

That the City of Boston Code, Chapter V, is amended by adding the following new section and subsections:

SECTION 1. Purpose

There is hereby established within the City of Boston the Office of Returning Citizens, which shall provide support services for the formerly incarcerated to assist in their successful reintegration into the community. The Office shall work to promote equitable access to services and opportunities in the areas of employment, housing, health care, education, and social Services. The Office recognizes the value of returning citizens as both recipients of services, clients, and as leaders helping to shape the vision and work of the Office.

SECTION 2. Duties of the Office

The Office of Returning Citizens shall:

- Serve as an advocate for returning citizens by addressing barriers to reintegration, including employment, housing, and access to health and mental health services.
- Coordinate reentry services across City departments and nonprofit organizations, to support returning citizens.
- Develop and promote programs that support the employment and workforce development of returning citizens, including collaborations with employers, job training programs, and CORI-friendly employment opportunities.
- Assist returning citizens in securing stable housing through collaborations with housing providers and programs.
- Work with organizations to improve access to health care services, including mental health and substance use treatment.
- Promote financial independence by offering workshops and training.
- Engage with local communities to raise awareness of the challenges faced by returning citizens and encourage public participation in supporting reentry initiatives.
- Collect and maintain data on returning citizens served by the Office.
- File with the City Clerk an annual report on the activities and outcomes of the Office.

SECTION 3. Executive Director

The Office of Returning Citizens shall be headed by an Executive Director, who shall be appointed by the Mayor. The Executive Director shall:

- Serve as the principal advisor to the Mayor and the City Council on matters related to the reintegration of returning citizens.
- Oversee the daily operations of the Office.
- Collaborate with public and private organizations to enhance the services provided to returning citizens.

SECTION 4. Severability

The provisions of this ordinance are severable, and if any provision, or portion thereof, is held to be unconstitutional or otherwise invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, such unconstitutionality or invalidity shall not affect the remaining provisions, which shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 5. Effective Date

This ordinance shall take effect 90 days after passage.