



The following needs were shared with us by a local sober living home. It provides some great ideas for those who would like to respond in this way

Suggestions from a sober living home:

We found that some of the more important items for us getting back on our feet were more geared toward resources, rather than material goods. This isn't to say that the material things like food, clothing, etc. aren't beneficial. They obviously are; however, in addition to those items we've included things that sort of help us put one foot in front of the other. Some of them will definitely require some problem solving, but at least now they're on paper. Hope this helps.

Public Transit

-SEPTA isn't doing bus tokens anymore; however, they are doing SEPTA passes. Key cards. We were thinking maybe \$10 or \$20 SEPTA cards that are loaded up. It takes some time and dedication, as each pass would have to be set up separately, but they're great because they can't be used to exchange for cash.

General Welfare

-We've found that the issue with getting things like food stamps, health insurance, etc. isn't the issue itself. Rather, it's the transportation and the case working to/from/for each individual that causes the most hurdles. The SEPTA key would help with the transportation, that's for sure. But maybe also some resource materials that break down - at a more digestible level - how to get these things taken care of. Pamphlets, brochures, direct contacts that your friend may have with case workers at the welfare office. You'd be stunned by the number of people that are staying with us that qualify for an immense amount of help from welfare, but don't actually use it. Something to move this process along for them.

Driver's License / State Identification

-Definitely a tricky one. The first two items (Public Transit, General Welfare) would propel the individual forward considerably when faced with the, "Proof of Identity" issue. That being said, PENNDOT does charge a fee to get the necessary identification. This is an issue for those who want to get job searching or Welfare squared away, but also don't have capital to get the identification in the first place, which of course is required for employment/welfare. We were toying with the idea of

making this available to the individual, without giving them tangible money. Perhaps a voucher of sorts? Some sort of way that the individual could receive the necessary funds (I believe PENNDOT charges something just shy of \$40) without actually having cash on hand? This may be another situation where your friend's network could play a role. Maybe there's already a solution for this we aren't aware of! Anyhow, attaining the necessary funds to obtain identification has proven to be a major issue for many of us starting over. Maybe we can come up with a solution.

Tracphone

-Not quite as tricky, but still requires some serious footwork. Many of us arrived at our home without proper cell phone service. Tracphones, Obamaphones, etc. are the answer here. Maybe we could provide some type of voucher or service that makes this process quicker or easier. If somebody comes in without proper identification or capital, a phone is difficult to get with any kind of efficiency. It is also of paramount importance to have said phone when trying to network for both employment and in recovery. The guys thought maybe a prepaid phone with minimal service being a part of the "bundle" (for lack of a better word) that your friend gets together?

Employment

-I feel as though we actually do a pretty good job of this at our home. Still, if we got something together (again pamphlet, brochure, word document included on intake paperwork, etc.) that listed companies currently hiring, or contacts that we have in the working field, that would be wonderful. Sometimes simple tasks like Googling "who is hiring?" is daunting for the new addict or alcoholic. Some may feel better if they had a tangible list that read "Call Maria, at CVS - 215-xxx-xxxx". Essentially, more social working for us, but quite useful to somebody brand new.

Hopefully all of that makes sense. Now, the obvious:

Food

-Canned goods, non-perishables, water, quick cheap easy meals (frozen stuff, ramen, etc)

Clothing

-Season should be considered. Hats/boots/gloves for the cold seasons, shirts/shorts for the warm ones. UNDERWEAR AND SOCKS. Footwear.

Toiletries

-Soap, shampoo, shaving cream, razors, deodorant, tooth brush, tooth paste, bath towel, wash rag.