

2nd Opportunity Program

Frequently Asked Questions- Juvenile Justice

What is the 2nd Opportunity Program?

An employment readiness, financial literacy, life skills, and reentry program consisting of five core courses, in both English and Spanish, designed for those individuals who are at risk or have been involved with the justice system, substance use, or any other negative life changing event, that want to get their life on a more positive track.

We believe 2nd Opportunity is the most authentic & comprehensive program available. It is based on a combination of lived experience and evidence-informed research; sharing stories about challenges and successes brings hope and helps individuals to create their own paths. Each course provides a Certificate of Completion to demonstrate progress to judges, probation/parole, and family.

How is 2nd Opportunity beneficial to the Juvenile population?

The fact that 2nd Opportunity stems from lived experience creates a personal understanding of the current path these students are on. Our facilitators share stories of the lessons, and knowledge learned as an outcome of the residual consequences of similar actions. It is our goal to provide skills, knowledge, and firsthand experiences to help encourage their success and divert them back to a more positive path.

Our program focuses on subject matter not often covered by traditional educational placement, covering topics surrounding trauma, communication, conflict resolution, basic life skills, goal setting, and finances, all of which are needed for future success.

How will 2nd Opportunity be provided to our participants?

We offer both self-paced and group instructed versions. The 2nd Opportunity Program was created to have a variety of methods to allow access into any facility, classroom, or organization. The self-paced version allows the individual to progress through the courses, completing the activities, Quick Checks, and “Organize your Thoughts” Journal Question. The group instructed version is especially beneficial for those that may have literacy or comprehension issues. The DVDs do the actual instructing, the trained facilitator leads the conversation to ensure a true understanding of the many topics. This method promotes social skills and shared perspectives. The classroom environment provides a very powerful learning experience.

The program is available through:

- Tablets/Smartphones
- Live Streamed via Zoom (or similar)
- Local Area Networks (LAN)
- DVD- Facilitated Model
- Workshops & Workbooks

Who can serve as a Facilitator and what type of training is provided?

A facilitator can be a staff member, community volunteer, or peer leader who has completed the program. We have a detailed facilitator guide, and training that will help prepare the facilitator to help

lead the group. The videos provide the instruction of a topic, and the Facilitator will use the Guide to lead conversation, open discussions, and make the experience more engaging.

What are the benefits of the workbooks and workshops?

There are two versions of the workbooks: Companion Workbooks and Activity Packets. Companion Workbooks provide the text that is the backbone of the video presentations. It also provides the forms and space for completing the activities, such as creating a budget, and to journal thought provoking questions. The Activity Packet doesn't contain the text but does contain the forms and space for activities and journal questions.

Workshops are not designed to re-teach what is on the videos. They serve to guide people through the 2nd Opportunity Program and keep them inspired and motivated. They are impactful and can be done through Zoom (or similar) or in person depending upon availability.

Walkthroughs allow us to meet with potential participants and explain the origin, value, and benefits of the 2nd Opportunity Program. Experience shows it makes an enormous difference in the number of enthusiastic participants.

How long does it take to complete the 2nd Opportunity Program?

It depends on the way the program is implemented into your facility. If done in a self-paced method, it can be completed in 2-3 weeks, assuming several hours per day and completion of the workbooks. If offered as a class, it can be completed according to the needs of the facility. We provide the classroom templates ranging from less than 30 days to 3 months, we will help custom design time frames to your specifications.

How much does the program cost?

The 2nd Opportunity Program is offered on an annual license basis. The cost will depend upon the number of participants being served over a one-year time frame. It also depends on the method of delivery, and the number of workshops and workbooks. We are glad to discuss implementation and provide a proposal for your consideration.

How long has 2nd Opportunity been in existence and can you provide references?

The origin of the program goes back to 2012 when it was first developed and instructed in Federal Prison. It became a mandatory component of the treatment plan in the Federal Prison Residential Drug Abuse Program (RDAP) in Duluth, MN. Today it is used in jails, prisons, halfway houses, substance abuse treatment facilities, at risk youth/ juvenile justice systems, colleges, and has been used in a court-ordered diversion program. We are a coalition member of Project Opioid. We have worked with Cook County Juvenile Detention, Year Up, Chi-Prep Academy and Chicago Community Colleges alternative school at Olive-Harvey. We are glad to provide references along with their contact information and video testimonials.