

Inside Justice: A Summer Interns Perspective

R.E.S.T.O.R.E. Duval Observations

Entry 2: What is R.E.S.T.O.R.E. Duval

There are currently two R.E.S.T.O.R.E. reentry houses, each a four-bedroom, three-bathroom house that comfortably accommodates six ladies, two per room, and one house manager. Each house is located near multiple bus lines, making transportation accessible for residents without a driver's license. Before construction, Rebecca gathered suggestions from future residents on what they would like in the space. Based on their input, she included extra storage under the beds and a personal closet for each resident. Valerie now lives in the second reentry house and has earned a single bedroom with its own TV, a privilege granted to those who take initiative within the program. A new quadplex apartment building is now under construction to offer affordable rent and full amenities to R.E.S.T.O.R.E. women who are ready for independent living. While Valerie looks forward to moving in when the time is right, she's thriving and content with her current situation.

Rebecca spends the first three days with residents once they arrive at the R.E.S.T.O.R.E. house. This helps them get settled and set up for success. They start at the local Sheriff's office to register as a convicted felon, then go to Walmart for basic clothing and undergarments. Each resident is provided a laundry basket full of what Valerie describes as "every hygiene item you could need," and three large bags packed with clothing to wear until they can purchase their own.

Valerie mused that classy women donate the clothing, and the high-quality items help residents "look good, feel good, and do good." Rebecca even purchased a cellphone for Valerie, eliminating communication and job search barriers.