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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER TO ASSIST RESIDENTS
RETURNING FROM INCARCERATION AND JAIL**

*City of Chicago also releases report from Returning Residents Working Group: A
Roadmap for a Second Chance City*

CHICAGO – Today, Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot stood with those impacted by the criminal justice system, including Alderman Walter Burnett and community leaders, to sign an executive order creating a first-of-its-kind Interagency Reentry Council. This newly established Council will convene City Departments, sister agencies, and community partners with the shared goal of promoting positive reentry outcomes for Chicago residents returning from incarceration and jail.

Beginning in the Spring of 2021, Mayor Lightfoot convened a multi-sector Returning Residents Working Group made up of community leaders, advocates, and residents with lived experience, to shape the City's policy and programmatic agenda around healthcare, workforce development, and housing access to better support returning residents.

“As the sister of a man who spent more than a decade of his life incarcerated, I have seen firsthand the incredible barriers and challenges faced by people seeking to rebuild and reshape their lives as they exit the criminal justice system,” said Mayor Lightfoot. “When I became Mayor, I knew that I owed it to my brother, and the millions of people facing those same challenges that he faced, to ensure that Chicago became a welcoming city for people who have paid their debt to society and are seeking to build productive and meaningful lives post-incarceration.”

This executive order was crafted in partnership with the 2021 Returning Residents Working Group and is aimed at addressing the specific needs identified by those members with first-hand experiences returning to society post-incarceration. This group's recommendations have been compiled and today are being published in tandem with the signing of this historic order. “[A Roadmap for a Second Chance City](#)” is the culmination of the recommendations made by the Returning Residents Working Group and will serve as the cornerstone for the new Reentry Council's work.



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"We cannot allow those who have already paid their debt to society continue to be punished by systematic blockades preventing them from reentering society," said Alderman Burnett. "Today's executive order, in tandem with the 'Roadmap for Second Chance City' is not just an investment in our returning citizens, it's also an investment in community healing, families, education, and a stronger Chicago."

This first-of-its-kind interagency Reentry Council will closely examine the recommendations made in the "Roadmap for a Second Chance City" and work to implement those recommendations throughout City Government and its sister agencies. The report touches dozens of critically important topics, with a specific focus on recommendations for employment opportunities, healthcare, and housing.

"When you actively provide the steps to reentering life from incarceration, you significantly reduce the risk to individuals from the dangers of homelessness, unemployment, and endless trauma," said Willette Benford, Live Free Chicago. "This initiative demonstrates our dedication to every single one of our citizens, and that regardless of their pasts, they are entitled to success and prosperity in our great city."

This order builds upon the investments made for returning residents in Mayor Lightfoot's recently passed Chicago Recovery Plan, which invests \$10 million in a 3-year Reentry Workforce program for training and wrap-around supports for formerly incarcerated residents to attain employment and stabilization, and \$3 million in expanded community legal services like expungement and record sealing. Mayor Lightfoot is also creating a Director of Reentry role within the Mayor's Office, who will be tasked with leading this important work alongside the Interagency Reentry Council.

"The people returning to our city from jails and prisons are at the center of our work. They have paid their debt to society, and giving them a hand up will benefit them and our communities," said Ahmadou Dramé of the Illinois Justice Project. "Government must create healthy and humane pathways out of jail and prison cells and back into safe homes. Without that help, the expensive and harmful cycle of incarceration and recidivism will not end. I commend Mayor Lightfoot for her leadership and commitment to this work, and I look forward to working with her team to implement the recommendations in the report."

Along with advancing the priorities of the 2021 Returning Residents Working Group around healthcare, housing, and workforce development, the Council will also be tasked with collecting and analyzing data on Chicago's returning resident population, including using data to identify communities disproportionately



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impacted by recidivism. Using this data, the Council will establish a set of shared goals, and track progress toward outcomes. The Council will also engage government, non-profit, business, and philanthropic partners toward building a coalition committed to making Chicago a Second Chance City.

The newly created Council will convene no later than March of 2022 and will publish annual reports on their progress.

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