

## AGENDA ITEM REQUEST

Community Corrections Partnership Executive Committee (CCPEC)

*Note: This agenda item request is due at least six (6) weeks prior to CCPEC meeting.*

*Email requests to [ProbationCommunityPrograms@acgov.org](mailto:ProbationCommunityPrograms@acgov.org).*

TO: Community Corrections Partnership Executive Committee (CCPEC)  
c/o Alameda County Probation Department  
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FROM: **Name:** Xavier Johnson  
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This agenda item is being submitted for consideration by the Community Corrections Partnership Executive Committee (CCPEC) at their meeting on November 21st, 2022.

**Title/Subject/Description:** Re-entry Housing Policy Scholars Program: Trainings for Formerly Incarcerated Individuals in Community-Based Participatory Public Policy Design and Implementation

**Background Information:** Just Cities Institute is requesting funding support from Alameda County Probation to engage formerly incarcerated residents through a **Re-entry Housing Policy Scholars Program (“Scholars Program”)** including members of the AB109 population. Specifically this Program will involve 1) training in community-based participatory public policy design; 2) policy leadership development skills building and training; and 3) engagement in the implementation of a Re-entry Housing Plan for Alameda County so that formerly incarcerated residents who are part of the AB109 realignment population are actively involved. The Scholars Program will leverage existing partnerships in the Re-entry Housing Plan including Alameda County leading re-entry justice groups, All of Us or None, Asian Prisoners Support Committee, Building Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency (BOSS), and Communities United for Restorative Youth Justice (CURYJ). This program builds upon a prior grant that Just Cities Institute received from the State of California Health Equity Division to begin the process of defining a re-entry housing plan for the County of Alameda. We conducted a community needs assessment and policy research to define the key areas of re-entry housing needs in Alameda County. Past activities have included affinity group focus groups and interviews with formerly incarcerated people, meetings with an advisory group of formerly incarcerated residents, stakeholder interviews with organizations led by formerly incarcerated people, and policy and budget research to map the landscape of reentry housing support available in Alameda County. Through these efforts, we have identified key areas of policy priorities and are now seeking additional support to deepen the involvement of AB 109 realignment populations in Alameda County’s consideration and implementation of these policy proposals.

**Fiscal Impact\***, if any:

**Recommended action to be taken:** Support the funding request.

*\*When requesting funding, please answer the questions in either Section 1 or 2 below. If requesting funding for a new program idea, answer the questions in Section 1. If requesting funding for a program with an existing AB 109-funded contract, answer the questions in section 2.*

**Signature:** Xavier Johnson

**Print Name and Title:** Xavier Johnson, Director of Policy Justice, Just Cities Institute

## **Section 1: Requesting Funding for a New Idea**

### **Addressed in the Logic Model**

*A logic model from the Programs and Services Workgroup may be attached in lieu of answering the following questions:*

- What part of the AB 109 population do you propose to serve? (For example: unhoused individuals, clients disengaged from Probation services etc.)
- Which client needs are being addressed? (For example: housing, employment, substance abuse etc.)
- What are the objectives and benchmarks for success of the proposed program/activity?
- What are the resources and activities required by an organization to make the program successful? (For example: staffing, development of workshops etc.)
- How will Probation Officers inform clients about the program/activity?
- If referrals don't come from Probation, how will clients be informed of the program/activity?

Building upon the outcomes of a previous project funded by the State Health Equity Division, the Scholars Program is a component of the Re-entry Housing Plan that serves formerly incarcerated individuals in Alameda County who are unhoused, at risk of losing their access to housing, tenuously housed in short-term situations, and living in transitional reentry housing with limited access to permanent housing solutions. The Scholars Program will provide training around public policy design and leadership skill-building among formerly incarcerated individuals to support their participation in the Re-entry Housing Plan that will address policy solutions to safe, affordable, and sustainable housing for Alameda County's re-entry population.

