

## Compliance with Scope of Work

### Criteria

#### A. Public health-oriented understanding of community safety

Racine Vocational Ministry, Inc. (RVM) is requesting funding to support its Racine-based Second Chance Reentry Program (SCRIP), with a special focus on BIPOC reentrants and women. This proposal will meet the criteria of the RFP. The project if funded will:

- Serve ***those individuals at highest risk for perpetrating community violence.***

Individuals served by this project are referred to the program following periods of incarceration at high risk for recidivism resulting from the commission of new crimes likely to be violent in nature.

- The proposed services are ***informed by and respond to the impact of trauma on individuals and the broader community in historically underinvested communities.***

RVM serves Racine's most marginalized individuals who have few resources and unstable systems of support. BIPOC and women reentrants are disproportionately impacted by incarceration and without help may face insurmountable barriers to successful community reentry.

- The purpose of all services and programs offered by RVM are ***to promote healing and resiliency in residents and neighborhoods impacted by violence.***

RVM approaches reentry services from the perspective that healing and resiliency result from cognitive changes.

- **Promote community ownership of safety outcomes in residents and neighborhoods.**

RVM approaches prison reentry as a community endeavor. RVM believes that a successful reentry program is both good for the participants served and good for neighborhoods and the community at large. When reentrants become civically engaged citizens, giving back to their communities,

neighborhoods and communities are safer and more economically viable.

#### **B. Community Safety Priorities**

- This proposal explores the **disproportionate impact of violence on some groups and communities.**

The target population is BIPOC and female prison reentrants who are identified by the department of corrections as at a high risk for recidivism. BIPOC are largely overrepresented in the prison population. Although 7% of the State population is black, 29% of the jail population and 41% of the prison population is black. Black individuals are incarcerated at 6.9 times the rate of white people. BIPOC women are overrepresented similarly in the prison system and lack reentry resources.

- **Plan and implement community specific services and partnerships that improve community safety and wellbeing through preventative strategies.**

SCRIP offers community specific services to individuals reentering Racine following periods of incarceration. The program and services require partnership with numerous programs and businesses to be successful. Without reentry services, formerly incarcerated individuals who are at a higher risk for recidivism put the safety and well-being of the community in jeopardy. Individuals with a known potential for violence, who transform their lives, no longer pose a threat to the community, but are instead caring for themselves, their families and positively impacting their communities.

#### **Qualifications and Experience**

Racine Vocational Ministry, Inc. (RVM) came into existence in 2002 after a group of concerned citizens determined that the community's most marginalized individuals needed support to become productive members of the community while maintaining their dignity and sustaining themselves and their families.

RVM recognized early on that individuals with criminal records, and the formerly incarcerated faced significant barriers to entering the workforce and becoming fulfilled citizens. Those with criminal backgrounds faced barriers that made taking traditional paths to finding employment difficult if not impossible. The Second Chance Reentry Program (SCRCP) was formed to specifically serve this population. RVM initially was part of a community effort to decrease recidivism and increase public safety through a federal grant awarded to the City of Racine. This funding ceased in 2015, but RVM continues to provide prison reentry services. RVM has been very successful in keeping its participants out of prison and guiding them to life-sustaining careers and community engagement. During the past year, RVM had a one-year rate of returns to prison of 5.2% which compares very favorably to the statewide rate of 15% representing a 67% reduction. From 2020-2023 the three-year RVM SCRCP recidivism rates were 9%. The State average is close to 40%, again, maintaining a ¾ reduction over a three-year period. RVM believes this number is a result of a convergence of good case management, high program dosage and a window in time that has favored this number.

### **Respondent Approach to Providing Services**

Racine Vocational Ministry prepares participants to become fully engaged in their lives by offering tools and skills, respecting their inherent dignity, and walking alongside them in their transformative journeys. Criminal activity and anti-social relationships result from anti-social cognition. Correcting this is the driver for social inclusion and strong, healthy families. RVM focuses on transformation over remediation. Staff are trained in techniques that assist participants in moving steadily towards a more prosocial world view. The Ohio Risk Assessment System (ORAS), an evidence-based tool, is designed to assist participants in establishing pro-social thinking, goals, and strategies.

A holistic, trauma sensitive approach that centers on cognitive change, spiritual awakenings, personal responsibility/accountability, a commitment to community wellness, and familial support

forms the program's foundation. Government-led efforts often over-focus on compliance, which research demonstrates, does not produce lasting change. A change in world view allowing for hope, trust in key relationships, strong personal support, and belief in redemption, restoration and community acceptance is key to long term success.

