



# Connecting Systems to Expand Housing Opportunities

Presentation to North Carolina Joint Reentry Council

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# Agenda

1. **Context:** Reentry 2030 Strategic Plan and Focus on Housing
2. **Zero Returns to Homelessness (ZRH):** A National Strategy to Support the Work
3. **Housing System Assessment:** Goals, Approach, and Timeline
4. **Next Steps and Discussion**



Photo: Courtesy of CSG Justice Center staff, 2024

# Reentry 2030 in NC

- Whole of government strategy to improve reentry success for formerly incarcerated people
- Focus areas:
  - Economic mobility
  - Physical/mental health
  - Expanding housing opportunities
  - Reducing barriers to reintegration



Photos from NC Reentry 2030 Strategic Plan

# Expanding Housing Opportunities: A Vital Strategic Goal

- One of the toughest reentry challenges
  - 17% released from custody in NC without housing plan in 2023
  - 40% of NC landlords noted criminal history is a factor in decisions
- Research also shows housing is **critical** to reentry success

## Several Ambitious, Housing-Related Strategic Plan Objectives:

### OBJECTIVE 19

Implement an online housing resource guide with housing resources available for every county in the state.

### OBJECTIVE 20

Reduce the number of formerly incarcerated people experiencing homelessness by 10% every year.

### OBJECTIVE 21

Increase the number of units for people exiting without a housing plan by 1,800 units available each year by 2030 by creating a continuum of housing options, including transitional housing and permanent housing for reentrants.

### OBJECTIVE 22

By 2030, provide 100% of self-identified incarcerated veterans within state facilities with services to gain housing upon release.

# Zero Returns to Homelessness: A Bold Vision to Support Big Goals



Photo courtesy of CSG Justice Center staff, 2023

- **A bold, national vision** created by U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the CSG Justice Center
- First unveiled at the **National Reentry Housing Symposium** in June 2023 in Washington, DC
- Now a **National Strategic Initiative** and the foundation of Reentry 2030 Housing Technical Assistance

# Zero Returns to Homelessness (ZRH): A 4-Part Strategy Grounded in What Works



**Step 1: Collaborate**



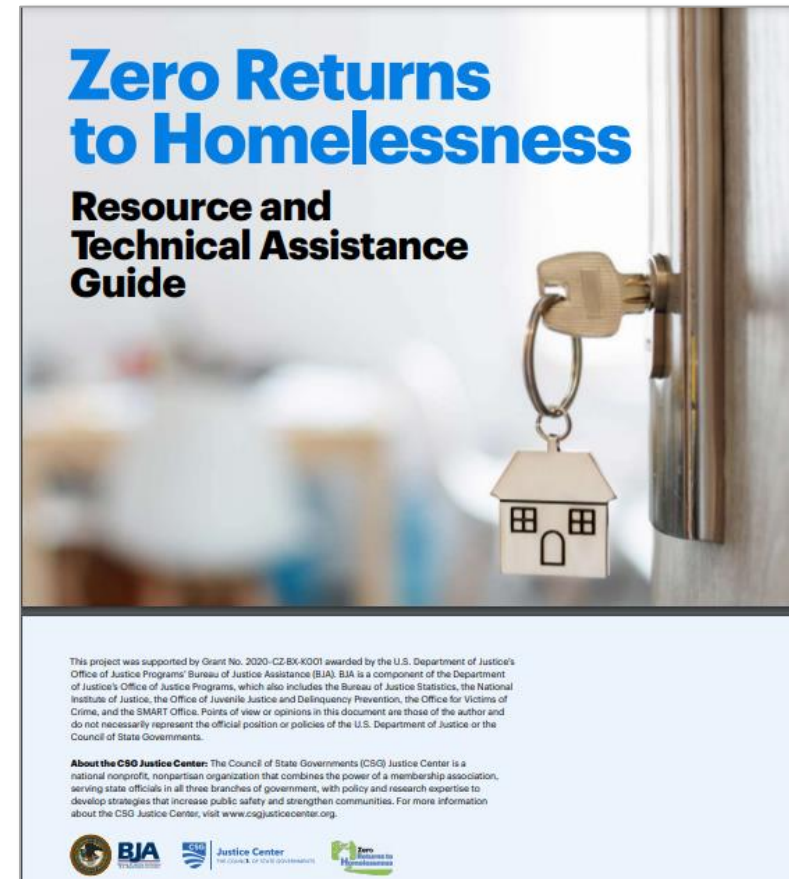
**Step 2: Assess**



**Step 3: Connect**



**Step 4: Expand**



# Example of the ZRH Strategies in Action: Approaches and Success Markers (Connect)



- 1) Reducing Policy Barriers
- 2) Reprioritizing Funding
- 3) Embedding Access Points
- 4) Expanding Access to Existing Units
- 5) Leveraging Funding to Connect People to Housing