This program includes the following objectives: 1) training in community-based participatory public policy design; 2) policy leadership development skills building and training; and 3) engagement in the design and implementation of a Re-entry Housing Plan for Alameda County so that formerly incarcerated residents who are part of the AB 109 realignment population are involved. To accomplish these objectives, Just Cities will work collaboratively with formerly incarcerated individuals, organizations that provide services to formerly incarcerated individuals and are led by formerly incarcerated individuals to set the targets of the policy goals. To date, the Re-entry Housing Plan has identified general themes of what the needs are in the community and work is ongoing to refine these themes into specific targets for investment by Alameda County, including programs like the Scholars Program to improve access to housing for formerly incarcerated folks. Just Cities will track progress towards our objectives with benchmarks based on the number and quality of experience of formerly incarcerated individuals who have undergone training in community-based participatory public policy design, the

number and quality of experience of formerly incarcerated individuals who completed policy leadership development trainings, and number and quality of experience of formerly incarcerated individuals actively engaged in the Re-entry Housing Plan activities.

The resources and activities needed to make the Scholars Program successful are 1) funding for Scholars Program participant stipends, staff at core partner organizations implementing Re-entry Housing Plan activities including mentoring and trainings for the Scholars Program, and Just Cities Institute staff providing training and programming support; 2) marketing and outreach materials for participants engaged through the Community Advisory Board (CAB) and Probation Department Officers; and 3) design and dissemination of program evaluation tools including pre and post-training surveys to participants. Target clients will hear about the Scholars Program through CAB members, which consists of formerly incarcerated individuals, and the Alameda County Probation Department via Probation Officers during client engagement opportunities.

### **Background Research**

- Is the initiative evidence-based or a promising new idea?
- If this is an evidence-based program, what does the research say about it?
- If there is existing research, was the research done on a population similar to the population the program anticipates serving?
- Is Probation funding any similar activities?
- If Probation is funding similar activities, what is unique about this program/activity, why is it necessary?
- Lived experience can often provide a layer of knowledge often not captured by traditional research methods. Please provide any anecdotal knowledge based upon lived experiences that contributes to or strengthens your proposed program/activity.

The Re-entry Housing Plan which includes the Scholars Program is evidence-based and is supported by research regarding key challenges faced by formerly incarcerated folks as they try to obtain and retain housing after incarceration. According to the Alameda County Probation Department, about 8,442 individuals were on probation in 2020.<sup>1</sup> In the same year, about 1,500 parolees lived in Alameda County.<sup>2</sup> There is a well-documented, critical need among the reentry population for affordable, long-term housing: formerly incarcerated individuals are 10 times more likely to experience homelessness.<sup>3</sup> This is particularly true for formerly incarcerated folks living in Alameda County, where the cost of living is a significant financial burden.

Since Spring 2022, Just Cities has worked with its partners to identify the needs of the re-entry population and devise an inclusive Re-entry Housing Plan. Based on participatory action research and engagement with our community scholars, we have identified the following strategies: 1) improve conditions in transitional housing; 2) invest sufficient public funding for transformative services for reentry housing success, including wraparound services, housing assistance, and behavioral health supports; 3) prioritize housing for reentry population in affordable housing funding opportunities; and 4) enact and implement the fair chance housing access across Alameda County. These strategies were born from the lived experiences of the target population as well as

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<sup>1</sup> Still, Wendy, "Achieving 21st Century Transformation: July 2016 - June 2021," Alameda county Probation Department, 2021, <https://online.fliphtml5.com/tanfs/rbsk/>.

<sup>2</sup> Alameda County, "Community Corrections Partnership Plan, Fiscal Year 2020-2021", Alameda County Probation, 2021, <https://www.acgov.org/probation/documents/CCPPlan-FINAL.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Couloute, Lucius, "Nowhere to Go: Homelessness among formerly incarcerated people," Prison Policy Initiative, August 2018, <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/housing.html>.

evidence-based policy solutions. Randomized controlled trials have shown that mentoring<sup>4</sup>, access to housing<sup>5</sup>, case management to provide access to social services and healthcare<sup>6</sup>, and employment training<sup>7</sup> have significant impact in reducing recidivism and additional involvement in the justice system among the re-entry population. A participant in the needs-assessment survey conducted by UC Berkeley Students pointed out that housing provides the stability needed to achieve all other goals in reentry: “People should have a place to go right away where they aren’t expected to pay...It’s about stability. Without Stability, it’s impossible to do anything.”<sup>8</sup> On the need for employment training, another participant explained: “We need to be set up with financial and entrepreneurship opportunities. Not necessarily have it given to us, but we know what it is to work hard and be dedicated.”<sup>9</sup> The AC Probation Department has already implemented evidence-based policies, such as providing access to vital documents, and mainstreaming access to mental health services and has witnessed an increase in completion of probation terms and a decrease in individuals returning to prison and jail.<sup>10</sup>

