

**THOMAS C. LEPPERT  
MAYOR**



**CITY OF DALLAS**

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **MAYOR NAMES CHARLES TERRELL AS RE-ENTRY CZAR Announces Comprehensive Re-entry Pilot Program: DOORS**

Mayor Tom Leppert announced today the first major steps to create a model prisoner re-entry program for Dallas: He named Charles T. Terrell as the newly created position of Re-entry Czar and announced a 3-year pilot program called DOORS - Dallas One-stop Optimized Re-entry System.

The comprehensive program is designed to help support ex-prisoners, parolees and probationers as they leave the prison system and re-enter their community. Each year, more than 8,000 men, women and juveniles are released from state and federal prisons as well as county jails and return to Dallas communities. There are currently 12,000 active parolees and 50,000 active probationers in Dallas County. But many find roadblocks to jobs and housing or cannot find a service provider that will offer them sustained guidance and support. Statistics show that 2 out of 3 people releases from prison are re-arrested within 3 years.

"We cannot just send these ex-offenders back into the community and hope for the best because that clearly isn't working," said Mayor Tom Leppert. "What we can do is make sure they get the kind of focused help they need to make sure their re-entry into our community is positive, and something that will last."

As Czar, Mr. Terrell will help oversee the program's development, outreach and fundraising. Mr. Terrell is the former chair of both the Texas Criminal Justice Task Force and the Texas Department of Corrections.

"All of these folks have the potential to turn their lives in a positive direction provided they get the right kind of sustained support," said Mr. Terrell. "We really want this to be a national model for re-entry success."

DOORS - created by the non-profit *Safer Dallas Better Dallas* – will act as the umbrella organization for the Mayor's re-entry initiative. DOORS is a seamless case-management system that establishes contact with prisoners before release, determines their needs upon release, then connects them with the appropriate service provider while helping them sustain their progress. Other partners include Dallas County District Attorney's Office, Dallas County and the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

Currently the Dallas area has several re-entry service providers. Some deal only with non-violent offenders, some juvenile, some focus on housing and some just on employment. DOORS will guide their cases to the correct provider then track their progress.

"There are clearly a lot of quality service providers in Dallas," said Mayor Leppert. "This allows us to leverage the good work they're doing and improve the odds for success."

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The initial 3-year budget is funded from two sources. A grant from the U.S. Department of Justice will fund \$489,000. This was earmarked for re-entry programs by U.S. Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson, U.S. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison and U.S. Sen. John Cornyn. An additional \$440,000 grant is from the W.W. Caruth, Jr. Foundation at Communities Foundation of Texas. Mr. Terrell and ***Safer Dallas Better Dallas*** will fundraise and work with the city on seeking federal and foundation grants for the project.

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