



COMMISSIONERS COURT
COMMUNICATION

REFERENCE NUMBER _____

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DATE: 04/16/2024

**SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN TARRANT COUNTY AND OPPORTUNITY RESOURCE
SERVICES TO PROVIDE SERVICES TO TARRANT COUNTY JAIL
INMATES**

***** CONSENT AGENDA *****

COMMISSIONERS COURT ACTION REQUESTED

It is requested that Commissioners Court approve a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Tarrant County and Opportunity Resource Services to provide services to Tarrant County Jail inmates with the goal of setting up a support system for incarcerated students, enabling them to access resources and support from second-chance education and employment programs.

BACKGROUND

Opportunity Resource Services (ORS) is an organization focused on disrupting generational poverty in Texas by empowering vulnerable teens and adults, especially first-generation college students, low-income individuals, and those involved with the criminal justice system, to attain higher education degrees of value, secure gainful employment, and achieve social mobility.

If approved, ORS will collaborate with the Tarrant County Sheriff's Office to provide programs, funded by the Bureau of Justice Administration through the Second Chance Act, aim to equip these individuals with the tools and knowledge essential for a smooth transition into society. Services offered under this program will encompass assistance with acquiring necessary credentials for employment, mentorship, and employment placement services during the pre-release and post-release stages. Special attention will be directed towards individuals released into the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex area.

Under the provisions of this MOU, ORS will provide:

1. **Credential Assistance:** ORS will facilitate processes that assist incarcerated students in obtaining the essential credentials required for successful employment.
2. **College & Trade Program Admission Assistance:** ORS will support students in identifying and applying for regionally accredited colleges and trade programs. The focus will be on affordable programs at not-for-profit institutions that offer credentials of value that will lead to gainful employment.
3. **Financial Aid Assistance & Improved Financial Literacy:** ORS will assist with applying for Second Chance Pell and accessing financial aid by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), including navigating student loan repayment programs to help more incarcerated individuals become eligible for federal student aid.

SUBMITTED BY:	Sheriff Office	PREPARED BY: APPROVED BY:	Vivian Bice Bill Waybourn
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4. Mentoring & Networking: ORS will establish mentoring programs that provide guidance, support, and networking opportunities for incarcerated students, connecting them to industry professionals.
5. Employment Placement & Career Readiness: Assistance will be provided to secure employment opportunities before and after release, ensuring a seamless reintegration into the community.
6. Supplemental Support Services: ORS will provide assistance connecting students to resources for housing, transportation, counseling, academic tutoring, and technology support.

This MOU shall be active from the beginning of the grant award. At the end of the grant term, both parties can review and decide on the continuation or alteration of the terms outlined in this MOU. This MOU is subject to review on at least an annual basis or as deemed necessary by either party. Any amendments or modifications to the MOU will be done in writing and signed by the designated representatives of both parties.

The Civil Division of the Criminal District Attorney's Office has approved this MOU as to form.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.