

COALITION TO REDUCE RECIDIVISM

Summer 2017

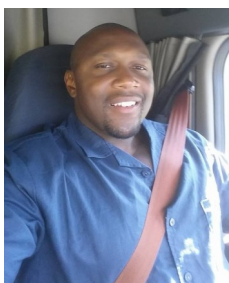
INSIDE/OUT



"A conviction does not have to be a life sentence"

Interview with Repatriate Mr. Willie Gibson Jr. :

By Kim Woods



When you look at Willie (Big Duke) Gibson Jr. you are looking at a miracle. In 2001 Willie received a prison sentence of 12 years for drug trafficking. While in prison, Willie decided to use his business mind obtained from "the streets" to make a decision that changed his life for the better. Inside/Out interviewed Willie to find out how he turned his life around and uses his life to mentor young people today. Read how Willie used his experience living in a confined jail cell-

to make money driving in a confined truck sleeper.

Question: Why did you go to prison?

I was selling drugs and got caught. I trusted the wrong person who did not have my best interest. The crazy thing is that I was actually pulled over by the police for a traffic violation. I picked up a friend of mine who had drugs on him. Later he lied to the police and told them I had sold the drugs to him. I had a rule that I would never sell drugs where I lay my head. It was considered a Controlled Buy Up.

(A controlled buy is when a cooperating witness or an undercover police officer purchases illegal items, typically a controlled substance, from a criminal suspect).

Question: Why did you decide to sell drugs?

I had a business mind and a good head on my shoulders. I wanted to use my talents to make that "quick money". I knew I needed to take care of my family and making lots of money felt good. I was known as a good guy on the streets. If there were kids who needed shoes or clothes, I would buy it for them. I felt I was doing the right thing by taking care of my family and the community. What I didn't know was that selling drugs has bad consequences. Many of these dudes out on the street don't think about the consequences. They just want that fast money. They don't realize that the same business knowledge on how they hustle and sell drugs can be used in the business world to make legit money.

Question: Did you want to change your life in prison or when you were released?

I decided that I wanted to change while in. I was watching my kids & family struggle and needing help but I couldn't do anything about it. There were older guys in prison who saw something different in me. They knew I was smart and different from the knuckleheads. I wanted something better and they helped to mentor me to go in the right direction. I was determined to teach myself a trade while locked up so I would be ready to work once I was released. My father was a truck driver and I wanted to obtain my CDL license like him. I asked my family to send me books on trucking. I also read books on owning a business and understanding stocks. Prison didn't teach me these things. I had to break through the system and find this info for myself.

Continued on page 7

Investing In Our Youth



Over 100 students attended the 2017 Youth Summit from the following middle school districts: Round Lake #112, Waukegan #60, Zion #6, and Beach Park #3. We had several informative and exciting workshops with dynamic speakers.

Continued on page. 4

Legislative Updates



Find out the latest legislative news of importance that can affect you.

Page 6

please join us **Save The Date**



**13th Annual Coalition to
Reduce Recidivism
Job Fair/Luncheon**

Friday, October 13, 2017

Milan Banquet Hall

Volunteers Needed

For more information call 847-244-4900
or email

Coalition2rr@waukegantownship.com

Pastor Todd Fletcher - Chair



"No More Victims"

About Inside/Out

Inside/Out is a publication of the Coalition to Reduce Recidivism, which is based in Lake County, IL. The newsletter intends to raise awareness and discuss issues that affect the lives of men, women and children who are incarcerated and who have been released from incarceration.

The views and opinions included herein do not necessarily state or reflect those of the Coalition's executive board or its individual members.

How to Reach Us:

By Phone: (847) 244-4900

By Fax: (874) 244-5185

By Email: coalition2rr@waukegantownship.com
www.reducerecidivism.org

By Mail:

Coalition to Reduce Recidivism
 149 S. Genesee St. Waukegan, IL 60085

If you have news or updates for our newsletter, you can send them to: kwoods@waukegantownship.com

Upcoming Coalition Meetings You Don't Want To Miss!

The Coalition to Reduce Recidivism Executive Board will meet the 1st Friday of each month from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., at 149 S. Genesee Street., Waukegan, IL.

The public meeting will be the third Monday of each month at 8:30a.m. to 10:00 a.m., 330 S. Greenleaf street, Gurnee, IL.