**Interventions:** Reentrants attend **"Welcome Home Meetings"** also known as Offender Notification Meetings, that inform the public that individuals are returning to the community, and to let reentrants know that there is a network of support available. **Case management** is the practice method that brings all elements of programming together. Participants work in partnership with case managers to self-assess, reassess and establish goals. With the aid of the ORAS assessment, case managers get a highly personalized insight into the specific needs and risks of each participant. The development of Individual reentry plans includes referrals to supportive services (such as mental health services, AODA counseling, basic skills training, anger management, etc.). Participants receive: One-on-One Counseling – Weekly meetings with a case manager to assist in all aspects of job readiness including the reduction of barriers to employment and to avoid recidivism. **Job Placement Support** – Relationships with partner employers help match participants with appropriate openings, and following up with placements to ensure the match is successful.

**Evidence Based Practices** - RVM is modeled after the Department of Justice's Second Chance Reentry programs that prescribe the use of validated tools and best practices. To ensure fidelity to the model RVM uses: ORAS, Moral Reconation Therapy, Motivational Interviewing, and Offender Notification Meetings.

RVM's approach to reentry differs from the traditional Department of Corrections approach in that using a cognitive approach, the whole person is treated, and participants are assisted in removing the many barriers to their success. Participants learn to think with a pro-social mindset. RVM's core

philosophy is that transformation – not compliance, leads to positive permanent change. RVM not only encourages reentrants to behave better, but most importantly to think in a new way.

### **Respondent Description of How Funds Will Be Budgeted for Use**

The focus of this proposal is BIPOC and women. RVM will serve 17 women and/or BIPOC in five months from receiving funding. RVM will recruit participants as soon as funds become available and until all slots are filled. Funding will be used to provide staffing to adequately carry out the program. Case management is key to ensuring program effectiveness. Funds will be used to support case management, including supervision and administration of the position. Case Manager @20 hours = \$20,800, Supervision of the Case Manager = \$7,800, Administrative Support = \$4,420, Payroll taxes will cost = \$2,496, Insurance Benefits = \$5,400, Program Supplies \$2,800, Office Supplies = \$450, Automobile Expenses = \$439. Project Total \$44,605

### **Budget Proposal – Separate Document**

### **Prior Experience and Familiarity of Required Services -5**

RVM has administered state, federal, local and private foundation grants since its incorporation in 2002. RVM is aware of the contractual requirements and is prepared to implement the programming described. RVM will provide monthly progress and financial reports and comply with other WCSF reporting requirements as requested.

The success of SCRP is dependent on the use of and fidelity to the model described above. RVM employs staff trained in the use of each of these tools and staff who are qualified to train other staff in their use. RVM has offered reentry services since 2005. RVM is a model program, nationally recognized, following the guidelines and principles of the U.S. Department of Justice. RVM's program has demonstrated repeated success and has been replicated in at least two other communities.

RVM's one-year recidivism rate is 3.6%, 5.7% after two years and 8.6% after 3 years. This

compares favorably with the current State averages of 15.1% recidivism for one-year and 33.3% for three-years. The majority of RVM's participants are medium-high and high risk for recidivism.

In RVM's most recent three-year study of the Ohio Risk Assessment, all 6 non-static ORAS subfields show significant improvement for those RVM participants being assessed 3 times between 2020 and 2023. The average score across all participants for each of these 6 categories improved by at least 16% with a maximum improvement of 36%. Such marked improvement is no easy feat, as this represents reducing risk factors spread across 6 different facets of life by nearly a quarter each. The consistent improvement across all 6 fields speaks to RVM's commitment to transforming the whole of their participants' lives and their participants' commitment to the incremental change necessary to get there.

Especially prevalent are the 29%+ improvements in the categories of Family and Social Support, Substance Use, Peer Associations and Criminal Attitudes and Behavioral Patterns. These areas of growth underly RVM's dedication to ensuring participants have a strong support system and the tools necessary to make positive changes in their lives.

#### **Knowledge of City of Racine -**

RVM has operated in the City of Racine since its inception in 2002. The case management services provided by RVM require a strong working knowledge of the city, its resources and its programs. RVM demonstrates the importance of establishing community partnerships in resourcing, funding, and the delivery of services. RVM is a charter member of the Continuum of Care for the City and County of Racine. This collaborative effort ensures that participants have access to the entire gamut of services offered by the members of the CoC. The Wisconsin Division of Community Corrections is a major partner for SCRCP has a strong presence in the city.