

FY26 Strategic Plan
Far Southside ROSC Initiative (FSSRI)
Transforming Educating & Empowering Children and Humanity (TEECH)
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Mission

The mission of Far South Side ROSC Initiative (FSSRI) is to dispel fear and enhance the love of self and others through the Vehicle of education. It embraces the philosophy, “don’t look back you are not going that way” We believe recovery is comprised of countless pathways that contribute to a healthy quality of life for those who are seeking long-term recovery.

Vision

Our vision is to assist in building a healthy community of productive and positive individuals, who understand their purpose and gain the ability to exercise their power of choice through the recovery process.

Needs Assessment:

Community Demographics: The Far South Side ROSC service area includes 14 communities collectively representing a population of approximately 250,000 residents. West Englewood, Auburn Gresham, Beverly, Washington Heights, Morgan Park, Roseland (NE), Calumet Heights, Pullman, South Deering, Hegewisch, Evergreen Park, Oak Lawn, Robbins, and Dolton. These communities collectively represent a population deeply rooted in African American culture, intergenerational family networks, and long-standing community institutions.

Overdose Data from FSSRI Service Area: Several ZIP codes on Chicago’s Far South Side—including 60621 (Englewood), 60620 (Auburn Gresham/Chatham), 60628 (Roseland), 60617 (South Deering/Calumet Heights), 60472 (Robbins), and 60419 (Dolton)—are among the highest-burden areas, with annual overdose totals ranging from 460 to 1,188. In the first quarter of 2022, Roseland’s 95th Street CTA Terminal recorded 94 opioid-related EMS responses, while Englewood and West Englewood saw 149 EMS overdose responses. Data from Chicago’s South Side Opioid-Related Mapping and the CDPH Healthy Chicago 2023 report reveal clear overdose hotspots and concentrated risk across these neighborhoods, underscoring the urgent need for a coordinated public health response. Lower-reporting ZIP codes such as Beverly, Morgan Park, Evergreen Park, Oak Lawn, and Hegewisch likely underreport due to surveillance gaps, stigma, and limited healthcare access. Additional clusters near 111th and Wentworth, close to Roseland Hospital, highlight elevated risk in transit-accessible corridors, with hotspots concentrated along major transit hubs and commercial areas facing socioeconomic challenges.

Gaps Highlighted by the Council’s Community Survey Results: Community surveys have revealed significant gaps in behavioral health access, recovery housing, transportation, stigma reduction, and continuity of care for returning citizens—who face recidivism rates as high as 89% in Chicago, highlighting the urgent need for coordinated support. Insights from community meetings, focus groups and interviews emphasized

the limited availability of services on the Far Southside, making it even more challenging for returning citizens to access the help they need. Participants also spoke about the pervasive stigma surrounding substance use and incarceration, which is present not only among law enforcement but also within the broader community. Notably, one individual shared that, had they been aware of available recovery support services, they most likely would not have had repeated offenses.

Council Outreach and Communication Plans

Purpose:

To ensure transparent and inclusive engagement, FSSRI will utilize multiple communication channels: monthly newsletters (12 per year), weekly social posts (52 per year), monthly meetings (12 per year), and at least 3 press releases annually. These efforts are designed to keep coalition members, partners, and the broader community informed and involved in the initiative's progress

Objectives: Increase visibility of ROSC activities, improve trust, mobilize partners, reduce stigma, and improve access to recovery supports.

Target Audiences: The strategic plan is shared with a variety of key audiences to ensure transparency, collaboration, and community-centered implementation. Coalition members receive agendas, minutes, progress updates, data findings, and policy alerts through meetings, shared platforms, and email communications to maintain alignment across partners. Returning citizens are informed about programs, services, events, and policy changes through community partners, social media, flyers, text updates, and peer navigators so they can fully engage and provide feedback that shapes our work. Families of returning citizens receive resources, event information, and updates through newsletters, workshops, social media, and direct outreach to strengthen their role as a vital support system. Service providers are kept informed of referral pathways, best practices, program changes, and performance data through meetings, shared databases, and email updates to enhance coordination across the reentry ecosystem. Marginalized communities receive accessible summaries, resources, and opportunities for engagement through trusted messengers, outreach events, printed materials, and digital communication to ensure equity and inclusion. Stakeholders—including funders, policymakers, and institutional partners—are provided with strategic updates, evaluation results, impact metrics, and policy briefs through reports, presentations, and dashboards to strengthen accountability and long-term investment. The media receives press releases, announcements, data summaries, and event information through advisories, interviews, and digital communication to raise public awareness and shift narratives surrounding reentry. Collectively, these communication strategies allow each audience to receive the information they need in formats that support understanding, engagement, and shared responsibility for advancing the plan's goals.

