is the key to increased interaction between Brooklyn residents and the KCRTF. Mr. Owens met with Mr. William Power of KCDA regarding the creation of a KCRTF website and was given the green light to proceed. The website will have its own URL and will be linked to the DA's website. The KCRTF is planning on launching the website in 2015, somewhere towards the end of the first quarter. Dr. Seward has asked for one-pagers from organizations who would like to work with us so that reference information can be compiled for the website.

		<p>Re-entry Job Summit</p> <p>Margaret Chretien from the Division of Criminal Justice Services is currently working to create a Re-entry Job Summit. As of this date, the summit is in draft proposal stage. The idea is that NYSDCJS will bring all of the County Re-entry Task Force programs in the “downstate area” together with job developers and potential employers (Bronx, Kings, Nassau, Orange, New York, Suffolk, Westchester). Ms. Chretien will be creating a roster of faculty presenters to speak about what they do. The summit’s goal is to bring re-entry services and coordination to a more proactive level. Friday, February 6, 2015 is the tentative date.</p>
6	Report on Fiscal Year 2014-2015 Year to Date	<p>Michael Davenport presented statistics and analysis for the current Fiscal Year (FY2015), through October 31st.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intakes. The KCRTF has reached 109 client intakes out of our goal of 250 for this Fiscal Year. • Retention. The KCRTF has 97 clients who have hit the 45-day threshold and there have been 91 clients who have hit the 90-day threshold. • Discharges. The KCRTF has 91 clients who were successfully discharged per CRTF criteria, and 12 who were classified as “other.” This is a big shift from the last fiscal year. • Mr. Davenport stated “our reorganization has made a significant difference in our engagement with our clients.” Successful discharges are defined under DCJS as clients who have been discharged after being engaged with the KCRTF for 90 days. An unsuccessful discharge means that a client was not engaged with KCRTF for 90 days due to a variety of reasons (client has moved, was re-arrested, <i>et al.</i>) So called “voluntary discharges” have, therefore, drastically declined.
7	Feedback	<p>Reports/concerns from task force partners and/or service providers</p> <p>Charles Bryant (DOE FUND) handed out flyers and referral forms for his organization and voiced his concerns about employing sex offenders. He stated that there are real public safety concerns when allowing sex offenders to work closely with the public.</p>
8	Guest Presentations	<p>Ms. Patricia Brown, LCSW-R, Executive Director, Community & Behavioral Health Initiatives Correctional Health Services, NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene</p> <p>Ms. Brown stated that there are full correction services on Rikers Island. Medical care, mental health care, substance abuse programs, and discharge planning programs are offered on Rikers Island. They currently contract with <i>Horizon Health Services</i> to provide medical and mental health care services. The discharge-planning program is administered by NYCDOHMH staff and not by their vendor. <i>A Road Not Taken</i> is the substance abuse program on Rikers Island. They work very closely with the courts for diversion for individuals with substance abuse issues.</p> <p>As a result of the <i>Brad H. Lawsuit</i>, The City is required to provide discharge-planning services for the mentally ill. NYCDOHMH has approximately 70 staff members who connect individuals with proper after care services. The staff work with individuals – while incarcerated – to obtain their entitlements such as public assistance and residential treatment. NYCDOHMH makes sure that persons receive 30 days of medication at the time of their release.</p> <p>The <i>Bowery Residence Committee</i> works with NYCDOHMH to provide services to persons released early from Rikers that have not received discharge-planning services to provide them with proper assistance.</p> <p>Mr. Larry Menzie, LCSW, Director, New York Counseling for Change/ Queens Counseling for Change</p> <p>Mr. Menzie is a current social worker and former parole officer. He works with sex offenders to prevent sexual violence. Mr. Menzie also sits on the Executive Board for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers and works closely with problem solving courts in Queens. His work is primarily concerned with preventing the occurrence of sexual abuse.</p> <p>Mr. Menzie stated that sex offenders are a misunderstood population. The re-offense rate of sex offenders is lower than other offenses. They are the second least likely to re-offend after murderers, who are the lowest to re-offend. As professionals, he states that it’s important to educate the community on how to be safe and prevent sexual abuse.</p>

		<p>The sex offender registry is not very helpful in keeping us safe because, since most offenses involve people who know each other – including family members -- “we are missing 90% of the people we need to be aware of ... we need to keep our families safe”.</p> <p>Most sex offenders are not sex offenders at the time of their offense. For this reason it is important to concentrate of prevention methods. There are currently approximately 16,000 registered sex offenders in New York State.</p> <p>His organization works to help overwhelmed families such as single parent homes with obtaining safe childcare in efforts to avoid them putting their children in potentially harmful situations with a friend or family member. 86% of sexual abuse cases have been by performed by family members or people close to the family.</p> <p>Sex offenders need structure and programs to keep them off of the street. Mr. Menzie stated that it is difficult to find programs (i.e., drug treatment) that will accept sex offenders because many programs will not accept them - mostly due to being uncomfortable with the sex offender population. <i>Queens Counseling for Change</i> is using the “Good Life Model” that is based on the notion that all persons have goals to better themselves and assess the dynamic risk factors that lead to sexual abuse behavior. They work on cognitive issues, strengthening families, and creating plans that help clients realize when they are more at risk of engaging negative behavior.</p> <p><i>Mr. Balmain Rosegreen, Director, NYS Office of Mental Health Forensic Case Management</i></p> <p>The NYS Office of Mental Health (NYSOMH) is committed to providing linkage for clients who are incarcerated in New York State’s prison system. The program is operated by the South Beach Psychiatric Center. NYSOMH has a strong connection with the field office in Manhattan and with the forensic center in Albany. The primary goal and function of this program is to provide a bridge for clients who are about to be released from incarceration.</p> <p>NYSOMH offers an array of mental health services; the center of their program is located in Sing Sing and is called the CORE program. CORE is a traditional day treatment program for inmates dealing with mental health issues. 90 days prior to their release, clients are identified by NYSOMH units across the state to participate in the CORE day program. Upon their release, clients are provided with a referral package that will link them to outside programs to provide them with necessary services.</p> <p>They are currently dealing with administrative changes due to the merger between Parole and DOCCS. NYSOMH worked as the liaison between Parole and DOCCS, however due to this merger NYSOMH is now realigning their methods.</p>
9	Old Business	There was no old business to report.
10	New Business	<p>Dr. Seward introduced the idea of KCRTF participating in VDAY, which is a group concentrating on violence against women, and the WBLS Major Urban Coat Drive.</p> <p>The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 21, 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm. The location was not finalized.</p>
11	Adjournment	The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 pm.