- Number of people connected to **permanent housing**
- Number of units/services** available by type
- Reduction in the number of people **returning to homelessness**
- Percentage of people **connected to services and employment opportunities**

# Zero Returns: Tailored Directly to NC's Objectives



## OBJECTIVE 20

Reduce the number of formerly incarcerated people experiencing homelessness by 10% every year.

### Example ZRH-Informed Plan Strategies:

- DAC will establish a consistent homelessness risk assessment.
- Partnerships will be developed between DAC and state/local housing agencies to create pathways to permanent housing.

## OBJECTIVE 21

Increase the number of units for people exiting without a housing plan by 1,800 units available each year by 2030 by creating a continuum of housing options, including transitional housing and permanent housing for reentrants.

### Example ZRH-Informed Plan Strategies:

- DAC will support 10 new transitional housing programs.
- Broad-based work will take place with affordable housing providers to increase units and funding dedicated to this population.



# Housing System Assessment: Overview

- **To meet these ambitious housing goals, the CSG Justice Center team will provide this Council with policy recommendations that are**
  - Based on local needs and data,
  - Guided by the voices of people with lived experience,
  - Realistic based on time and available resources, and
  - Grounded in research and best practices.
- **To develop these recommendations, we propose beginning with a *6-month housing system assessment*, conducted by our team in collaboration with key state partners.**



# Housing System Assessment: Goals and Approach

- **The Assessment will help achieve these big picture outcomes:**
  - Cataloging the landscape of housing resources available statewide
  - Understanding the challenges that people in reentry face in securing housing
  - Developing a baseline understanding of existing processes and partnerships
  - Identifying key trends by region and sub-population (ex: veterans)
- **Methods will include:**
  - Public data gathering
  - Collection/review of key policy documents
  - Stakeholder interviews (housing providers, people with lived experience, etc.)
  - Systems and workflow analysis

# Housing Assessment Key Work Streams and Timeline

1. Roadmap of public and subsidized housing providers at the state and county levels	Oct
2. Inventory of housing and service resources available from publicly funded providers	Nov–Dec
3. Collection and analysis of private market housing cost and vacancy data	Oct–Nov
4. Analysis of existing barriers to housing	Nov–Jan
5. Analysis of existing housing plans and prioritization	Nov–Jan

# Housing Assessment Key Work Streams and Timeline (cont.)

6. Analysis of existing partnerships and agreements	Jan–Feb
7. Inventory of existing data and key screening and assessment processes	Oct–Feb
8. Mapping of existing processes and flow between DAC and reentry housing partners	Mar
9. Inventory of potential funding and other resources to support expanded housing and service efforts	Mar
10. Identification of areas of key housing needs, gaps, and opportunities to recommend for prioritization	Mar

# Focus Area: Inventory of Housing and Service Resources (Step 2)

## Approach

- The focus of this step will be identifying what level of housing resources affordable housing providers identified in Step 1 have available (units and/or subsidies), as well as supportive services.
- Some data will be public but there will be research required including contacting providers, HUD regional offices, etc.

## Key Considerations

- For this and many other steps, we will want to prioritize efforts based on agency, type, size, geography, and other priorities (sub-population, etc.).

# Focus Area: Analysis of Barriers to Housing (Step 4)

## Approach

- The team will inventory and collect governing policy documents from key agencies identified in Steps 1 and 2 (such as PHA plans, CoC written standards, etc.) to develop a baseline understanding of policy-level barriers.
- This may be supplemented with semi-structured interviews with providers as well as research on state and selected municipal ordinances likely to create housing barriers.

## Key Considerations

- This step will include heavy involvement from people with lived experience, both as interviewees and in the planning and implementation of the work.

# Housing Assessment: Next Steps, Larger Goals, and Discussion

- Once the Assessment is complete, the team will identify key areas of housing needs, gaps, and opportunity to prepare to craft recommendations for prioritization.
- The team will then present its findings to the Housing Subcommittee and the Joint Reentry council for discussion.
- Implementation planning will then follow!



Photo courtesy of CSG Justice Center staff, 2023