



Renville

COUNTY

Service · Stewardship · Shared Responsibility

Renville County Jail: A Unique Approach

By Ned Wohlman, Jail Administrator

Renville County Jail (RCJ) is not just an ordinary jail. Part of our mission is to make Renville County a safer place to live.

We believe that two key areas where the jail can make an impact is in education and chemical dependency treatment. RCJ is also a good example that rehabilitation programming doesn't have to be expensive to be effective.

We are unique in having a licensed chemical dependency treatment program within the walls of the facility. This is run by New Beginnings of Waverly, a Meridian company. Our philosophy is that we do our level best to give people the tools needed to succeed before they leave the jail. RCJ does not pay anything for this service to be offered in our facility.



Renville County Jail Public Entrance

have been awarded their GED, on average, will earn an additional \$250,000 over a lifetime of employment.

Renville County Jail offers GED classes four or five days a week. The southwest region Adult Basic Education program (ABE) funds the GED teacher 100%. The entire GED program is offered at virtually at no cost to the jail.

Chemical dependency treatment and GED are just two of the areas in which the Renville County Jail works with inmates in preparation for release. Healthcare, employment possibilities and life skills of various kinds are available inside the jail. Our staff works hard to assess the areas of need for each inmate.

The Renville County Jail staff is committed to assisting inmates better themselves while they are in jail. We don't simply "lock up" people. Inmates are not allowed to just sit around. We do our best to have a positive impact on their lives.

Sooner or later, inmates here will be released, and we have a choice. We can either treat inmates like many facilities do and release inmates who would be angry, resentful and without much hope, or we can release inmates with healing self-worth, hope for tomorrow and the tools to succeed in their fight against addiction.

Which one would you like to be your neighbor?

To learn more about programs at the RCJ, contact Ned Wohlman, Renville County Jail Administrator at 320-523-3778 or nedw@renvillecountymn.com or Elliot Johnson, Program Director at 320-523-3808 or elliottj@renvillecountymn.com.



Actual file of letters received from former inmates

Renville County Jail has a file full of letters from former inmates who were greatly helped by receiving treatment while in jail. This helped put their lives back on track, helped restore their families, and helped provide a support network. One individual shared, *"I came here thinking my life was over, and I left believing in myself again. Thank you Renville County Jail!"* All this at no cost to the jail.

The second area helping us fulfill our mission is by offering General Education Development (GED) classes and testing.

Many jails larger than us do not offer GED in their programming lineup. In most cases, even the jails that do offer GED do not offer GED testing inside the jail. As you may have guessed by now, we do!

Since we began offering GED classes inside the jail, we have had 85 GED graduates and even four actual high school diplomas earned while in RCJ. People who