

CONTACT INFO:

Whatcom County Re-Entry Coalition

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or

*Contact the person who gave you this
brochure.*



Find out more about us at

Our website

www.whatcomrec.org

The following is a letter sent by an inmate expressing his concerns upon his release from prison. This letter is an example of the concerns that most people experience while trying to re-enter our community.

Dear Re-Entry Coalition,

I am currently in DOC (Department of Corrections) at Shelton and will be for the next two and a half years. I am trying to turn myself around and start fresh.

Eleven months ago I was released from Federal Prison in Minnesota and was told to go home, meaning Washington, and start over. They gave me 200 bucks and said hit the streets and make it.

I am a manic-depressive who takes medication, which was cut off when I left there. I re-offended seven days after my release. I robbed a bank in order to get my medication and to start work. I never threatened anyone then nor have I in my life. I'm not that type of person. I did not like doing what I did there, or in Bellingham where I was caught.

I've got no one out there nor the resources to try and do it alone. I won't make it, I know that. My psychiatric counselors all tell me that I will be eligible for social security and other benefits based upon my condition and history. At least 7 different doctors have said that I should be eligible for help. I am planning on returning Bellingham where I once lived to start over. I would appreciate any help or guidance that your group can throw my way.

Thank you,

S. G.



Mission Statement:

To provide an efficient and supportive network of assistance for former offenders, homeless and others at risk in Whatcom County to ensure their successful re-entry into our community.

Our Objective:

To help those who are willing to change their lives by assisting them with housing, transportation, treatment, education, employment and re-entry into society with dignity and honor while encouraging them to become functional contributing members of society.

Our History:

The Whatcom County Re-Entry Coalition was organized in December 2006 by Irene Morgan and friends after being in contact with Don Kirchner. He is responsible for a program entitled, "The Society for the Return to Honor." Don's story can be viewed at www.amatteroftime.org

Our Goals:

- *Improve public safety in Whatcom County*
- *Reduce recidivism and criminal justice costs*
- *Reduce emergency and other medical cost*
- *Improve community education in regards to re-entry*
- *Promote community prevention and early intervention activities*

Our Members:

Our members include people from many walks of life; authors, teachers, police, counselors, therapists, DOC personnel, housing specialists, other re-entry programs, former offenders and interested citizens.

FACTS:

Whatcom County statistics



- 536 DOC prisoners were released in 2007.
- 53 sex offenders were housed under the supervision of DOC. Of those 53, 7 left the house after violating the rules. All of those who became homeless re-offended. Those who had stable housing did not re-offend.
- 7,126 people in 2007 released from jail.
- 752 under DOC supervision
- 3200 on probation

Why are these numbers important?

- Those coming out of jail and prison need the support of a re-entry program to assist in obtaining stable housing, treatment and other services. Without these services the person is likely to re-offend and continue to cycle through the criminal justice system.

Assistance and referrals are available for:

- Housing
- Substance Abuse treatment
- Mental Health counseling and treatment
- Education and vocational opportunities
- And much more...

OPPORTUNITIES:

- *Would you like to know more?*
- *Do you know someone who will be re-entering our community and needs help?*
- *Are you in need of housing, treatment, or other services once you are released?*
- *Would you have an employment position for someone making a new start?*
- *Would you like to donate to our cause?*
- *See contact info on this brochure*



Also...

- *Contact your local government to make a change and support re-entry programs.*