Key Messages: Recovery is possible through many pathways; FSSRI is inclusive, peer and community-led, and centered on equity and dignity.

Communication Channels & Frequency: Monthly newsletters, weekly social posts, monthly meetings, press releases, and outreach.

Roles & Responsibilities: Communications Lead, Outreach Coordinator, Peer Leaders, Newsletter Editor, Data Team.

Evaluation & Feedback: Analytics, attendance tracking, quarterly reviews, surveys, and partner feedback.

Council Goals, Objectives, and Outcome Measures

Goal 1: FSSRI will develop a plan to integrate the re-entry population (50 returning citizens) into a recovery-oriented system of care by June 2026.

Objectives for Year 1:

- A. Far Southside ROSC Initiative will integrate a recovery-oriented re-entry systems for individuals returning from incarceration by improving access to recovery housing, employment, and family reunification services for at least 50 returning citizens.
- B. FSSRI will supply resources for housing placements, job training programs, and family reunification services for returning citizens, referencing at least 50 individuals for these opportunities.
- C. FSSRI will provide information packets and resources to expand person-centered re-entry approaches for at least 50 returning citizens and will engage 5 peer recovery coaches to support participants during re-entry.
- D. By enhancing collaboration with partner organizations, FSSRI will provide resource guides that will assist at least 50 individuals with access to employment and education opportunities, and increase support materials for mental health and recovery supports by at least 10 new resources, even in the face of funding limitation

Deadline/Timeframe: By March 30, 2026

Progress to Date (Year 1 months 1-6)

- A. Supported partnerships with 2 recovery housing providers and 1 transitional living program to increase referral options for returning citizens
- B. Finalized formal agreements (MOUs) with 2 key housing and employment partners.
- C. Connected an initial cohort of 15 returning citizens to employment-readiness workshops and job placement programs through resource sharing.
- D. Coordinated with 2 family reunification agencies and 1 restorative justice agency to streamline service access and support reconnection efforts.
- E. Supported recruitment and onboarding of 5 peer recovery coaches who formed a lived-experience advisory/alumni group with 8 members to guide program design.
- F. Established a foundational participant feedback loop using 1 survey and 1 focus group.
- G. Distributed 10 resource guides through community-based partners to increase access to employment, education, and behavioral health services.

Next Steps:

- A. Continue providing resources and assistance to ensure timely access to services for at least 50 returning citizens. On-going with target by June 30, 2026
- B. Expand outreach to at least 2 correctional facilities for warm hand-offs for individuals scheduled for release. By June 30, 2026
- C. Share information about and support the launch of 1 reunification workshop for returning citizens and their families. By April 30, 2026.

D. Continue efforts to reach the target of 50 individuals by providing resources and assistance. On-going with target by June 30, 2026.

E. Output measures: Tracking Methods

- Maintain referral logs to document at least 50 referrals employment, healthcare, and other services by June 30, 2026.
- Request and review quarterly partner reports to verify service access and outcomes for referred individuals.
- Track correctional facility agreements through two signed MOUs or letters confirming warm hand-off processes by June 30, 2026.
- Use workshop sign-in sheets to record attendance of at least 20 participants at the reunification workshop by April 30, 2026.
- Administer pre- and post-workshop surveys to measure at least 70% of participants reporting improved family communication and well-being by May 31, 2026.
- We'll coordinate at least two joint feedback meetings with correctional staff and community partners by June 30, 2026, working together to share resources, review progress, and strengthen our collaborative efforts.
- Partner agencies will report on satisfaction surveys collected from at least 75% of returning citizens and families by June 30, 2026, to help us understand how well resources are meeting community needs.

Goal 1 Year Three: FSSRI will implement a recovery-oriented system of care plan, focused on integrating needs of re-entry population, including establishing at least five focused partnerships, producing reports on number of follow up contacts annually, by June 2028.

