

**COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE**  
Inter-Office Communication

Date: 4/21/2023

To: Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

From: Chantell Jewell, Superintendent

Subject: Community Reintegration Center 2023 Annual Report

File Type: Informational Report

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This informational report provides a report on the Community Reintegration Center (CRC) set and achieved its 2022 goals.

**POLICY**

This report aligns to Chapter 108: Achieving Racial Equity & Health.

Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances:	<a href="#">Chapter 108: Achieving Racial Equity &amp; Health</a>
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**BACKGROUND**

[File 22-104](#) amends Chapter 108 to require that “annually, by April 30 of each year or sooner, each Milwaukee County department leader and/or their designee(s) shall provide a written and oral report outlining their year-end results to a Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors committee. The reports shall, at a minimum:

- (a) Indicate the year-end goals the department set in the prior year
- (b) Share the rationale and relevance of the department’s performance metrics (i.e. explaining why they are “SMART” goals (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely, and extending) and how they align to the county’s racial equity strategy, if applicable)
- (c) Report the department’s year-end results relating to the goals it had set, and
- (d) Provide a thorough analysis clearly articulating why goals were significantly exceeded, met, or not met.
- (e) Explain the department’s progress in creating a departmental-level strategic plan that aligns to the countywide strategic plan and provide an update about future plans to revise and enhance the departmental-level plan in the year ahead.”

## **ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN**

- 1A: Reflect the full diversity of the County at every level of County government
- 1B: Create and nurture an inclusive culture across County government
- 1C: Increase the number of County contracts awarded to minority and women-owned businesses
- 2A: Determine what, where, and how we deliver services to advance health equity
- 2B: Break down silos across County government to maximize access to and quality of services offered
- 2C: Apply a racial equity lens to all decisions
- 3A: Invest “upstream” to address root causes of health disparities
- 3B: Enhance the County’s fiscal health and sustainability
- 3C: Dismantle barriers to diverse and inclusive communities

Alignment to the above strategic objectives is articulated in response to the questions below.

## **BODY**

1. What were the top 3 goals of your department/office for 2022? Please explain why they are “SMARTIE” goals (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely, inclusive, and equitable) and how they align to the county’s racial equity strategy.
  - **Goal 1: Decrease the CRC’s officer turnover rate and increase staffing**
    - Increased turnover and limited staffing at the CRC can have an overwhelmingly negative effect on officers, residents, the community, and other entities within the criminal justice system. The turnover rate as well as our staffing level is a metric that is generated at regular intervals. The goal would be to reduce our turnover rate to a more acceptable and pre-covid level of 25% as well as sustain a frontline workforce of 200 officers and sergeants. The CRC’s workforce (at all levels) will reflect the full diversity of Milwaukee County. (1A)
    - Without veteran and highly trained staff, we cannot achieve our main goal of reducing recidivism. That goal is achieved by maintaining and ensuring a safe and secure environment that consists of correctional programs to rehabilitate and re-introduce our citizens back into the community. Identifying and providing needs such as job skills, education, housing and Medical Assisted Treatment (MAT) services to those who do not have access to these essential resources allows the CRC to address the root causes of health disparities that exist throughout the County (3A).
  - **Goal 2: Increase the overall safety and security of the facility through staff training and development and increased communication.**

- Safety and security are the cornerstone of a correctional environment. Security is crucial to maintaining staff and resident safety. This is achieved through staff training and development.
- **Goal 3: Increase the number of avenues available to residents for positive change**
  - The goal of the Community Reintegration Center (CRC) is to create safer communities by providing programming, which comprehensively meets the needs of residents in our care and support opportunities for positive change. For those who are in custody, the CRC ensures all persons are treated with dignity, respect, and given the opportunity to reach their full potential. The CRC has adopted DHHS' No Wrong Door policy and services do not stop upon incarceration. The goal is to identify root causes of individuals' needs and attempt to address them in an effective and respectful manner, despite the challenges they may face from incarceration.

2. To what extent were these goals accomplished in 2022? Please explain.

- a. Goal 1: The CRC experienced a reduction in the front-line staff turnover rate since being able to offer more competitive wages in 2022. Our 2021 turnover percentage among front line staff was 49%. We hired 78 staff but lost 108 for a net loss of 30. For 2022, our turnover percentage was 55% with 86 hired and 95 staff members lost for a net loss of 9. However, once the \$3.00 an hour pay raise for officers became permanent in the last quarter of 2022, our turnover rate dropped 14 percentage points to 39% and we saw a net gain of 15 staff members. The first quarter of 2023 showed the turnover rate dropped again to approximately 20%.

<b>Front Line Staff Turnover Rate'</b>			
<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2022 Q4 (after \$3/hr raise)</b>	<b>2023 Q1</b>
49%	55%	39%	20%
Net loss: 30 staff	Net loss: 9 staff	Net <b>gain</b> : 15 staff	Net gain: 21 staff

- b. Goal 2: In 2022 the overall results for CRC showed a trend in a positive direction. The CRC hired a Security Director to oversee all security and training functions within the facility. By the end of the year, 98% (161 of 165) uniformed staff completed Incident Command System 100 and 200 level training. Entrance procedures were modified to accurately identify professional visitors inside of the facility. Two new metal detectors were installed to provide better screening of residents entering the facility.

