

# THREE CORDS STRONG ROSC ALLIANCE MEETING MINUTES

## TRANSITIONAL TRAINING SERVICES

**LOCATION:** 4455 S KING DRIVE SUITE 101-B

**DATE:** 01/29/2026

**Facilitator:** Francis Oklah

**CO-Facilitator:** Vawnshekia Oklah

**Speaker:** Carylon Howard

**TIME:** 09:30 AM – 11:45 AM

**ZOOM MEETING ID:** Hybrid- in person and on Zoom

### I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by **Francis Oklah**.

### II. Opening Statements

**Presented by Vawnshekia Oklah**

Vawnshekia Oklah welcomed ROSC members, partners, and visitors. She provided an overview of the purpose of the ROSC and emphasized the importance of community participation in building coordinated, recovery-oriented responses to substance use, mental health challenges, and justice involvement.

She outlined key ROSC priorities and upcoming milestones, including:

- Finalizing and presenting an adult deflection proposal to CPD District 003 leadership, in collaboration with TEECH leadership, outlining qualifying offenses, referral criteria, and partner roles by **March 31, 2026**.
- Co-developing and delivering deflection and destigmatization training for law enforcement officers, with a goal of reaching at least **25 officers by June 30, 2026**.
- Establishing a referral coordination process with Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities (TASC) and community partners to support adult deflection referrals by **April 30, 2026**.

- Piloting adult deflection referrals and beginning outcome tracking for diverted individuals by **June 30, 2026**.

### **III. Speaker Presentation**

#### **Carolyn Howard**

Carolyn Howard discussed strategies for advising clients, self-advocacy, and shared personal experiences and examples from past clients related to deflection and diversion.

She explained that **deflection** occurs prior to court involvement and allows law enforcement or first responders to connect individuals to services rather than arrest. Deflection relies on strong partnerships between police, treatment providers, peer recovery specialists, and community organizations and can prevent the initiation of a criminal record.

She also explained **diversion**, which occurs after charges are filed but before conviction. Diversion programs hold individuals accountable while allowing them to complete treatment, counseling, classes, or community service, with the possibility of reduced or dismissed charges upon successful completion.

Carolyn emphasized that many justice-involved cases are linked to untreated trauma, mental health challenges, and substance use disorders, and that coordinated responses across systems lead to improved outcomes and reduced repeat justice involvement.

### **IV. Question and Answer Session**

#### **Facilitated by Marjorie Howard**

Key points discussed included:

- Participation in deflection is typically voluntary.
- Diversion does not automatically dismiss charges; program completion is required.
- Police rely on community partnerships for referral pathways.
- Victim input may be considered in diversion cases.
- Deflection and diversion can address substance use, mental health, and homelessness.
- Peer recovery coaches play a critical role in engagement and system navigation.
- Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) supports officer readiness.
- Collaboration across systems is essential for success.
- ROSC networks help address service availability gaps.
- Community members can support efforts through stigma reduction, volunteering, and advocacy.

### **V. Order of Business**

#### **Presented by Francis Oklah**

**Mission:**

Three Cords Strong empowers individuals on their recovery journeys through personal growth, family support, and community resilience.

**Vision:**

A world where recovery is recognized as a lifelong journey supported by strong personal, family, and community connections.

**Strategic Goals:**

- Pilot an adult deflection pathway with CPD District 003 and TASC by **June 30, 2026**.
- Strengthen a recovery-friendly employment network for justice-impacted individuals by **June 30, 2026**.

**Updates:**

- Reviewed Illinois deflection-related statutes, including CESSA and SAFE-T Act provisions.
- Participated in an 11-week civilian police academy.
- Supported CPD District 003 strategic planning efforts.
- Began development of a formal adult deflection proposal.
- Engaged youth-serving partners to inform recovery-centered alternatives to arrest.

**VI. Community Partner Presentations**

- Robert Stewart – KCC Academy
- Angela Morgan – TCA
- Don Gordon- To Equip His People
- Florence Wright- SSHOTF

**VII. Action Items**

- Finalize and present the adult deflection proposal to CPD District 003 leadership by **Q2 FY26**.
- Co-develop deflection and destigmatization training with ROSC partners.
- Formalize referral coordination with TASC.
- Collaborate with TEECH Foundation on officer training focused on deflection, harm reduction, and recovery-informed engagement.
- Continue employer outreach emphasizing education, technical assistance, and stigma reduction.
- Encourage ROSC membership.

**VIII. Next Meeting**

**February 26th**

## **IX. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned by **Marjorie Howard**.

## **X. Attendance**

- **Donald Gordon**
- **Vawnshekia Oklah**
- **Francis Oklah**
- **Frankie Franco**
- **Stephanie Mitchell**
- **Hiram Maddox**
- **Keisha Stokes**
- **Kenneth Jordan**
- **Demetrius Pouncy Jr**
- **Angela Morgan**
- **Robert Stewart**
- **Jariya Batiest**
- **Azeez Muhammand**
- **Sara Williams**
- **Sharon Batiest**
- **Marquelah Bell**
- **Carolyn Howard**
- **Norberto Brown**
- **Johanna Gonzalez**
- **Ken Bell**
- **Darrel Pascal**
- **Carolyn Howard**
- **Florence Wright**
- **Araina Mickens**
- **Stanley Howard**
- **Ms. Haywood**
- **Ghazi Muhammad**
- **James Mitchell**
- **Marquelah Bell**
- **Zamaria Howard**
- **Marjorie Howard**
- **Carhe Robinson**
- **Jarvis Duncan**
- **Yessika Hernandez**
- **Terrance Mosely**
- **Sondra Muhammad**