Please consider joining the growing movement in support of the formerly incarcerated. Annual membership dues goes directly to supportive services on their behalf. Membership dues are as follows:

Corporate Membership \$500

Faith Base Membership \$500

(Level 3) 301+ Congregation Size

Faith Base Membership \$250

(Level 2) 101 - 300 Congregation Size

Faith Base Membership \$150

(Level 1) 1- 100 Congregation Size

Agency Membership \$150

Board of Directors \$100

Individual Membership \$50

Seniors (65+), Student & Other \$20



Coalition Membership Chair
 Jennifer Witherspoon,
 Coalition Vice President
 Esquire, Lake County Sheriff's Officer

Legal Help Desk



Arrests and acquittals are expungable. Guilty pleas, probation, supervision and convictions, are not. The filing fee for an expungement is \$60.

Information on how to file for an expungement is available through the Lake County Clerk's Office, 18 N. County St., Waukegan, or online at: www.lakecountyil.gov/CircuitClerk/CivilCriminal/Pages/Expungements.aspx.

Help is also available at:
www.illinoislegalaid.org

The Coalition's Legal Help Desk has volunteer lawyers, that offer free legal advice to people with criminal convictions and help to determine their eligibility for expungement and sealing. Hours are 1st Friday of the month from 8:30am – 12:30pm & 3rd Wednesday of the month from 12:30pm - 4:00pm. Walk In Preferred (No Appointment).

The Legal Help Desk is located at Waukegan Township Supervisor's Office 149 S. Genesee Street Waukegan, IL 60085. For information Call 847-244-4900 or email coalition2rr@waukegantownship.com.

Please bring your RAP SHEET and CRIMINAL HISTORY

For adult criminal Lake County cases: Request your rap sheet at the Lake County Clerk's Office, 18 N. County Street, Waukegan, IL 60085, Basement Floor. Office open from 9am-5pm. Service fees required. For more information, please call (847) 244-4900.

Member Agencies:

- ◆ Catholic Charities
- ◆ City of North Chicago
- ◆ College Of Lake County
- ◆ Delta Sigma Theta Sorority
- ◆ Harbor Lites
- ◆ Lake County State's Attorney's Office
- ◆ Nicasa Behavioral Health Services
- ◆ National Association of University Women
- ◆ Safer Foundation
- ◆ Waukegan Housing Authority
- ◆ Waukegan Township

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

The Coalition to Reduce Recidivism has a Transportation Initiative as part of the "Family Reunification Process" for families who require assistance with visiting their loved ones in an Illinois State Correctional Facility.

Visitation is important for offenders and their families. When contact is maintained families remain involved in each others lives. Visitation fosters reunification and contributes toward a prisoner's success upon release.

We want to help keep you connected to your loved one. Tell us what you think:

- 1) Would this be a program that you would utilize?
 - 2) What correctional institution would you like to visit?
 - 3) What day or days would be better for you?
 - 4) How many family members would go with you?
 - 5) Are the family members going seniors or children?
- ♦ It would be your responsibility to verify that you are on the Correctional Facilities visitors list.

Please visit our website and take the brief survey or respond via phone 847-244-4900 / email coalition2rr@waukegantownship.com.



Did you know?

160 MILES

AVERAGE DISTANCE KIDS HAD TO TRAVEL
TO SEE THEIR INCARCERATED MOMS



Source: Urban Institute

Mother Jones

News You Can Use

To date, **1,575** Repatriates have obtained employment since August 2005.

1st Qtr.:

34 Employed - Full time
13 Employed - Temp Agency
15 New Clients

Expungement & Sealing Data

Executive Clemency - 66 (61 Pending & 5 Granted)

Waukegan Township Office

Expungement - 60 (36 Pending & 24 Granted)

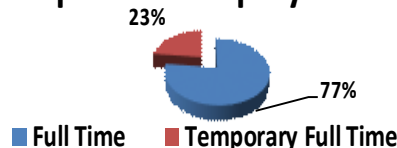
LEGAL HELP DESK

Sealing- 62 (33 Granted & 29 Pending)

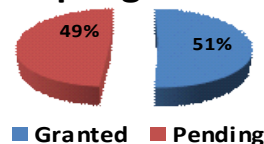
Total clients seen through the Legal Help Desk: 35

