

Advocates For Change

THE ADVOCATE

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

You Are Invited	1
Advocate for Your Loved One ...	1
SOMB & SOTMP Updates	2
AFC Meets with Parole	2
Ankeney Lawsuit Note	3
Have you Been Denied Parole?..	3
The GO Guide	3
CCJJ SO Working Group	3
Keep Your Documentation	3
Law Class Visits AFC	3
Editorial Policy	4

AFC MISSION STATEMENT

AFC supports those with a sex offense and their families by:

- Advocating for change in sex offense laws and policies, and for the adherence to constitutional rights;
- Educating the public, lawmakers, and the judiciary;
- Promoting the successful treatment and reintegration of those with an offense into the community, thus reducing victimization and enhancing the safety of all.

CONTACT AFC**Mail:**

P. O. Box 103392
Denver, CO 80250

Phone:

720-329-9096

Email:

advocates4changeafc@yahoo.com

Website:

www.advocates4change.org

YOU ARE INVITED!**A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR**

To the families of those in the justice system and those 'on the outside' please join us for our monthly meetings held on the third Tuesday of every month at St Paul's Church, 1600 Grant Street, Denver.

We have had many noted speakers who have shared with us great information, knowledge, and insights into the workings of the 'justice' system. They have taken questions and talked with members individually about their problems. And we have more great speakers on tap in the coming months. A few recent programs are highlighted below.

Law Students Come to AFC: AFC's guest speaker in June was Laurie Rose Kepros, Director of Sexual Litigation, Office of the State Public Defender, who brought 24 members of her law class to the general meeting. (More on p 3.)

Re-entry and Jobs: Our July speaker, William Case, talked about re-entry challenges and what felons can do to get a job. One thing he discussed was "banning the box". Many employers have a box on their job application asking if you have a felony. 'Banning the box' is a movement to get this box removed from the initial application. Employers can ask at a later interview if the job applicant has a felony, but this gives a person the opportunity to have an interview and be judged on merit and character.

A Judge's Viewpoint: In August, retired Judge Roxanne Bailin shared her perspective how our system came to be so punitive and what the role of a judge is in this system.

Save the Date: December 2nd is our annual **Holiday Party!**

Our theme will be **Regifting Yourself**. We will regift *stuff* by having a silent auction and we will share stories from inmates and parole/ probationers who have *regifted* themselves into the people they are today. If you have a story you wish to share, please submit it to us by November 15 – your name can be redacted if you wish. We will publish stories in the December Newsletter and share them at the Holiday Party. If you can, PLEASE JOIN US for this potluck and Holiday Party.

*Carolyn Turner, Chair
Advocates for Change*

A CHANCE TO ADVOCATE FOR YOUR LOVED ONE

Citizens Advocacy Meeting – Oct 8, 2014: Meet directly with DOC officials to air your concerns about a loved one who is incarcerated or on parole. More info: <http://www.doc.state.co.us/citizen-advocate-meetings>
RSVP/Consent to Search forms are due Oct 1.

SOTMP & SOMB UPDATES

Laura Trombley has resigned her position as administrator of the SOTMP. Christina Ortiz-Marquez is the interim administrator.

SOMB Standards & Guidelines Revision:

The SOMB has started a committee to rewrite their standards over a 3-year timeframe. For the first time, an offender advocate has been added to the group to provide input. **If you have any comments you would like passed on to this committee, please send them to Advocates for Change.** We hope to make a significant impact on this document which affects anyone convicted of a sexual offense.

SOMB Sunset Review: October 2014 is the start of the Sunset Review period for SOMB. AFC is already working on information to present to the Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA). **Please send AFC information or concerns that you would like reported to DORA.** This is a major opportunity to make our voices heard. Legislators will be paying attention to what this report has to say. We can use the results of the Sunset Review to continue to raise awareness and press for positive changes in sex offense laws.

