

**PRESS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
JULY 12, 2022**



### **CJCC Hosting Dialogues to Learn from Those with Lived Experience in the Local Criminal Justice System**

JULY 12, 2022 – NORTH CHARLESTON, SC: The Charleston County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, or CJCC, is seeking community members with lived experiences in Charleston County’s criminal justice system (both those who are survivors of crime and those who have been charged with a crime) to participate in confidential community dialogue sessions to discuss their experiences and help us all improve our local criminal justice system. Findings will be compiled and presented to local leadership.

The CJCC is a collaborative council of criminal justice system leaders and community representatives that routinely studies trends, identifies common challenges, and implements strategies to address them. Since its inception in 2015, the CJCC has taken a collaborative and data-guided approach to improve Charleston’s criminal justice system with an ongoing commitment to accountability and transparency.

“Those closest to the problem are often closest to the solution. It is important that those who have first-hand knowledge about our local criminal justice system are heard as we work to improve,” stated Easter LaRoche, Victim/ Witness Advocate Coordinator, Charleston County Sheriff’s Office.

Participants will engage each other in candid conversations about their experiences in the legal system and the impact it has had on their daily lives. Through this shared opportunity, participants will develop recommendations and actionable ideas to share with decision-makers, organizational and community leadership and others.

The dialogues, which are being co-lead by Everyday Democracy, will consist of a series of two conversations (July 23 and July 30). The dialogue groups are organized by their experience with the Charleston County legal system (survivors of crime or having been charged with a crime) as well as gender (identify as female or identify as male). Trained facilitators will lead each of the discussion groups of 8 – 12 individuals. The discussion groups will be held at the Main Library and the Otranto Road Library.

Interested community members are encouraged to register by visiting <https://bit.ly/2022Dialogues> or calling the CJCC at 843-529-7307.

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*The CJCC is a collaboration of elected and senior officials, law enforcement leaders, judicial and court leadership, behavioral health professionals, victim and legal advocates, and various community leaders working in service of the Charleston community. The mission of the CJCC is to assist in making sustainable, data-driven improvements to Charleston County’s criminal justice system and thereby improve public safety and community well-being. The CJCC is currently jointly funded by Charleston County and a Safety + Justice*

*Challenge grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. For more information, visit [www.cjcc.charlestoncounty.org](http://www.cjcc.charlestoncounty.org).*

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