



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



“New Prison Reentry Program Seeks to Transform Lives”

(MONROE, LOUISIANA) – March 22, 2018 – Created by Northeast Delta Human Services Authority (NE Delta HSA) in partnership with Goodwill Industries of NELA, the Louisiana Reentry Program or LA-Re is an ex-offender re-entry program that seeks to address the socioeconomic issues that increase recidivism among the formerly incarcerated. The goal of LA-Re is to give nonviolent, mentally ill and addicted ex-offenders an opportunity to receive the help they need post-incarceration so that they can build and maintain a positive social role within the community thereby avoiding the high individual, family, community and societal costs of recidivism.

“Innovation, integration and collaboration are some of the keys to resolving an entrenched social problem like incarceration. And while governmental agencies like NE Delta HSA should and can do its part, it will not be enough to solve this complex problem alone. We will need houses of faith, the business community, law enforcement, nonprofits, housing developers, educational institutions and families, to name a few, to work with us to help mitigate this issue,” said Dr. Monteic A. Sizer, NE Delta HSA Executive Director.

According to LA-PRI, every year Louisiana releases some 18,000 men and women from incarceration through completed sentences, parole, probation or conditional release. As such, these people face significant barriers to opportunities such as employment, health, education and housing. Within the first year of release, 14 percent of formerly incarcerated people will return to prison. By the fifth year, that number will skyrocket to 42 percent. As of June 2016, Ouachita Parish had a five year recidivism rate of 49 percent. This means that half of Ouachita Parish adults re-entering society will return to prison within five years of their initial release. This trend has significant societal and economic costs for both our state and the citizens we serve. For every 10 percent reduction of recidivism in the state’s 12 largest parishes, Louisiana will save over \$3 million.

“We’re following the direction of state government, but we’re not waiting for the template. We’ve crafted the template based on what we need in our own communities, because these services are needed now, not later,” said David Tinkis, Goodwill Industries of North Louisiana President and CEO.

LA-Re will service non-violent adults 18 years of age or older who are returning to Ouachita Parish from the Ouachita Correctional Center or state correctional facilities. In order to be considered for the program, the person must have evidence of a mental health and/or addictive disorder and be referred to the program within 90 days of release.

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Participants will be matched with case managers who will work with incarcerating facilities to establish individualized treatment and life plan options for the individual. LA-Re services will begin upon immediate release in order to build a solid framework for re-entry back into society.

“Finding innovative ways to help solve significant societal problems are at the heart of what we do at NE Delta HSA,” said Dr. Sizer, NE Delta HSA Executive Director. “Our Louisiana Reentry Program (LA-Re) is an example of us working across governmental systems to help meet the mental, physical, addiction and workforce needs of citizens being released to our region from Louisiana’s overburdened prisons and jails.”

LA-Re is modeled after the Louisiana Prisoner Reentry Initiative (LA-PRI) which utilizes evidence-based practices in its approach to reducing the rate of those returning to prison and Northeast Delta’s award-winning integrated approach to healthcare. Treatment includes admittance to any one of NE Delta HSA’s seven outpatient mental health and addiction clinics or one of three inpatient addiction service providers supported by NE Delta HSA. Furthermore, participants will also have access to NE Delta HSA’s tobacco cessation, gambling, developmental disability, prevention, workforce training and placement services. Additionally, they may also be referred to one of NE Delta HSA’s many regional primary health care partners for medical, dental and vision care.

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About Northeast Delta Human Services Authority (NE Delta HSA)

Northeast Delta Human Service Authority manages the operation of community-based programs to improve the quality of life for individuals with major mental illness, developmental disabilities and addictive disorders. NE Delta HSA accomplishes this by utilizing a nationally-recognized and integrative approach that identifies and addresses behavioral and primary health care needs.

Our agency operates through collaboration with regional partners in business, prevention, education and care in 12 parishes (Caldwell, East Carroll, West Carroll, Ouachita, Lincoln, Madison, Franklin, Morehouse, Jackson, Tensas, Richland and Union). NE Delta HSA is devoted to delivering programs and services that encourage citizens of Northeast Louisiana to reach their full human potential. Three tenets guide these efforts: excellent customer service, greater access to services and competent, quality care.

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