Coalition Jobs Report 2017 1st Qtr Statistics

Repatriate Employment



Expungement



Sealing



Johnnie Jenkins
Employment Specialist

The following companies are currently hiring. Please contact Johnnie Jenkins for employment opportunity and interview 847-244-4900:

- ♦ Home Depot
- ♦ IPCC
- ♦ Lake Side Transportation
- ♦ SCEP (age 50+)
- ♦ Thred Up

Coalition Youth Summit - Friday, April 7 and May 5, 2017

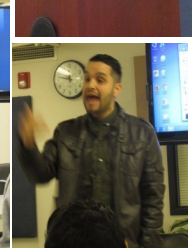


Over 100 students from local middle and high schools attended the sessions of the 2017 Youth Summit. We had several informative and exciting workshops and a special guest speaker newly elected Waukegan Mayor, Sam Cunningham. The students enjoyed a pizza lunch that was provided by

Waukegan Township. The sessions were engaging and showcased many of the youth's talents. Waukegan Township provided gifts to the youth that participated. Positive feedback was received from the youth, teachers, and those who attended the summit. The presenters were well prepared and the sessions were well attended. Everyone felt that the committee did a superb job organizing the meetings, selecting thought-provoking topics and identifying schools. Congratulations on both a successful and a memorable summit. Thank you to the Coalition members who helped facilitate the day. Stay tuned for upcoming dates for other Youth Summit events.

SUMMIT WORKSHOPS:

- Social Media, Explicit Messaging and Cyber-Bullying
- Drug Use and Abuse, Gangs and Street Violence, and Juvenile Incarceration
- What makes me upset? The Importance of Decision Making, Choices and Goal Setting
- **What** do you want to be vs. **Who** do you want to be.



Thank you to the 2017 Coalition Youth Summit Presenters and Speakers. Special thanks to Waukegan Township & College of Lake County Lakeshore Campus.

Farewell to College of Lake County President Girard W. Weber, Ph.D.

The Coalition would like to wish Dr. Girard Weber success at Bellevue College in Washington. He is the current President of the College of Lake County since April 2009. Dr. Weber will transition to Washington as President of Bellevue College in July 2017.

As President of the College of Lake County, Dr. Weber oversaw the Repatriation Program. Under his leadership the program was successful in providing training and curriculum for repatriates, collaborating with various community/governmental agencies for repatriate assistance, and assisting inmate transition from Lake County Jail to educational opportunities.

Dr. Weber has served on state and national boards and councils for community colleges related to international education, technology, administration, and educational policy. He has spent his career in Illinois community colleges and is known for building collaborations, most recently bringing workforce boards and community colleges in the Chicago area together.

The College of Lake County has assisted the Coalition with providing a location for our Annual Youth Summit, co-sponsoring the Annual Coalition Luncheon and providing speakers for several of our events.

We look forward to continued collaboration and success working with the interim president Dr. Rich Haney.



"Celebrating Diversity"



Artis Yancey

1959 - 2014

-Waukegan City Clerk
-Lake County Coroner
-Waukegan Police Chief



Prepare for 2018!

Make your spring break an adventure!

Join Us Spring Break 2018!

Our youth are future community leaders, entrepreneurs, educators and so much more. Your support and donations reflect the traditional values that we all believe in – “it takes a village to raise a child”.

The 2018 "Spring Break" tour will visit schools in Ohio, South Carolina, Pennsylvania, Washington D.C., including Howard University! Special visits to museums, art exhibits, and more!

For more information please call 847-244-4900 or email tsprings@waukegantownship.com



- Qualified Certified Chaperones
- One time fee which includes all meals & lodging for 7 days!
- Travel in a chartered motor coach

Open To All High School Students Grades 9th - 12th
Informational & Fundraiser Cook Out for the 2018 HBCU Tour

Tuesday, July 18, 2017
6:00pm - 7:00pm at Park Place
414 S. Lewis Ave, Waukegan, IL
Complimentary



Support Group

Repatriate, Empowering Support Group for the Formerly Incarcerated:

Meets 1st and 3rd Friday of every month - 5:30pm - 6:30pm., at
149 S. Genesee Street
For info call 847-244-4900

Substance Abuse Problem?

