National Resource Center on Domestic Violence

Pathways to Decreasing Homelessness Among Formerly Incarcerated Survivors

By Lavon Morris-Grant, Director of Community Engagement

The needs of formally incarcerated survivors are often not at the forefront of advocacy efforts focused on the intersection of domestic violence and homelessness. Often underrepresented and underserved, formally incarcerated survivors can face many barriers to accessing and retaining safe housing. This can be especially true for Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) survivors. Advocacy approaches such as community engagement can enhance domestic violence advocacy efforts to reach and build solutions that support these survivors. Community engagement approaches that center the leadership and lived experiences of survivors are critical to building relationships with community-based organizations who are often directly serving the most marginalized survivors within their communities.

A Miracle 4 Sure is an example of a community-based organization working to meet the needs of underserved survivors such as formally incarcerated survivors. A Miracle 4 Sure is a distinguished community partner, under NRCDV's Community Engagement efforts,), and based in Harrisburg, PA. This organization, led by Founder and Executive Director, Marsha Nixon-Curry, is dedicated to improving the quality of life for formally incarcerated individuals and families impacted by negative life experiences. AM4S provides crucial resources such as housing assistance, support groups, domestic violence services, a shower program for the unsheltered, and more.

Former incarceration is often linked to a higher risk of future violence and homelessness, particularly among marginalized communities such as Black women. The lack of stable housing post-release can contribute significantly to this cycle. For many formerly incarcerated individuals, the challenges of reentry are compounded by discrimination in housing markets, limited access to resources, and systemic barriers that hinder their ability to secure employment or access supportive services. This intersectionality between criminal justice involvement, housing instability, and heightened risk of violence underscores the urgent need for comprehensive support systems like the

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Transitional Housing Program and Trauma-Informed Care workshops provided by AM4S. By addressing the immediate needs of individuals upon release, including housing, employment, wraparound services, community reintegration programs and violence prevention and intervention initiatives and other essentials, organizations like AM4S can strengthen pathways to breaking the cycle in providing safety, stability, and empowerment for survivors of incarceration and homelessness.

A Miracle 4 Sure also advocates for creating supportive pathways that build upon individuals' knowledge and skills, such as job training programs, financial literacy workshops, mental health and counseling services, art and recreation programs, entrepreneurship support, and substance abuse treatment programs. Furthermore, AM4S emphasizes the importance of adequate funding being made available to establish research teams to study and evaluate why some individuals experiencing homelessness or living without shelter may not identify as homeless. Instead, these individuals often express a need for consistent access to basic amenities like showers, laundry facilities, and nutritious food daily.

A Miracle 4 Sure's unwavering commitment to the cause, serves as an inspiring example of the transformative impact that grassroots organizations can have on individuals and communities alike. As we advocate for positive change, let us learn from, highlight, and celebrate the extraordinary work of A Miracle 4 Sure, a true catalyst for hope and empowerment in the realm of reentry services and homelessness.

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