In the 4th quarter of 2022, monthly facility searches, and inspections were resumed. These inspections resulted in a 53% decrease in the amount of excess linen and clothing being confiscated, and a 22% decrease in the number of broken/damaged items and nuisance contraband. In 2022, a total of 34 fights and 8 assaults occurred. Comparatively, in 2021, there were 54 fights and 14 assaults. Between 2021 and 2022, there was a 38% reduction in fights, and a 43% reduction in assaults.

- c. Goal 3: Since 2022, the CRC has implemented evidenced-based programs and resources to provide opportunities to address any needs that may be unmet that may increase risk to reoffend. All below programs, and new positions are viewed through a racial equity lens (County objective 2C), and address root causes of health disparities and living conditions (County objective 3A).
- i. Since August of 2022, the Wisconsin Community Service (WCS) has been onsite at the CRC, conducting Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (LS-CMI) assessments for residents with 90 days or more. 75 residents were assessed, thus leading to referrals to some of the services below that addresses root causes of health disparities such as housing, access to health and mental health services, educational opportunities, and access to financial wellness information.
  - ii. Hired a Human Service Worker (HSW) in October of 2022 to assist WCS with conducting assessments and provide case plans for residents with 90 days or more. The HSW goes over the plan with the individual and guides them through the services available.
  - iii. Housing: Hired a Housing Navigator in June of 2022 to provide residents with resources, and housing referrals upon their release. Assisting residents with having access to affordable housing is vital in the quest to make Milwaukee County the healthiest county in the State. In 2022 she worked with 171 individuals and helped them secure critical documents such as birth certificates, ID's, and social security cards. She has also secured Section 8 Housing for two residents, one receiving housing benefits of \$999 monthly. She assisted a resident in securing \$7,155.00 from Community Advocates, and had a landlord dismiss the eviction.
  - iv. Employment/Economic Stability: In 2022 the CRC partnered with the City of Milwaukee to start the Drivers' License Recovery Program. In 2022, Judge Derek Mosley serviced 66 residents virtually and assisted them with their municipal tickets and/or suspended license. The CRC understands that often the lack of drivers' licenses is a barrier to employment opportunities, especially for minorities, therefore it is important to us for them to have an opportunity to get their drivers' license current and assist with bridging that gap to employment.
  - v. Economic Stability: In 2022 the CRC partnered with Chase Bank to provide courses for residents that will teach them about budgeting, saving, credit and homeownership. With poverty income gaps between black and whites, being glaringly high in Milwaukee County (\$65,862 income rates for whites to \$28,879 for blacks) the CRC felt the high need

- of providing financial wellness to residents by addressing this root cause of health disparity. Chase Bank serviced 62 residents in 2022.
- vi. **Employment/Economic Stability:** In 2022 CRC partnered with Employ Milwaukee to have an onsite employment specialist assist residents with job readiness training, interviewing skills, resume building, and employment opportunities. 30 residents gained full-time outside employment due to this partnership in 2022. 28 residents also graduated from “Making it Work/Thinking for a Change” which is a cognitive based curriculum also taught by the onsite employment specialist. Connecting residents with self-sustaining employment opportunities has been extremely important in CRC’s mission in investing in root causes of health disparities.
  - vii. **Education:** In 2022 the CRC partnership with Marquette University to spearhead the Education Preparedness Program (EPP). The EPP is a blended course model that fosters classroom collaboration between students directly impacted by incarceration and traditional Marquette students. Courses were held inside the CRC, and all courses are tuition-free and credit bearing. Courses offered were “Psychology of Human Development” and “African American History.” The CRC had 9 residents along with 15 traditional students that successfully completed both courses and earned 6 college credits. Access to quality educational opportunities while still incarcerated is another example of how CRC is commitment to addressing root causes of health disparities.
  - viii. **Healthcare:** In 2022 the CRC along with Wellpath continued the Medical Assisted Treatment (MAT) Program that treated residents with opioids addiction and assisted them in the recovery process. Participants met with case managers, peer support specialists, and AODA counselors weekly. 160 residents were treated/served in 2022. Ensuring that residents have access to quality health services is essential to racial equity and health outcomes.
  - ix. **Social:** In 2022 the CRC partnered with the Center for Self-Sufficiency (CFSS) and was awarded a 3-year grant from the Officer of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) to develop and deliver a family centric program at the CRC to provide a safe and supportive environment for incarcerated parents to strengthen relationships with their children through contact visits and promote healthy family lifestyles. The Family Center opened in December of 2022, with 3 families receiving contact visits.
  - x. In 2022 the CRC continued its partnership with the Benedict Center to provide services for justice involved women. The Benedict Center Women’s Reentry Program served 175 unique women. Courses included trauma informed care, Narcan and opioid education, life skills, nurturing parenting, reentry planning, mental health, and cognitive-behavioral programs.
  - xi. **Civic:** In 2022 the CRC partnered with the League of Women Voters and Supermarket Legends to encourage and educate residents about the importance of voting and participating in the democratic process. Studies

have shown that the more an individual is engaged in civic and community activities, the less likely they are to reoffend, thus creating safer communities and improving health outcomes. In 2022, 20 residents registered to vote for the first time. (Already in March of 2023, the CRC has 27 new registered residents, and 33 requested absentee ballots for the next April election).

