

## **Amicus Reconnect**

### **FACT SHEET**

#### **About Amicus Reconnect:**

- **WHAT IS IT:** A referral program for re-entering offenders who are searching for jobs, housing, ID, family services, transportation, clothing, food, sobriety support and other needs. Available to offenders in all Minnesota correctional facilities (state and federal) and all ex-offenders, whether just out or years after release. Founded in 1967.
- **BY WHOM:** By Amicus, a non-profit in Minneapolis that has been helping offenders build new lives for more than 42 years. [www.amicususa.org](http://www.amicususa.org)
- **HOW BIG:** Serving over 2,000 clients per year with over 5,000 service contacts last year.
- **APPROACH:** A first stop for those returning to the community, Reconnect provides direct services such as transit passes, voicemail, clothing, hygiene kits, and furniture. Staff and interns also provide practical information, leads, encouragement and advice which is focused on the issues commonly encountered by an ex-offender. Interviews are conducted in a respectful, one-on-one manner. Help is provided through phone, mail and client visits to our office in Minneapolis. Staff also visit facilities to share information about release planning and resources for successful re-entry.
- **GOAL:** Offenders access the resources they need and are empowered to build a successful, positive life.

#### **Program Services:**

- **Employment.** Staff and interns assist with employment searches using multiple online databases. They may also help with referrals to employers who are open to hiring persons with a felony and offer advice on handling felony background when filling out applications/interviewing. Staff can also provide employers information on bonding and incentive programs.
- **Housing.** Transitional housing, supportive/sober housing info and using Housinglink resources for apartments. How to address felony when applying for housing. Information on buying housing (if renting is difficult). Affordable housing database.
- **Transportation.** Bus passes are provided with a new full time job. Some are also available at reduced-price.

- **Family services.** Referrals for family reconciliation services, child care, and more. Reconnect also participates in a holiday gift program with toys for children.
- **Basic needs.** Referrals to clothing, food shelves and free meals, as well as furniture. Sometimes toiletries are available for recently released clients.
- **Support networks.** Referrals to recovery groups, sex offender community programs, former offender groups, faith communities, and other individuals/groups needed to stay on track.
- **Information about release requirements.** Help clients understand their release requirements.

### Why Get Involved with Reconnect:

- 42 years' experience helping offenders build new lives
- Award-winning staff, some who are former offenders themselves
- Expertise with special issues offenders face
- Really knows the territory and the resources available
- Cares about you as an individual
- Will respect and support you in building a positive, successful life
- Success = Plan plus Support plus Follow-Through. We can help with all three.

### How You Can Get Involved:

- If you are nearing release, or planning ahead, look in your facility's library for Reconnect information, or call or write the Amicus office (see below). Watch for Amicus and Reconnect at transition fairs at your facility. It's a great idea to start the re-entry process early, especially to secure ID and look into housing and jobs. Reconnect staff can help you with a planning timeline. The program has the greatest amount of contacts in the Twin Cities area but we also have limited information for our out of state clients.
- If you are already out, for any length of time, call, mail, or visit our Minneapolis office during Reconnect hours, Monday – Friday, 9am to noon and Monday through Thursday, 1pm to 4pm. (No appointment is necessary.) The office is located near Fifth Street and Hennepin by the Hiawatha Light Rail Line and several bus lines. We will meet with you one-on-one to help you plan, troubleshoot and find resources for whatever challenges you may be facing. Whether you are just out or whether a decades-old felony has come back to haunt you—Reconnect can help.

**Amicus is committed** to helping you be successful within an atmosphere of respect, openness, and empowerment. For more information, call us at 612 348-8570 (no collect calls), or write us at the address on the front. We look forward to hearing from you!