SOMB Family Engagement Panel and Survey:

In another first, the SOMB has convened an ad hoc Family Engagement Panel made up of four family members who have a loved one convicted of a sex offense and three representatives from CDOC, parole, and probation. The panel presented information to the SOMB about impacts on families during the June board meeting. The panel will present suggestions for better ways to engage and educate family members during the board meeting on September 19.

In addition, the SOMB will soon be conducting an anonymous, online survey of family members about their experiences regarding engagement, education, and support. We will update you as more information becomes available.

AFC MEETS A 2ND TIME WITH HEADS OF PAROLE

by Maxine Powers

In July, AFC members met a second time with CDOC head of Parole, Walt Pesterfield. We were joined by Deputy Director for Adult Parol, Alison Morgan. Highlights of our meeting included the following topics:

Continuity of Care: CDOC says that treatment delivered by SOTMP is equivalent to that provided by SOMB approved treatment providers. Even so, some treatment providers and parole officers do not agree. Also, offender's treatment records are reportedly not being forwarded from SOTMP to parole officers. For these reasons, parolees are starting over in treatment unnecessarily. We will keep working on this issue.

UAs and forced absence from the job: CDOC believes that steady employment enhances a parolee's ability to be successful and that a parolee's job should not be jeopardized by requiring parolees to miss work to complete UA's and to meet with their parole officers. **If we know of specific instances where someone's job has been lost or adversely impacted in this way, DOC would like to know about it.** AFC will be following up specific instances that we hear of and forwarding that information to Mr. Pesterfield and Ms. Morgan.

Paying for Treatment: CDOC is directing treatment money to those who (legitimately) do not have the ability to pay for treatment. They feel that gap in treatment arising from an inability to pay for treatment should not be cause for parole revocation. As long as the parolee is making a positive effort to be self-sustaining (e.g., actively seeking employment, paying rent), Parole says they will help with payment for treatment.

Housing: CDOC recently completed their housing voucher audit. Their findings resulted in some minor fixes. CDOC holds their housing vendors accountable for habitable living quarters. If there are problems (e.g., non-working bathroom, cockroaches or bedbugs, no heat in winter) CDOC would like to be given specifics of the situation. They will require action by the vendor and they will move the parolee so that there is no retaliation.

Complaints about a parole officer? First contact the Parole Dept. Constituents Services Office. The complaint will be forwarded to Ms. Morgan and Mr. Pesterfield. DOC will look into the situation. In doing so, they must not only look at a particular instance, but must consider patterns of behavior and accountability issues. If there is no response to the complaint, Ms. Morgan can be contacted directly.

Changes in Parole Department: Training dollars are being redirected to evidence-based training (coming out of the University of Cincinnati) for parole officers. The focus is now on successful re-entry as opposed to revocation of parole and re-incarceration. This shift in focus requires a culture change across the Parole Dept., which will take time to implement.

Pre-release Center: CDOC is in the processes of launching pre-release services in individual prison facilities. Funding from HB 1355, will pay for 19 new parole officers working with offenders in facilities to address pre-release issues. Susan White is now in charge of re-entry staff.

AFC is looking forward to continued dialogue with Parole and other CDOC officials.

ANKENY LAWSUIT NOTE

This lawsuit is going forward but it is important to reiterate what many of you have heard before from advocates. If you file your own lawsuit when a class action such as this is in process, it can derail the class action suit. We have heard that six lawsuits have been filed individually regarding Ankeny. All six have been denied. The important fact here is that the denials can be used by the defendant, CDOC, as ammunition in the class action. If it was denied by other courts; it can, therefore, be denied in the class action suit.

HAVE YOU BEEN DENIED PAROLE ? WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Mike Dell is looking for documentation received by inmates from the Parole Board when parole is denied. He would like to present them at the December hearings for Parole to show that the form does not have the necessary information for those convicted of a sexual offense. Your names and DOC#'s will NOT be used. (They will be blocked out or you can remove them prior to sending a copy of the document.) Copies can be mailed to Mike at So. CO CURE, P.O. Box 7474, Colorado Springs, CO 80944-7474.