Call Narcotics Anonymous for help in your area:

Hotline (708) 848-4884

www.chicagona.org

Working Together



In each edition, we will feature a service organization who offer services to assist former inmates and their families.

DEMAR HARRIS

Director of Programs and EEO Officer |
Lake County Workforce Development
Phone 847.377.3423 | Fax 847.984.5656
dharris@lakecountyil.gov |
www.lakecountyjobcenter.com

The Job Center of Lake County, who is a proud sponsor of the American Job Center, has always supported the mission of empowering those who were incarcerated to recognize the resources within their communities; and offer viable, reliable, and professional employment and training resources. The Job Center of Lake County has three primary goals as it pertains to ex-offenders: To assist those returning from prison and jail within their communities, reduce the number of people that reoffend, or offend “prevention strategies”, and align and build their skill sets to meet the demand of local employers. Over the last two years the Job Center of Lake County has served 70 new participants that have identified themselves as ex-offenders. From the 70 individuals that received Job Center services 30 have secured employment with an average wage of \$15/hr.

The Job Center of Lake County continues to partner with Waukegan Townships Re-entry Program, Probationary Offices, States Attorney Office, Prairie State Legal Services, Nicasa, and Lake County Health Department to address preventative services along with career services to create a streamlined approach. The Job Center of Lake County is currently in the research phase to create an “Intentional” County of Lake Re-entry model that addresses: External Barriers, Life Skills, Job Skills, Mental Health, Retention Skills, Internships and Environmental support as it pertains to ex-offenders and individuals on track to offend.

The Job Center of Lake County believes in an inclusive model, that offers specific resources for the identified population group. There are hundreds if not thousands of qualified ex-offenders that could meet the employer demand as it pertains to talent acquisition, aging workforce, and applicants that are ready to be trained up.

The Job Center hopes to create a model that will equip each trainee with a credential, certificate, community partner connection, resolution to pending offenses, work based learning opportunities when needed; and be recognized as a pre-screening re-entry model that employers believe in, are part of and build their workforce around.

Due to the great partnership with Waukegan Township and its conceptualized Re-entry Program the Coalition to Reduce Recidivism, the Job Center of Lake County has an engaged partner that has the experience, professionalism, platform for community engagement and tools necessary to attract, develop and equip the educated ex-offenders of today.

HB5915 Update: by State Representative Rita Mayfield



When many individuals are released from prison after paying their debt to society, they meet obstacles of getting jobs and giving back as productive members of society. Individuals released often do not have proper identification and are required to wait 30 days or more to start looking for employment to help prevent offenders returning to a life of crime! Mayfield sponsored a measure that would allow those recently released to receive a temporary ID that could be used to help them apply for jobs. House Bill 5915 passed the House and awaits action in the Senate.

HB5915 Synopsis As Introduced

Amends the Illinois Identification Card Act. Provides that the Secretary of State shall provide a temporary Illinois Identification Card valid for a period not exceeding 30 days upon the release of any committed person on parole, mandatory supervised release, wrongful imprisonment, final discharge, pardon, or commutation from the Department of Corrections (rather than the Department of Corrections issuing the temporary identification card). Amends the Unified Code of Corrections and provides that the Department of Corrections shall verify a person's identifying information and provide that information to the Secretary of State before the person is released on parole, mandatory supervision, final discharge, pardon, wrongful imprisonment, or commutation. The release of the person shall not be delayed in order to obtain verification of this information.

YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

HB2373 expands eligibility for the sealing of felony convictions, allowing more people to petition the court for consideration. Sealing helps people secure employment, housing and educational opportunities that can otherwise be denied because of past criminal records.

What HB 2373 Does	What HB 2373 Does Not Do
<p>1. <i>Expands the types of felony convictions eligible for sealing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Certain convictions already an exception in the sealing law remain ineligible, including sex offenses, domestic battery, violations of orders of protection, animal crimes and DUIs/reckless driving. <p>2. <i>Allows people a chance to go before a court for an individual consideration</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Courts consider five factors when deciding to seal records: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The strength of the State's case 2) Petitioner's employment and educational history 3) Length of time since the conviction 4) Public safety reasons the records should remain unsealed 5) Adverse consequences if the sealing is denied 	<p>1. <i>Does not automatically seal records</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Individuals must file a petition in each district where they have an arrest or court case. ➤ The court always has discretion to seal past records. <p>2. <i>Does not immediately seal records</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A person must wait three years from the completion of their last sentence. <p>3. <i>Does not seal records from all agencies</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Law enforcement always has access to sealed records agencies; and ➤ Employers that require fingerprinting for employment, such as schools, park districts, health care organizations, and financial institutions always have access to sealed felony records through the Illinois State Police.

