



## **Cincinnati [Support and Outreach](#)**

[The Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence \(CIRV\)](#) has teamed up with the [Hamilton County Office of Reentry](#) as the lead agency for support and outreach. Hamilton County Office of Reentry offers workforce and business development, family and community support, community awareness training, and basic needs.

The following are examples of how Cincinnati is working towards meeting a wide range of needs that are in line with the NNSC's support and outreach model:

### **Affirmative Outreach**

The Cincinnati team has created a handout to be distributed at the call-in which asks the following questions: Do you have child support issues? Is your license currently suspended? Do you have any outstanding warrants? Do you have health insurance? Do you have anything on your record that needs to be expunged? Are you currently employed? If no, are you interested in employment? The Cincinnati team has found that the call-in attendees are much more likely to provide accurate contact information because of the specific and supportive nature of the questions on the form. Knowing someone could contact them to help with expunging something from a criminal record, or to assist with child support, is motivating.

Those who call to receive support services are assisted by "OG" mentors. These mentors are former group members from the community who gave up a life on the streets and are trying to make a positive impact in the community. They have started support groups that occur every Thursday and are held in a local church. Word has gotten out about these groups, and others have started asking where and when the groups are held.

### **Providing the "Big Small Stuff"**

CIRV fostered relationships with local and state offices to help meet the immediate needs of their clients. One example is the Hamilton County Reentry Office, which works directly with the DMV to establish a payment plan with the group members that allows for their license to remain valid as long as they continue to pay. Furthermore, the group members are immediately enrolled in Affordable Healthcare upon intake. The local jails also enroll inmates in healthcare upon intake.

Hamilton County's Re-entry Office has developed a program which offers offenders the chance to have their tattoos removed in order to erase these most obvious marks of prison stigma. Relying on volunteer doctors instead of tax dollars, this program will tear down one of the biggest barriers confronting men and women trying to live down their past. This is an excellent example of the sort of service that is very much needed for a successful transition, but often overlooked.

### **Protection from Risk**

Cincinnati saw the need to relocate witnesses/group members in danger to other towns to keep them safe. Initially, homicide detectives were putting witnesses in hotels in Cincinnati, but the witness protection funding for that ultimately ran out. The GVI support and outreach team established a relationship with the Salvation Army in a couple neighboring towns and is now able to relocate people as needed. The partners at Salvation Army understand the risk these

individuals are facing and are ready to continue providing support and resources to group members who are being relocated.

**Addressing Trauma**

During intake, the CIRV team assesses whether or not the group members are experiencing PTSD. They have partnership with Salvation Army, Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health and Court Clinic where they can send clients in need of trauma treatment.