

I Still Live with That Today

(Reentry Council Member)

I guess what pushed me was we had three people getting out. They got out of prison here, and they were residents here, so we put them in hotels. And when I say hotels, we're not talking Hiltons, we're talking low budget motels. We put 'em in what we can afford just to get them off the street. And we only had 30 days of funds cause that was the criteria: 30 days to get 'em out of prison, get 'em clothing, get 'em food, get 'em all those basic needs and a little bit of safety. And then try to get them in the mindset of getting employment on top of everything else cause they only got 30 days to be self-sustaining. That's tough.

So, we got two of them up and out. They got jobs because we had relationships with employers, but one of them hadn't been in regular society for years and years and years, and on that 30 day mark we asked the county for an extension. And they said no. I said, "Wait, wait, wait, wait. This guy, he's trying but he doesn't have the skills. We're still working on that. We just need maybe another 30 days." And they said, "No, I'm sorry, we're not going to do it."

This is winter, this is January. And we had to tell this guy that he had to leave by Friday.

He said, "Well, where am I going to go? And I said, "I don't know. I don't even know what to tell you. I don't know. All I know is we didn't get the authorization, and they're not going to let you stay here for free."

And I still live with that today. The look on his face and not being able to do anything.