



Richmond City Sheriff's Office
Sheriff C. T. Woody, Jr.



PRESS RELEASE

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REAL PROGRAM PARTNERS WITH LOCAL TATTOO REMOVAL SERVICE

Richmond, Virginia – The Richmond City Sheriff's Offices' Internal Program Department is happy to announce a new partnership with East Coast Laser Tattoo Removal for residents in the REAL Program who have recently been released.

East Coast Laser Tattoo Removal, located in Richmond, will provide tattoo removal to those desiring in exchange for community service hours. The process usually takes several months, dependent on how many laser treatments are needed to rid the ink. The focus is on visible tattoos, such as on the face, neck, and hands, that often prohibit job attainment.

Yesterday, our first candidate, Charles Greene, underwent his first laser removal treatment; he has had a tattoo on his right cheek since 2004. Complete removal of the tattoo will likely take nine treatments – each one approximately 6 weeks from other another. Talking about this opportunity, Greene, shared “When I was in REAL, one of the main takeaways from that program was ‘people, places, and things.’ I got a lot of my tattoos when I was living my old life, and now that I have a new life, I want a fresh start. I have to remove the things from my old life that are holding me back. These tattoos cause people to look at me differently, and it’s difficult to get a job – it’s hard to get people to give you a chance when you don’t LOOK like you’ve changed.”

Sheriff Woody added, “Tattoo removal is just one step in the process for many of our program participants. Many got the tattoos when they were living a life of crime and drugs or running with gangs - echoes of that old life can still hinder their success and rehabilitation even when they’ve left the jail. Partnering with Chuck and East Coast Laser Tattoo Removal is something that will be hugely beneficial to the individual and the community at large; when the individual is able to obtain work because they no longer have widely visible tattoos, and the community no longer feels their burden, we have then come to a place of mutual benefit that is good for everyone.”

According to research and a recent article published in Correctional News Magazine, it hypothesizes that tattoo removal could put a dent in reducing recidivism. In a 2013 study published by the International Journal of Criminology and Sociology, researchers followed behaviors of 80,000 inmates, with and without tattoos. The study found that inmates with one or more visible tattoos had an increased likelihood of recidivating for a violent crime within three years following prison release. By removing these tattoos, especially for young inmates, it gives them opportunities that were likely not previously available.

The Richmond City Sheriff's Office is responsible for maintaining a secure jail and a safe court system, along with seamless inmate transport and civil process to preserve public safety. We remain committed to performing these duties with unsurpassed integrity and professionalism, with progressive training that incorporates best practices and technology. While partnering with the community, we strive to lower recidivism by providing faith-based and community-based programming that empowers ex-offenders to become productive members of society.

