

THREE CORDS STRONG ROSC ALLIANCE MEETING MINUTES

TRANSITIONAL TRAINING SERVICES

LOCATION: 4455 S KING DRIVE SUITE 101-B

DATE: 06/25/2026

Facilitator: Francis Oklah

Co-Facilitator: Marjorie Howard, Vawnshekia Oklah

TIME: 09:30 AM – 11:00 AM

ZOOM MEETING ID: Hybrid (in person and on Zoom)

I. Call to Order: Dr. Francis Oklah

II. Opening Statements – Marjorie Howard

Marjorie Howard welcomed ROSC members and visitors and provided an overview of what a ROSC meeting is and why it matters. She shared the purpose of the Three Cords Strong ROSC Alliance and explained why community members, service providers, and system partners should join the ROSC.

Key ROSC Goals & Milestones- Vawnshekia Oklah

Engage at least 10 employers or workforce agencies to explore recovery-friendly and second-chance employment by **June 30, 2026**.

- By **June 30, 2028**, Three Cords Strong ROSC will expand adult deflection partnerships beyond CPD District 003 and support consistent, recovery-centered deflection practices across multiple Chicago Police Department districts.
- Expand deflection partnerships to CPD districts by **June 30, 2028**.
- Institutionalize deflection and recovery-informed training within participating law

III. Speaker Presentation – Florence Wright

- Our task force is made up of professionals from law enforcement, healthcare, emergency medical services, behavioral health, treatment providers, community organizations, and recovery advocates who work together with one common goal: preventing overdoses, connecting people to resources, and supporting long-term recovery.

- Recovery is not easy, and anyone who tells you otherwise has likely never experienced the challenges that come with overcoming addiction.
- A relapse does not erase the progress you have made or define your future. Recovery is a lifelong journey that is built one decision at a time, and every positive choice you make moves you closer to the life you deserve.
- Recovery often requires replacing unhealthy environments with positive influences that remind you why you started this journey.
- Naloxone, commonly known as Narcan, is a medication that can temporarily reverse an opioid overdose and provide valuable time until emergency medical personnel arrive. Carrying naloxone is not about encouraging drug use; it is about protecting human life.
- Recovery involves much more than overcoming physical dependence on substances. Many individuals in recovery also struggle with anxiety, depression, trauma, grief, or post-traumatic stress disorder.
- Every person in recovery experiences triggers, and learning to recognize them is an important part of preventing relapse. Triggers may include stressful situations, financial difficulties, unhealthy relationships, loneliness, certain places, holidays, or even unexpected successes that create emotional pressure.
- Recovery is about much more than simply avoiding drugs or alcohol. It is about rebuilding every area of your life one step at a time. This may include finding stable employment, returning to school, repairing relationships, becoming financially responsible, improving your physical health, or reconnecting with your children and loved ones.
- Addiction is a medical condition, not a character flaw or moral failure. Using respectful language, such as "person with a substance use disorder" or "person in recovery," reminds us that people are far more than the challenges they have faced.

V. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION— Florence Wright

- **Question: What does the Opioid and Heroin Task Force actually do to help people struggling with addiction?** The Opioid and Heroin Task Force brings together professionals from law enforcement, healthcare, behavioral health, emergency medical services, treatment providers, schools, and community organizations to address the opioid crisis from multiple angles. Our work includes overdose prevention, public education, distributing naloxone (Narcan), connecting individuals and families with treatment and recovery resources, supporting prevention initiatives, and working to reduce the stigma associated with substance use disorders
- **Question: How can employers and communities help reduce the stigma surrounding addiction and recovery?** Employers who offer second-chance hiring opportunities and employee assistance programs can make a tremendous difference in helping individuals rebuild stable and productive lives.
- **Question: How can I help a friend or family member who is still actively using opioids or heroin?** The most important thing you can do is approach them with compassion rather than judgment. Let them know you care about their well-being and encourage them to seek professional treatment when they are ready. Carry naloxone if appropriate, know how to recognize the signs of an overdose, and remember that while you can offer support, you cannot force someone into recovery before they are ready to accept help.

- **Question: What are the warning signs that someone may be at risk of overdosing, and what should I do if it happens?** Common signs of an opioid overdose include very slow or stopped breathing, blue or gray lips and fingertips, pinpoint pupils, unusual snoring or gurgling sounds, and an inability to wake the person.
- **Question: Why is fentanyl found in so many different drugs, and how can people protect themselves from accidental exposure?** The safest way to prevent accidental fentanyl exposure is to avoid using illicit drugs. Education, awareness, and access to naloxone are also important tools for preventing overdose deaths. Use drug test kits to test if fentanyl has been added to the substances you are using. Also use the test kits especially when you are using a different dealer or the dealer is new.
- **Question: What are some healthy ways to cope with cravings, triggers, and stress without returning to substance use?** Healthy coping strategies include attending recovery meetings, talking with a sponsor or trusted friend, participating in counseling, exercising, journaling, practicing mindfulness or meditation, engaging in hobbies, volunteering, maintaining a structured daily routine, and avoiding situations that may trigger cravings.

IV. Order of Business – Three Cords Strong Mission, Vision & Updates

Presented by Marjorie Howard

Mission:

Three Cords Strong empowers individuals on their recovery journeys by weaving together personal growth, family support, and community resilience. We believe that recovery is a continuous journey rather than a final destination and strive to embrace and support individuals on their unique paths to recovery.

Vision:

A world where recovery is celebrated as a lifelong journey, weaving the threads of personal growth, family, and community connections, forming a resilient tapestry not easily broken.

V. Strategic Goals:

- Finalize and present the adult deflection proposal to District 003 leadership, including referral criteria and partner roles, by Q2 FY26.
- Co-develop deflection training and destigmatization education for officers in collaboration with ROSC partners.
- Pilot adult deflection referrals and begin tracking outcomes and lessons learned by Q3 FY26.

VI. Updates:

- Researched workforce training programs aligned with recovery-friendly and second-chance employment models.
- Initiated conversations with local employers to assess readiness and interest in hiring individuals impacted by substance use or justice involvement.

VII. Community Partner Presentations

- Angela Morgan – TCA
- Felony Free Society
- New Millennium Law

VIII. Next Action Steps

- Join the Three Cords Strong ROSC Alliance
- **Next Meeting: July 30th 2026**

IX. MEETING CLOSE – Vawnshekia Oklah

X. MEETING ATTENDANCE

1. Azeez Muhammad
2. Sharon Batiest
3. Zamaria Howard
4. Marquelah Bell
5. Alice Muhammad
6. Sondra Muhammad
7. Juliea Clippard
8. Marjorie Howard
9. Vawnshekia Oklah
10. Francis Oklah
11. Benedicta Ossom
12. Carolyn Howard
13. Agnes Oklah
14. Joshua Bracy
15. Dajuan Logan
16. Eric Hernandez
17. Kenneth Floyd
18. Jose Martinez
19. Anthony Allen Jr.
20. Anton Allen
21. James Mayes
22. Raymond Williams
23. India Payne
24. Issac Thompson
25. Daquan Jones
26. Jashima Ford
27. Jeffrey Coleman
28. Antonio Lee
29. Brent Burge
30. David Ruth

- 31. Charles Easley**
- 32. Joy Mckennies**
- 33. Benny Lee**
- 34. Angela Rand**
- 35. Nicole Baker**
- 36. Caprie Lee**
- 37. Darryl Paige**
- 38. Diane Howard**
- 39. Florene Wright**
- 40. Corina Kizer**
- 41. Romesia Lowery**
- 42. Emmanuel Poku**
- 43. Angela Morgan**