

Westside ROSC Council

Lead Agency: Chicago Recovering Communities Coalition

Friday, June 27th, 2025

10am – 12pm

[Zoom Meeting Information](#)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/695761637?pwd=eVVOUzJlN3VUcXl6WFJzSnVNOVJXdz09>

Meeting ID: 695 761 637 | Password: 038839

Meeting Minutes

Welcome Extended by; Ed Boone: Expressed appreciation for members present, and continued support, also mentioned that ROSC will offer CEU's.

Participant Introductions: Kimberly Haywood, Brighter Behavior Choices; Earl A. Wallace, TASC; Freida Thomas, The Coaching Center; Inga Totty, Individual; Mary Dowling, West Side Heroin Task Force; Charlotte A. Estell, Kalimba Foundation; Tanya Johnson, BEWC; Angelina Sanchez, Brighter, Behavior Choices Inc; Nicole Moreno, NDARS/A Way Out; Nicholas Kanehl, Cook County Sheriff's Office (Ready for Recovery); Myleka Hohnson, TASC; Kenneth Bell, Statewide ROSC; Michael Ferguson, Family Guidance Center; Christina Banda, Illinois Family Resource Center; Toniesha Roberts, Trilogy Behavioral Health; Marty Cook, Individual; Linda Sharp, Individual; Debra Beckmann, Statewide ROSC Team; Gail Richardson, West Side Task Force; Ruthie Williams, Faith Way Men's Independent; Matthew McFarland, TASC; CB Johnson, CDFW; Michelle Leopold, Gateway Foundation; Charles Brown, West Side Heroin/Opioid Task Force; Benneth Lee, N.A.E.F.I.; Sandy R. Mays, Individual; Arbutus 'Beauty' Winfrey, West Side Task Force; Richard Wilkens, CDFW; Dora Dantzler-Wright, CRCC; Chris Leavy, CRCC; Tom Johnson, CRCC; Venessa Moreno, CRCC; Candyce Banford, CRCC; Angel Crower, CRCC; Daijuan Soloman, C4Counseling Center; John Hardin, CRCC; John Wright, CRCC; Fanya Burford-Berry, West Side Task Force; Edward Boone, West Side ROSC; Yulanda A. Thomas, CRCC; Patrica T. Johnson, Chicago Department of Health; Kim Hill-Bey, CRCC;

Our council is made up of members including Hospitals, Treatment Centers, Mental Health Facilities, First Responders, Recovery Programs, Schools, Local Government, Employment Agencies, and importantly persons with lived experience.

Goals and Objectives by; Ed Boone: Westside ROSC Councils overall goal is to advocate and assist with guiding and monitoring the development of an integrated system of recovery by creating a shared vision to improve availability of services by building a sustainable ROSC Council. Our objectives 1. To create communities of recovery that encourage and integrate resources for the recovering individual, families, and friends. 2. Develop supportive recovery communities that foster growth, respect and understanding of communication, those who have identified problems in the areas of substance use and mental health. 3. Implement effective that will allow for the inclusion of PLE's (persons with lived experience) voices to be heard:

Summary:

ROSC Council Monthly meeting Overview

The monthly ROSC (Recovery Oriented Systems of Care) meeting was held as a hybrid event, with both in-person and online participants. Venessa welcomed attendees and requested that participants provide their names, organization, phone number, and email in the chat for attendance tracking and follow-up. The meeting featured a panel of speakers, with Ed Boone set to moderate, and the agenda included highlighting the panelists and discussing the ROSC objectives



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Supporting a Diverse Chicago West Side Community

ROSC Council's Integrated Recovery System

The meeting focused on the ROSC Council's goals and objectives, particularly advocating for the development of an integrated system of recovery. The council aims to create communities of recovery, develop supportive recovery communities, and implement effective communication. The panelists shared their experiences and their roles in providing support to individuals and families in the area of recovery, and reentry.

