Tips for Addressing Bias Against Incarcerated Survivors

1. Address organizational culture
   - Review training and outreach materials — are they inclusive of the communities in your service area? Do they address specific needs/concerns of incarcerated survivors? Do they include incarcerated people as a part of who your organization serves?
   - Look at mission/vision/values — are they inclusive or could they seem exclusive to an incarcerated or formerly incarcerated survivor?
   - Look at recruitment and interview materials — do they address the need for unbiased and nonjudgmental staff, specifically in regards to incarcerated or formerly incarcerated survivors?
   - Walk through organization’s office(s) — what would a formerly incarcerated survivor need to feel welcome there?
   - Get feedback on your organizational culture from incarcerated survivors and other community organizations working with incarcerated people.

2. Start the conversation
   - Use the readiness tool with your advocacy team or whole organization — where are you at in this process?
   - Identify internal barriers — what is getting in the way?
   - Address training needs — what does your team need to feel capable and confident?
   - Connect with community partners — who is already serving incarcerated people?

3. Create change
   - Take deep breaths — unlearning bias is a slow but important process
   - Confront discomfort — have the difficult conversations necessary to create growth, but ensure safety by withholding judgment
   - Set clear expectations — include serving incarcerated survivors in the recruitment and interview process for new staff and volunteers
   - Review program policies — make sure incarcerated survivors are incorporated into all programs and that all advocates are able to provide services if needed