Long Term Objectives and Outcome Measures for FY27/FY28

- A. Aim to facilitate access to recovery housing, behavioral health resources, and peer recovery coaching for up to 150 returning citizens. The initiative seeks to connect approximately 100 individuals to behavioral health resources and support as many as 150 returning citizens through peer recovery coaching. By June 30, 2028.
- B. Aim to strengthen coordination across five correctional facilities, twelve treatment providers, recovery organizations, and community partners by implementing standardized warm hand-off procedures. The initiative seeks to report at least thirty successful follow-up contacts after participant transitions by June 30, 2028.
- C. Support the recruitment and engagement of up to 20 peer recovery coaches. The initiative seeks to facilitate connections and provide resources to peer recovery coaches, with the goal of having 20 actively engaged. Efforts will also focus on supporting the implementation of at least 1 feedback survey and 2 focus groups per year to gather input and guide continuous improvement. By June 30, 2028., 2028.
- D. Collaborate with 10 law enforcement and community organizations to achieve at least 60 diversion referrals to treatment and recovery supports. Collaborate with 10 law enforcement and community organizations. The number of diversion

referrals made will be 60 or more. The number of public awareness and stigma-reduction materials released will be 15 or more. Completion date is June 30, 2028.

- E. Reach at least 200 residents through public forums, reunification workshops, and outreach events. The number of residents engaged through events and workshops will be 200 or more. The number of reunification workshops held will be 3 or more. The number of quarterly outcome summaries produced and shared will be 4 or more. Completion date is June 30, 2028.

Goal 2: To increase access for individuals transitioning services, FSSRI will develop a plan to establish Warm Hand-Offs Between Treatment & Recovery Organizations by June 2026.

Objectives for Year 1:

A: Far Southside ROSC Initiative will propose the continuity of care and coordination between treatment and recovery organizations by establishing consistent warm hand-off procedures across all partner agencies. The goal is for at least 5 partner organizations to adopt these procedures.

B: FSSRI will support collaborative practices through 2 cross-agency meetings and cultural competency trainings to strengthen relationships and trust among providers.

C: By offering shared information and exchange platforms, FSSRI will provide resources and assistance to partner agencies to strengthen coordination and engagement, aiming for at least 15 participants to experience successful follow-ups after transitions

Deadline/Timeframe: By June 30, 2026

Progress to Date (Year 1 - Months 1-6)

- A. Finalized a warm hand-off procedure template for all partner agencies, outlining step-by-step transition protocols to guide collaborative efforts and ensure consistent coordination across organizations.
- B. Provided resources to partner agencies to organize 2 early cross-agency meeting, facilitating collaboration, clarifying roles to build trust among 5 treatment and recovery providers.
- C. Provided resources for 2 introductory cultural competency discussions to prepare partner agencies for more structured training sessions.
- D. Supported real-time monitoring of warm hand-offs by collecting engagement information for 15 participants, tracking follow-up outcomes, and assisting partner agencies in identifying three key system-level gaps for improvement.
- E. Provided resources for follow-up for 15 initial transitions to create a baseline for tracking improvements toward future targets.

Next Steps

- A. Continue providing resources and assistance for structured referral pathways for at least 30 returning citizens. On-going with target by June 30, 2026
- B. Expand outreach to at least 2 correctional facilities. By June 30, 2026
- C. Share information about 1 reunification workshop. By April 30, 2026

- D. Continue coordination and engagement among partner agencies by providing resources and assistance through shared information and exchange platforms, with the objective of supporting at least 15 participants in achieving successful follow-ups after transitions. On-going with target by June 30, 2026

E. Output measures: Tracking Methods

- Keep a referral log to track at least 30 returning citizens connected to resources by June 30, 2026.
- Use sign-in sheets at returning citizen outreach activities to track the number of individuals engaged, aiming to reach at least 50 by June 30, 2026.
- Track the number of formal partnerships established, aiming for at least 2 new agreements each with correctional facilities, treatment providers, hospitals, recovery homes, and community organizations by June 30, 2026
- Use partner feedback to report at least 15 participants achieving successful transitions by June 30, 2026.

Goal 2 Year Three: FSSRI will facilitate and support the continued coordination of Warm Hand-Offs by increasing connections between Treatment & Recovery Organizations by 10 agencies by June 2028.

Long Term Objectives and Outcome Measures for FY27/FY28

- A. Aim to expand the adoption of standardized warm hand-off procedures to at least 10 partner agencies—including correctional facilities, treatment providers, and recovery organization. Outcome will be measured by the number of agencies implementing these procedures and the consistency of their use, as reported from partner feedback. By June 30, 2028
- B. Seek to facilitate at least 4 cross-agency meetings and cultural competency trainings to strengthen collaboration, adjust roles, and increase trust among providers. Progress will be tracked by meeting records, training attendance, and post-event evaluations. By June 30, 2028,
- C. Support the use of shared information and exchange platforms among all partner agencies, with the aim of achieving at least 60 successful follow-ups after participant transitions Outcome will be measured by partners who follow-up with participants and collect qualitative feedback. By June 30, 2028.