Topic Discussion: Successful Men in Recovery & Reentry

ROSC Council Speakers: John Wright / Chicago Recovering Communities Coalition (CRCC); CB Johnson / Campaign for a Drug Free West Side; Matthew McFarland / Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities; Benny Lee / National Alliance for the Empowerment of the Formerly Incarcerated; Dr. Charles Brown / West Side Heroin/Opioid Task Force

Recovery Panelist Introductions

The meeting focused on introducing panelists for a discussion on recovery and reentry, highlighting their backgrounds and contributions to the field. ROSC provided brief introductions for each panelist, including John Wright, C.B. Johnson, Dr. Charles Brown, Benjamin Lee, and Matthew McFarland, emphasizing their expertise and commitment to recovery and community support. Ed noted the lack of support from local businesses like Subway in providing donations for the event, but praised a local Black-owned restaurant, M & S Cafe, for its contribution. The meeting also touched on the importance of community involvement and support in addressing substance use and mental health issues.

Supporting Returning Citizens with Substance Abuse Issues

The panelists discussed their organizations' approaches to supporting returning citizens with substance abuse issues. Task Treatment Alternatives for Safety Communities (TASC) explained their comprehensive model of care, including deflection, specialized case management, and coordination across the criminal justice system. Another organization shared their mentorship and reentry coaching program, emphasizing the importance of community support and partnerships. The discussion highlighted the challenges faced by returning citizens and the need for a holistic approach to their reintegration into society.

Barriers to Men's Reentry Support

The panelists discussed the challenges men face when seeking housing, employment, and community support during reentry and recovery. They highlighted barriers such as lack of understanding, criminal background checks, limited income, difficulty asking for help, and the stigma associated with seeking assistance. The panelists emphasized the importance of collaboration between organizations and the need for a supportive community to help overcome these obstacles. They also stressed the value of sharing personal experiences and building trust to break down barriers and provide

Overcoming Barriers for Ex-Offenders

The discussion focused on the challenges faced by individuals with criminal records, particularly in obtaining licenses and employment. The speaker shared personal experiences of overcoming these obstacles and highlighted the importance of changing perceptions and providing support. They also discussed the role of nonprofit organizations in offering opportunities to individuals in recovery and the need for more leaders with similar backgrounds to better understand and address these issues.

Challenges of Older Black Men

The meeting focused on the challenges faced by older Black men, particularly those over 45, who are suffering from overdoses and related issues. Participants discussed the reasons behind this trend, including depression, lack of preparation for retirement, and the impact of the criminal justice system. The group also explored solutions, such as improving communication between organizations, creating safe spaces for men to seek help, and addressing the stigma associated with seeking mental health support. They emphasized the importance of self-esteem, community support, and redefining what it means to be a man in today's society.



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Supporting Recovery Through Community Advocacy

The meeting focused on supporting men in recovery and reentry through community involvement and policy advocacy. Panelists discussed the importance of raising community awareness, improving advertising for recovery services, and collaborating with local businesses and organizations. They emphasized the need for a continuum of care that addresses various needs of individuals in recovery, such as housing, social security, and treatment. The panelists also highlighted the role of policy advocacy in securing resources and support for recovery programs.

Generational Engagement and Community Events

The meeting focused on the importance of bridging generational gaps and fostering face-to-face interactions, with a call for younger participants to engage in community efforts. Announcements included a job fair, an open house at COIT on Madison and Laramie, and an upcoming International Overdose Awareness Day on August 29th. The group discussed an event on July 3rd at the Austin Town Hall, inviting organizations to set up tables and participate in panels. The conversation ended with plans for Narcan training and expressions of gratitude to attendees for their participation.

Next Steps

- ROSC Council: Improve communications and streamline efforts between organizations on the westside to make a greater impact on the community
- ROSC Council: Develop better marketing and outreach strategies to raise community awareness about available recovery and reentry services
- ROSC Council: Create more opportunities for face-to-face meetings to bridge generational gaps and improve communication between service providers
- ROSC Members: Participate in the International Overdose Awareness Day event on August 29th
- Community Organizations: Participate in the event at Austin Town Hall on July 3rd to set up tables, display services, and join panel discussions
- CRCC: Host upcoming job fair
- Community Members: Visit COIT's open house at their new facilities on Madison and Laramie
- Local Organizations: Collaborate with barbershops and beauty salons to provide discounted services to support individuals in recovery and reentry

Closing Remarks

Ed: Thanked the membership for sharing openly and respectfully and we will see everyone next month. Next Westside ROSC Council meeting will be hosted in person on July 25, 2025, at 10am, location TBA. The conversation ended with a reminder to fill out the attendance form for those who wanted to receive CEUs.

Please Join Us in Building a Sustainable Westside ROSC Council

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