

The Story of Dismas House

A Catholic priest of The Archdiocese of Louisville, Father William Diersen founded Dismas Charities more than fifty years ago with the help of volunteers from The Knights of Columbus. Father Diersen was a man of courage, determination and Christian virtue who served the world by living the Beatitudes. (Dismas Charities Inc.).

Based on that same attitude of virtue and determination Dismas House New Mexico was created in 1994. This program has been an answer to the growing need in our community for supportive services for individuals struggling to re-enter society after spending time in prison/jail. Since that time, Dismas House has developed an effective residential program that provides a comprehensive matrix of services for adults returning to the community after incarceration.

Founded in 1985, HopeWorks is a nonprofit organization working to end homelessness and suffering in Albuquerque. Every year, almost 10,000 individuals receive food, shelter, clothing, mental/behavioral health services, employment, and housing support with the goal of moving them off the streets and into housing. This mission also applies to helping rehabilitate those in tough situations to help them get back on their feet. Both Dismas and Covenant house are now a part of the HopeWorks' list of services.



@HopeWorksNM


hopeworks
ending homelessness since 1985

Dismas and Covenant House



(505) 343-0746 or via email:
Apply4dismas@hopeworksnm.org

Dismas House

Dismas House is a ninety-day transitional living program for motivated men on probation or parole. We provide case management services, therapeutic and life-skills groups, and room and board with 24/7 on-site staff support and supervision. We work to be a safe passage for adults transitioning from incarceration into society. Our residents learn to trust, communicate effectively, work together, and develop a respect for themselves and others which builds up and empowers our community.

Covenant House

Covenant House serves females exiting incarceration. Clients remain in the program for months, in an effort to successfully transition back into society. HopeWorks contracts with the State of New Mexico to provide these recently released individuals with room and board, 24/7 on site supervision, behavioral health services, life maintenance support, and employment assistance.



National statistics reveal that individuals who utilize the services of half-way house programs reduce the likelihood of prison recidivism by 40 – 60%. Programs like this make a profound difference in the lives of those leaving the prison system.



A Balanced Lifestyle

At Dismas/Covenant House of New Mexico we assist clients with the development of self-sufficient thoughts, feelings, and actions in our 90-day programs. We do this through the support of case management, therapies including individual and groups, and AA/NA meetings. We understand that breaking lifelong habits and avoiding harmful beliefs are difficult tasks; one needs help in making stable changes and we have the skills and desire to help. We are also highly aware that the population we work with may have become dependent on others to provide for their emotional, physical, and mental support. This dependency is usually developed in broken systems such as dysfunctional families, institutional life, and selfish systems such as drug cultures. With this in mind, we also understand that we only have the ability to support our clients. We are not able or willing to make their lives better for them. We support our clients in less controlled surroundings than typically found in a halfway house to which provides clients more opportunities to succeed in the path of their choosing. We as a staff will address issues first with our client in a respectful straight forward manner and with probation and parole officers when appropriate. We know that making choices on a daily basis can be difficult and stressful at times and are always available to talk on any issue. Asking for help and making good choices can be clouded by our past and we ask that everyone in our program take time to learn human nature better to understand ourselves, our families, and our communities.

The Importance of Community

Community is an important part of our program. Human nature means that we strive to be a part of a group and interact with others on a regular basis. We know that the type of community we choose to engage with limits the choices we are going to make and what type of group we are going to create around ourselves. Keeping this in mind, we try to boost responsibility by creating an environment where responsibility to ourselves and our community is in a well-designed balance. We provide chances to be part of a member of a healing community by providing chores, room-mates, and volunteer provided dinners that promote the understanding that you can't change your path alone.

Partnership with Probation and Parole

We at Dismas/Covenant house strive to work together with the probation and parole offices by having the best communication as possible with each individual probation and parole officer with whom we share clients. We also believe this working relationship encourages the acknowledgement, development, and management of responsibilities that our clients have and recognizes the reality of our client's lives while in our program. We offer an open invitation for all probation and parole officers to walk through and offer feedback on the program, its grounds, and the clients we work with at any time, place or method of their choosing. We will report any major program and law abuses including drug use, curfew violations or lack of payment for services in a timely manner to our clients and their probation and parole officers.