As we continue making progress with the Re-entry Housing Plan, we at Just Cities recognize the need for more effective participatory action honed through skill-building and leadership development, and better centering the lived experiences of impacted communities in implementing this Plan. The Scholars Program reflects this recognition, which aligns with Just Cities’ vision and theory of change based upon transformative justice principles that center the leadership of impacted people in planning and policy design. Scholars Program participants are closest to the issues affecting formerly incarcerated individuals, and therefore have the most expertise to provide effective solutions. Similar to the Community Advisory Board, which was formed as part of AB 109 realignment, the Scholars Programs will involve individuals impacted by AB 109 in guiding public policy planning.

AB 109 has funded similar programs in 2021 that support a range of support services including career technical education, employment, family reunification, and more. The Scholars Program is unique because it focuses on developing lifelong skills including understanding of policy design and implementation, community based participatory research, and leadership for one’s community to address the structural roots of re-entry housing barriers. Furthermore, all policy priorities in our Re-entry Housing Plan were identified by formerly incarcerated residents, including many of whom are in the AB 109 population.

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<sup>4</sup> Sells, Dave, Curtis, Anderson, Abdur-Raheem, Jehan, Klimczak, Michele, Barber, Charles, Meaden, Cathleen, Hasson, Jacob, Fallon, Patrick, and Emigh-Guy, Medirith, “Peer-Mentored Community Reentry Reduces Recidivism,” *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 2020, Vol. 47, No. 4, April 2020, 437–456.

<sup>5</sup> Fontaine, Jocelyn, Gilchrist-Schott, Douglas, Roman, John, Taxy, Samuel, and Roman, Caterina, “Supportive Housing for Returning Prisoners: Outcomes and Impacts of the Returning Home-Ohio Pilot Project”

<sup>6</sup> Burns, Marguerite, Cook, Steven, Brown, Lars, Dague, Laura, Tyska, Steve, Hernandez Romero, Karla, McNamara, Cici, Westergaard, Ryan, “Association Between Assistance With Medicaid Enrollment and Use of Health Care After Incarceration Among Adults With a History of Substance Use,” *JAMA Network Open*. 2022;5(1):e2142688. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2021.42688.

<sup>7</sup> Price-Tucker, Adiah, Zhou, Amy, Charroux, Andrew, Tenzin, Choetsow, Robertson, Emma, Abdalla, Hoda, Gu, Jeffrey, Barton, Jordan, Keselj, Maria, Bernstein, Owen, Alexis, Paul, Odayappan, Sethu, Escalante, Tabitha, “SUCCESSFUL REENTRY: A COMMUNITY-LEVEL ANALYSIS,” The Harvard University Institute of Politics Criminal Justice Policy Group, December 2019, [https://iop.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/sources/program/IOP\\_Policy\\_Program\\_2019\\_Reentry\\_Policy.pdf](https://iop.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/sources/program/IOP_Policy_Program_2019_Reentry_Policy.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> Bush, Jayden, Cho, Agnes, Jacobson, Emily, Laureano, Angela, Smith, Talia, “Restoring Human and Housing Rights and Dignity to Survivors of Mass Incarceration in Alameda County: A Needs Assessment for Just Cities,” Just Cities, May 2022, p.17.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p. 19.

<sup>10</sup> Still, Wendy, “Achieving 21st Century Transformation: July 2016 - June 2021,” *Alameda county Probation Department*, 2021, <https://online.fliphtml5.com/tanfs/rbsk/#p=1>, p. 54

**Fiscal Impact**

- What is the total proposed budget for this program/activity?

The total proposed budget for the Re-entry Housing Plan, which includes the Scholars Program, is \$533,897 over two years. We are requesting \$400,000 over two years from Alameda County Probation to support the Re-entry Housing Policy Scholars Program, which includes stipends for formerly incarcerated residents, including Alameda County’s AB109 realignment population, training and mentoring support from re-entry justice organizations, program evaluation, and overall program operations.

Signature: Xavier Johnson

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