

HOPE Letters Ministry Information Session

Presented by: Reba Collins, All In Community Consultant

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A signature initiative of
All In Community





Purpose & Principles

- ❖ **Ministry of Correspondence** :: Does not require visiting inside prison
- ❖ **Relationship Centered** :: Mentor for personal transformation and growth
- ❖ **Community-based** :: Develop a healing community for justice-involved ministry
- ❖ **Contextual** :: Adapts to needs of incarcerated persons within ODRC institutional setting



Group Dynamics





Group Dynamics

- ❖ Groups of 4+ People
- ❖ Meet 1-2 Times a Month :: Group Meets Regularly
- ❖ Hold Each Other Accountable :: No One Writes Alone
- ❖ Develop Ministry Competency :: Trainings & Strategic Community Engagement
- ❖ Be Good Partners :: Follow ODRC Policies and Procedures for Correspondence & Maintain Regular Check-ins with Prison Chaplain

- ❖ **Know and Comply with Agency Policies.** Be familiar with the current policies of ODRC regarding mail and follow them (for example, only use blue or black ink and only white paper).
- ❖ **Writing Boundaries.** Women write women only. Use the mailing address of the church or other neutral group, not home or business. If available, you can use HOPE Letters stationary.
- ❖ **Personal Boundaries.** Do not give last name, address, phone number, social security number, or any other identifying information. Never tell mentee private information, such as family members' full names, where you work, what your birthday is.
- ❖ **Consistent Correspondence.** Write on a regular schedule, no more than one to two times per month
- ❖ **Cultivate Patience.** Commit to corresponding for at least a year. Mentees may not reply quickly. Don't just stop writing.
- ❖ **Attend Monthly HOPE Letters Meetings.** No one writes alone. HOPE Letter meetings are critical for on-going support and guidance, accountability, and preparedness.



Best
Practices



Group Member Boundaries

For *your* safety and efficacy of HOPE Letters ministry, mentors may NOT:

- ❖ Serve as ODRC volunteer in **same** institution as HOPE Letters.
- ❖ Engage in HOPE Letters and ODRC volunteerism without obtaining prior approval from ODRC
- ❖ Use HOPE Letters to maintain contact with previously known persons
- ❖ Use HOPE Letters as supplement to current prison ministry efforts
- ❖ Correspond with mentee outside of group's activities
- ❖ Send money, stamps or other items of value
- ❖ Put money on mentee's account for anything (phone calls, music, envelopes, etc.)
- ❖ Get involved in your mentee's legal affairs.
- ❖ Take sides either way if mentee is having problems with the ODRC staff



Question
&
Comments

To start a HOPE Letters
group contact:

Reba Collins

All In Community Consultant

rebakco@gmail.com

513-262-0184