- xii. Employment/Economic Stability: In 2022 the CRC partnered with the Milwaukee Bucks to create a pathway for employment opportunities for our residents at the Fiserv Forum. Due to this partnership, the Milwaukee Bucks hired 5 residents from the CRC in guest services, housekeeping, and other parts of the arena. This program helps residents become self-sustaining and assisting with bridging the gap of poverty rates.
- xiii. Economic Stability: In 2022 the CRC also partnered with Waukesha County Technical College (WCTC) to provide virtual and in-person services to the residents. WCTC provided job preparation and financial planning workshops, along with introductions to resource agencies. Equipping residents with the tools for financial success will also facilitate bridging the gap for poverty rates amongst different races. There were 43 residents who took advantage of this opportunity in 2022.

3. What factors *enabled* progress toward accomplishing these goals?

- Addressing the pay inequity between Milwaukee County and our surrounding counties did allow the CRC to significantly reduce our turnover percentage. We had staff who had recently resigned return to CRC employment. The hiring process was shortened due to a large percentage of applicants accepting other employment while they were in the CRC's hiring portal. In addition, in the spirit of strategic objective 2B (breaking down silos to maximize access to and quality of services offered), Job fairs held at the Zoo also proved fruitful. Our Employment Engagement Committee allowed our staff to have a voice and express concerns directly to Administration, thus improving relations with our officers.
- An internal audit of security issues was completed. This audit revealed issues with security cameras and video storage systems, lack of training or knowledge for staff involving facility policies and procedures and a lack of formalized entrance procedures for staff and visitors to the facility. This audit demonstrated the need to continue focusing on staff training and development, led to policy revision and creation of new policies and placed an emphasis on upgrading several key systems.

Monthly meetings took place between Executive staff and Captains. Quarterly meetings were implemented by the Security Director with all Lieutenants and Captain in attendance, thus increasing communication and the establishment of clear expectations. Maintaining a fully staffed training department allowed the facility to meet all mandatory in-service training requirements. Four Law Enforcement Standards Board (LESB) Certified Jail Officer Academies were completed, providing CRC with 24 new LESB certified Officers.

- What has enabled programs and activities at the CRC is that most of the programs have been grant funded or provided for free from individuals or groups. With no programming budget, administration intentionally set out to find grants and resources that met our needs. Administration utilized county, city and state relationships and common interests to provide comprehensive programming and activities for our residents. Breaking down silos across governmental entities allowed the CRC to partner with the Department of Health and Human Service Housing Division to bring a Housing Navigator on site at the CRC, along with partnering with the City of Milwaukee to have a Drivers' License recovery program at the CRC.
  - What has also enabled the unique programs opportunities at the CRC is that administration makes decisions through a racial equity lens, and the fact that CRC leaders were born, raised, and lived in the same areas most of the residents that are under CRC's care. Ensuring that race should never be a factor in determining health outcomes has been a priority for CRC, which is why leadership has intentionally invested in programs that address root causes of health disparity, such as financial wellness, housing, and trauma informed care in addition to evidence-based programming offered.
4. What factors *hindered* progress toward accomplishing these goals?
- Working conditions can be difficult. With other high paying job opportunities available that require similar or lesser qualifications as well as more desirable schedules, it is a challenge to retain staff. The \$3.00 an hour premium status during most of 2022 did not have any effect on retention or attracting new recruits. Not until it was made a permanent part of the officer pay rate did we see a positive return of investment.
  - The two greatest hindrances in providing a safe and secure environment were a lack of staffing and financial constraints. Due to a significant lack of staff, most uniformed staff were required to work additional shifts and were forced to work on their off days. This led to low employee morale and made implementing additional training opportunities difficult. Many of the systems in the facility need repairs or upgrades (cameras, Tasers, card readers), however due to financial reasons these upgrades have been delayed, thus negatively impacting the overall security of the facility.
  - Lack of staff contributed to the hindrance of providing more programming for residents. Often when the institution is short staffed, program staff members would have to fill in and provide coverages in the mandatory areas at the CRC, thus cancelling the program for that shift or day.
  - Not having an actual programs' budget and relying on grants and acts of kindness by individuals and groups have hindered our ability to provide even more programming at the CRC. Having an earmarked budget for programming would assist in securing more resources, and programming opportunities.

5. What is the status of your department/office in developing its strategic plan?

The CRC is in the process of solidifying goals and objectives for 2022 which align with the CEX and County Board, but also bringing us back to the original intended purpose of CRC, which is rehabilitation.

**FISCAL EFFECT**

The report is informational only and there is no fiscal impact.

**PREPARED BY:**

Chantell Jewell, Superintendent

**APPROVED BY:**

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