



POSITION ON CRIMINALIZING ADDICTION



The policy position of the Transforming Justice Coalition is as follows:

1 We oppose the criminalization of public use and recriminalizing simple possession.

We do not support returning to 50 years of failed war on drug policies, rooted in anti-Black racism, that have destroyed and traumatized communities. The criminalization of addiction and poverty fails to invest in the support and services communities and people need to thrive.

2 We support greater investment for the creation and development of peer-led community outreach teams, with healing/health centered care to connect people to services and de-escalate crises.

To facilitate long term solutions for people living on the streets, we need to support the creation of more proactive, peer-led teams trained to work in relationship with people who experience houselessness, addiction, and untreated mental or behavioral health disorders to create accountability and healing. System navigators with lived experience are far more effective in connecting people to services and de-escalating community crises than law enforcement.

3 We support greater investment in the addiction treatment continuum of care, with a focus on programs that are trauma informed, culturally specific and in multiple languages.

Programs and services that meet the needs of Black, Latinx, Indigenous and other people of color have been historically underfunded in Oregon. To ensure everyone who needs services receives and benefits from them, we must invest in both new and existing programs, while providing technical assistance and support to these organizations (i.e. Behavioral Resource Network Programs) to ensure their success.



About the Transforming Justice Coalition

The Transforming Justice Coalition, formed in the fall of 2020, is a statewide collaboration between advocates of the criminal justice system, leaders, and individuals with direct lived experience.

Since then, we have advanced numerous policies to shrink the number of people under correctional control, reduce racial disparities and invest in culturally specific programs across the state of Oregon.

The Transforming Justice Coalition is guided by these principles:

1. We seek to dismantle institutional racism within the criminal justice system and are transparent about the influence of white supremacy that created and sustains the policies and the criminal justice system. In the short and long term for our work, this means advancing policy that reduces racial disparities.
2. The people impacted by these policies are centered and present in our development process.
3. We seek to shrink the correctional control system.
4. We seek to address and prioritize the needs of victims and survivors.
5. We seek to invest in services that are culturally specific, healing-centered, and trauma-informed.
6. We are inspired by the Breathe Act, which offers a “radical reimagining of public safety, community care, and how we spend money as a society.”



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