Goal 3: FSSRI will develop and launch a collaborative program with law enforcement, including three partnerships, to provide alternatives to arrest for individuals with substance use disorders and mental health issues by June 2026.

Objectives for Year 1:

A: FSSRI will aid in expanding diversion and recovery pathways by providing resources and strengthening partnerships with at least 3 law enforcement agencies through resource sharing and information dissemination.

B: FSSRI will increase mitigation overdose risk education by releasing at least 20 public awareness materials (e.g., social media posts, newsletters, flyers) to educate the community and law enforcement about recovery-centered diversion options.

B: Provide resources and support for at least 2 public forums and develop stigma-reduction materials to promote acceptance of diversion and recovery options throughout the community, aiming to reach at least 50 community members.

C: Deadline/Timeframe: By April 30, 2026

Progress to Date (Year 1 - Months 1-6))

- A. Initiated outreach to 5 law enforcement agencies.
- B. Held preliminary meetings with 4 police districts and 2 municipal departments.
- C. Developed 3 social media posts, 2 informational flyers, and 3 newsletter inserts.
- D. Provide resources and support for 1 public forum, reaching out to 10 community leaders, 5 behavioral health providers, and representatives from all 5 law enforcement agencies.

Next Steps

- A. Facilitate the formalization of collaboration agreements with at least 3 law enforcement agencies and support the development of one clear referral protocol that prioritizes treatment and recovery over arrest. By March 31, 2026.
- B. Support and coordinate opportunities for at least 25 law enforcement officers to participate in training on diversion options, crisis response strategies, mitigating overdose risk principles, and culturally responsive engagement with individuals experiencing mental health or substance use crises. By June 30, 2026.
- C. Assist in finalizing and distributing five stigma-reduction materials designed to encourage community support for diversion approaches, to be shared through partner organizations. By January 30, 2026.
- D. Support the establishment and monitoring of a system for at least 20 diversion referrals, follow-through, and outcomes in collaboration with law enforcement partners. By June 30, 2026.
- E. Assist with conducting a mid-year review to assess early progress, identify at least three key barriers, and refine engagement strategies to support ongoing implementation. By December 30, 2025.

F. Output measures: Tracking Methods

- Obtain at least 2 signed collaboration agreements and 1 referral protocol with law enforcement agencies by June 30, 2026.
- Use sign-in sheets at training sessions to document participation for at least 25 law enforcement officers in diversion, crisis response, and overdose risk training by June 30, 2026
- Website administrators will confirm the posting of each stigma-reduction material by adding a digital acknowledgment or comment to the distribution log by January 30, 2026.

- We will provide resources and work closely with law enforcement partners to support the logging of at least 20 diversion referrals and their outcomes by June 30, 2026. This
- Summarize findings from the mid-year review, identifying at least 3 key barriers and refined strategies by December 30, 2025.

Goal 3 Year Three: By June 30, 2028, FSSRI will collaborate with local law enforcement agencies to implement at least one formal alternative to arrest program, that provides alternatives for individuals with substance use disorders and mental health issues, with success measured by partnership agreements, and reports on program utilization by June 2028.

Long Term Objectives and Outcome Measures for FY27/FY28

- A. Aim to strengthen partnerships with at least eight law enforcement agencies and community organizations to expand diversion and recovery pathways. By June 30, 2028,
- B. Seek to support and coordinate the release of at least 30 public awareness and stigma-reduction materials (such as social media posts, newsletters, and flyers) and facilitate at least six public forums to educate the community and law enforcement about recovery-centered diversion options by June 30, 2028.
- C. Aim to facilitate opportunities for at least 60 law enforcement officers to participate in training on diversion options, crisis response strategies, mitigating overdose risk principles, and culturally responsive engagement by June 30, 2028.
- D. Support the establishment and monitoring of a system for at least 80 diversion referrals, follow-through, and outcomes in collaboration with law enforcement partners by June 30, 2028.
- E. Assist with conducting annual reviews to assess progress, identify key barriers, and refine engagement strategies to support ongoing implementation through June 30, 2028.