NEWS FROM THE SAFER POLICY INSTITUTE

Bill No.	Description	Developments
SB 1413	VITAL RECORDS-SEARCH PAROLEE	5/16 Passed Both Houses
HB 3342	DFPR-CRIMINAL HISTORY	5/19 Placed on Calendar Order of 3rd Reading 5/22/17
SB 1688	DFPR-CRIMINAL HISTORY	5/31 Passed Both Houses
HB 3822	LICENSING-CRIMINAL HISTORY	4/28 Rule 19(a)/Re-referred to Rules Committee
HB 2752	INS CD-CRIMINAL HISTORY	4/28 Rule 19(a)/Re-referred to Rules Committee
HB 514	CRIM ID-IMMEDIATE SEALING	5/29 Passed Both Houses
HB 2988	EXPUNGEMENT-DECRIMINALIZATION	4/28 Rule 19(a)/Re-referred to Rules Committee

Interview with Mr. Willie Gibson Jr: Continued from pg. 1

Question: What did you do to obtain employment once you were released?

I worked with the Coalition to Reduce Recidivism. Johnnie Jenkins sent me to the WEA program at the Lake County Workforce Development. There I signed up for classes to help obtain my CDL license. The Coalition helped me a lot and gave me information on what I needed to do to better myself. I had the people on the “streets” still trying to pull me back into that old lifestyle. I stayed focused on making myself better. I stayed with my parents until I was able to buy my own home. I didn’t want to rent and give somebody else my money. I wanted my money to go to something that I owned. Once I got my CDL, I worked for a trucking company. I knew that I had to make sure I presented myself as a professional when I went for the interview. You can’t go in with saggy pants, clothes all messed up, and hair not cut. I looked like I wanted the job and I let them know that I would be a good worker and that I wanted to get ahead. After three years, I thought to myself “why am I making these dudes all the money? I need to cut out the middle man”. See, I had the same business mind that I had when I was selling drugs. I started to see how trucking and selling drugs are both businesses. I bought my own truck and I paid for a list that shows me open pick up jobs all over the country. Today I can make my own schedule and decide where I want to go and how much money I want to make. I like to drive.

Question: What advice do you have for that man or woman in prison or repatriate who is reading this?

Make sure you set goals and standards before you get out. Understand that the definition of insanity is to keep doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result. There is opportunity out there. You just have to have a plan A., B., and even C. Make sure you study about the area that you are interested in and don’t let pride get in the way. If you need a Link card-get it. If you need help with getting a ride-find it. Don’t be afraid to ask for help. The code on the streets is “Get it how you live”. We need to change that mindset. Be patient and stay consistent. Don’t let your background or people saying “no” stop you. People told me no and doors closed on me. I was ok because I knew that every time a door closed on me another one would open.

*Thank you to the Coalition Executive Board
for your steadfast and commitment to change.*

From the desk of Lake County State’s Attorney Mike Nerheim: Second Chance



As a prosecutor, I believe in accountability. I believe that people should be held accountable for the choices that they make. Indeed, a large part of my job is holding people accountable to the law. But I also believe in second chances. I preach to every Assistant State’s Attorney who works for me that our job is to seek justice.

Justice requires us to look at every case, the facts of that case, the law that applies, and the circumstances surrounding the conduct. There is a perception that prosecutors only seek to send people to jail or prison. The reality is that we use incarceration as a last resort. We have an obligation to ensure that everybody, including those whom we charge, is treated fairly under the law, and we also have a duty to keep our community safe.

Recognizing these principles, I created the Alternative Prosecution Program (“APP”) a few years ago. This program allows first-time, non-violent felony offenders to avoid a felony conviction if they are willing to take responsibility for their actions. Program participants agree to complete a variety of obligations depending on the circumstances of the case and individual. Some of those obligations include drug or alcohol treatment, public service hours, restitution, and job skills training. If the person can complete his or her obligations and stay out of trouble, we agree to vacate their plea of guilty and dismiss the case.