THE GO GUIDE: RE-ENTRY GUIDE FOR COLORADO by C J Spencer

Did you know that *The go Guide*, published by the Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition (CCJRC) has information on everything from Planning for Release to Understanding Parole and from Applying for Benefits to Money Matters? This book should be available on the inside from the DOC Library in your facility or your Case Manager.

For those on the outside or for more info on the book, you can also contact CCJRC at 1212 Mariposa St. #6, Denver, CO 80204.

CCJJ SO WORKING GROUP ACTIVITY by Ann Harris

CCJJ Sex Offender Working Group recently discussed the issue of early discharge from probation. There is a great reluctance to release people early from probation particularly from victim's advocates and prosecutors. Even though they recognize the 10- and 20-year sentences were made arbitrarily without research, they don't want to move from this time frame. The district attorneys feel these are a different type of crime that requires long sentences. Probation also recognizes that they operate in a fear based community and that the public wants long sentences.

The group has compromised to identify some permanently incapacitated or bedridden people who could be released from probation.

LAW CLASS VISITS AFC

by Ann Harris

AFC's guest speaker in June was Laurie Rose Kepros, Director of Sexual Litigation, Office of the State Public Defender, who brought 24 members of her law class to the general meeting. The theme of the discussion was: Building the Next Generation of Criminal Defense Lawyers.

The law students were in their first and second years with one third year, and all were externs working with various public defenders offices. Prior to coming to the meeting Ms. Kepros had them prepare by reading the current sex offender laws. Ms. Kepros had prepared ten questions regarding defense attorneys and how we as clients felt about our experiences with them. The participation from the membership helped the students see how the law does or doesn't work regarding those with a sex offense.

Concerns of the audience included attorneys not staying communication with clients, misinformation about plea bargains, what it really means to have an indeterminate sentence, mandatory sentencing and the consequences of being sentenced with a sex offense. AFC members were surprised to hear that attorneys are not up to date or totally unaware of the sex offender laws. The meeting provided an eye opening experience for the law students present.

KEEP YOUR DOCUMENTATION by Pat Martin

After attending a Continuity of Care meeting at SOMB, we learned how important it is (for those with a sex offense) to keep all paperwork provided to you by your treatment provider. Most treatment providers keep their records for only 7 years.

It is important that you keep any certifications, notes from therapist, dates of treatment, and therapist information whether incarcerated or on parole. Also, keep any polygraph information you receive and the name of the polygraph company.

We know people who have had to repeat treatment because their new therapist could not get the information from their last provider. Having polygraph information may mean not having to pay for a second or third history polygraph

We know that it may not be easy to save this information, but it will become very important when applying to have your name removed from the registry in 10 years.

Editorial Policy

The Advocate is published by Advocates for Change. We provide information on our efforts to affect change in legislation, treatment, and re-integration into the community, primarily for those who have been convicted of a sex offense. Nothing offered by AFC is intended to be legal advice, and any information provided should never be a substitute for obtaining counsel and/or conducting your own research.

Submissions from inmates/offenders, parolees, and members, are encouraged. Please limit articles to 300 words. The editor reserves the right to publish all, part or none of the contributions submitted. Send contributions for publication and/or comments on the newsletter to: Advocates for Change, Newsletter Editor, PO Box 103392, Denver, CO 80250.

PLEASE JOIN US

Membership Fee is \$20 for family membership, \$5 per year for returning citizens, and 8 stamps for those on the inside. Any additional donations are gratefully accepted.

Today's Date: _____

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 plain news letter in plain envelope
 do not send a newsletter

Please feel free to share an application with a friend or a family member. Call 720-329-9096, if you have any questions or comments.

**Send membership applications to: AFC Membership
P. O. Box 103392
Denver, CO 80250**



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