This program has been in place for over one year and we have already had several successful graduates. This past week, we expanded the APP to include misdemeanor offenses. The program gives people the opportunity to be accountable for their conduct, address whatever issues may have led to it, and have an opportunity to get on with their lives without the burden of a conviction on their record—a “win-win” as far as I am concerned. The program provides people with a second chance while also helping keep our community safe.



Patricia Jones, M.ED
Founder, Chairperson
Waukegan Township
Supervisor

Gene But Not Forgotten

We would like to take this time to acknowledge Lake County Board member, Audrey Nixon's service and dedication to the Coalition to Reduce Recidivism. Audrey was a woman of immeasurable faith, even through her own suffering; Audrey exhibited unyielding dedication to the success of others and a true champion for those with seemingly insurmountable obstacles. She worked tirelessly to increase awareness of the need to provide programs and services for those re-entering the community after being incarcerated.

Audrey Nixon was the 1st President of the Coalition in 2006. She consistently worked with the Lake County Board alongside Supervisor Patricia Jones, to secure over \$20,000 to help support the Coalition in achieving its goal of reducing recidivism by assisting citizens with criminal records in becoming productive members of the community. Mrs. Nixon served on the Lake County Board's Law and Judicial Committee during her tenure, much of it as its chair and according to Chief Judge Jorge L. Ortiz, "She regularly implored the county's justice partners to work together in the best interest of the people of Lake County". Mrs. Nixon held a number of offices and was a member of several organizations that share the Coalition's vision of reducing recidivism. She was a member of the Lake County Board (1982-present), Forest Preserve

District (1982-present), School Board Member, Minority Affairs Commission, National Association of Counties Justice and Public Safety Steering Committee, and NAACP Emblem Chapter 140, just to name a few. She also held a position on Lake County Committees; Law and Judicial - Chair, Ethics and Oversight, and Ad Hoc Diversity and Inclusion. "Audrey Nixon understood the importance of giving back to the community, whether it was organizing groups, volunteering, or serving on boards, she will be greatly missed and never forgotten by the Coalition" says Waukegan Township Supervisor Patricia Jones. Audrey made a difference. She is described as a woman who "loved giving back and helping her community: she loved her church, she loved and adored her family, but most of all and most importantly, Audrey loved her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." She is now gone and will never be forgotten. Her legacy will live on through her friends and family especially her loving children; sons Rodney and Anthony, daughter, Tonya, and each one of her grandchildren. We will miss her dearly.



Audrey Nixon
1935 - 2017



Dr. Mary Roberson,
President
Coalition to Reduce
Recidivism

Words from the C2RR President

Congratulations to Waukegan's newly elected Mayor, Sam Cunningham, on his historic victory. As we continue our mission at the Coalition to Reduce Recidivism (C2RR) with our youth and adult citizens, it's refreshing to see active participation from our elected officials.

The C2RR team recognizes that returning citizens from the Illinois Department of Corrections are faced with numerous challenges, employment being one. As the C2RR gear up for the annual Expungement and Sealing Summit, the Job Fair component is a major benefit for returning citizen's in need of employment. Thanks to the various employer vendors who have committed to the job fair and very special words of gratitude to Waukegan Community Church, Pastor and First Lady Oberton.

Successful re-entry to the community requires helping returning citizens change their attitudes and beliefs about crime, addressing mental health issues, offering educational opportunities and connecting them with community resources. The work of the C2RR continues to make a difference in our communities. Please feel free to attend our monthly public meeting the 3rd Monday of each month 8:30a – 10a at the United Way of Lake County in Gurnee. In the words of Margaret Mead: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Repatriates and Ex-Offenders



YOU CAN VOTE!
ACCORDING TO ARTICLE II, SECTION 2, OF THE ILLINOIS STATE CONSTITUTION, EX-OFFENDERS RIGHT TO VOTE ARE RESTORED UPON SENTENCE COMPLETION. THIS INCLUDES THOSE WHO ARE ON PAROLE OR PROBATION.

Register to vote at Waukegan Township Supervisor's office:

149 S. Genesee Street or Park Place -

414 S. Lewis Ave, Waukegan, IL

For more information contact the Lake County Clerk's Office at 847-377-2400 or visit www.lakecountyil.gov/161/County-Clerk