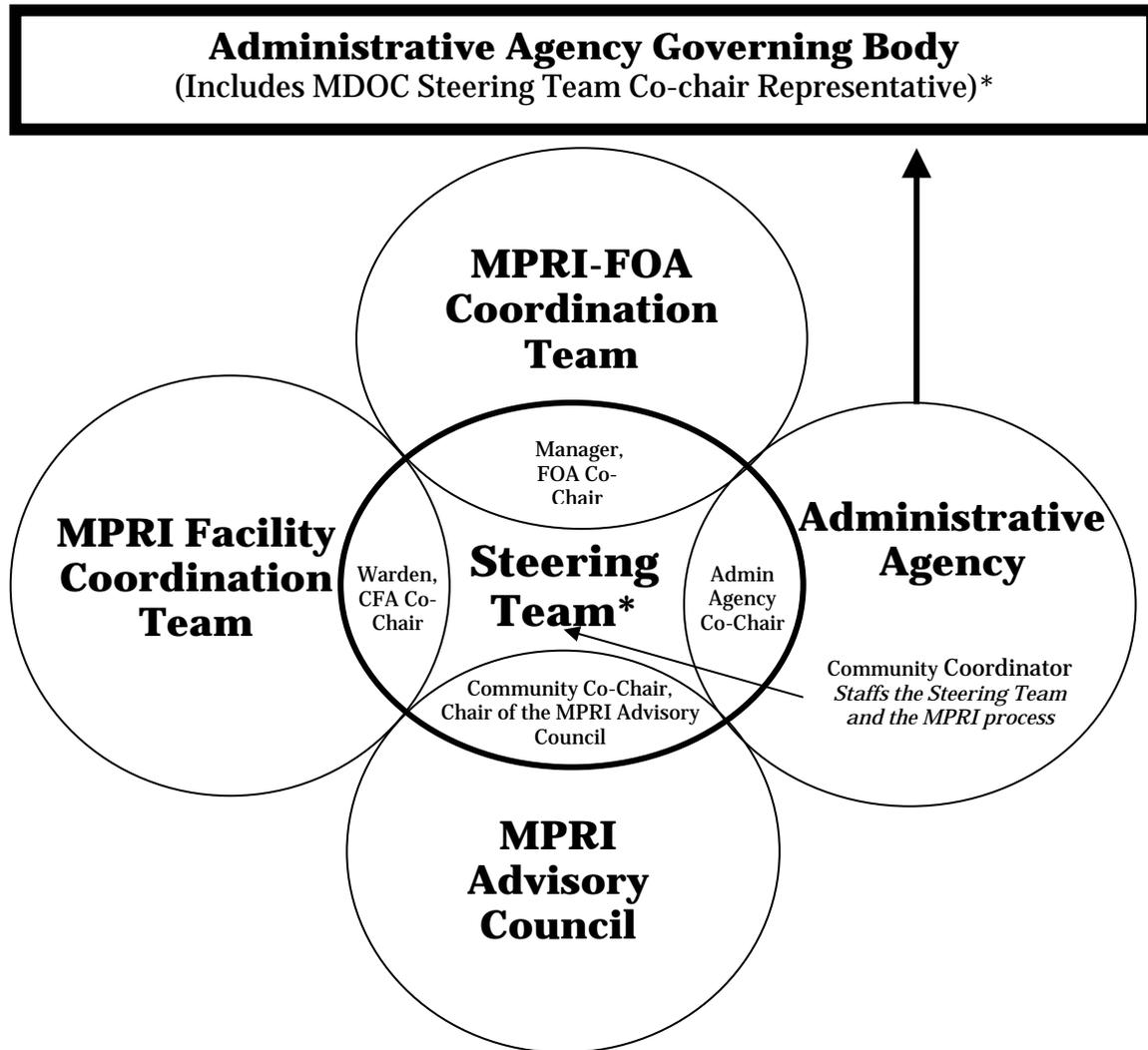


MPRI Local Governance Structure

October 20, 2008



The **GOALS** of the MPRI local governance structure are to:

1. Provide as much statewide consistency as possible in the implementation of the MPRI Model while requiring local input by the MPRI Steering Team and other stakeholders.
2. Provide protection from legal liability to local stakeholders involved in the MPRI process through their involvement in formal and established administrative structures.
3. Ensure that key decisions about the design, implementation and oversight of the local MPRI comprehensive plans are part of a formal, clear and open process that involves community leaders, representatives from the Michigan Department of Corrections, local elected and appointed officials, and citizens who support the crime-fighting goals of the MPRI.
4. Provide an effective forum to conduct public education about prisoner re-entry and the MPRI.

The purpose of this Issue Brief is to provide guidelines for local governance in FY 2009 to prepare for improved contract language for FY 2010 contracts. Current contract language is not amended as a result of this Issue Brief and all contractors must adhere to their contracts.

* An MDOC Steering Team Co-chair participates as a member of the Administrative Agency Board, if it is allowed by board policy, and ensures that the MPRI principles are addressed in their plans for the local population. The representative will be provided by the MDOC and the appointment will be approved through the existing local appointment process.

Roles and Responsibilities of Local Governing Bodies

The Comprehensive Prisoner ReEntry Plan

Community leaders serve on the Steering Teams in local MPRI sites. These Steering Teams are responsible for developing and reaching consensus in a collaborative manner a local, community-based Comprehensive Prisoner ReEntry Plan that is submitted to the Administrative Agency's Governing Body for approval. The Plan must address 16 service areas such as housing, employment, substance abuse services, mental health, transportation, victim services, and the involvement of local law enforcement and faith-based institutions. For each of these 16 service areas, the Comprehensive Plan describes the local assets that are in place to increase the potential for success for former prisoners, barriers that impede maximum use of these assets, gaps in services, and proposed solutions to address the barriers and gaps. Thus, the plan builds upon existing services and embeds their use within the context of comprehensive service delivery.

The Comprehensive Plan also addresses critical issues such as case management approaches for accountability, monitoring, and performance measurement and ways to educate the public about the crime-fighting goals of the MPRI. The Comprehensive Plan is the basis for requests to the Michigan Department of Corrections for annual MPRI funding as well as requests for support from federal, other state, local and foundation funding sources.

Local collaboration is at the heart of the Michigan Prisoner ReEntry Initiative and the MPRI Model. Collaboration requires stakeholders to meet and to make decisions together. This is different than cooperation, which can be done in isolated silos by simply sharing decisions. MPRI requires a full participatory process in order to change the way the public views, accepts, and responds to former prisoners within the context of the local justice system – that is now more participatory and transparent. It is only through full community participation in this collaborative work that we will be able to sustain the model when the initiative phase of our work concludes in 2011.

The MPRI Application for Funds

Each year, the local MPRI site Administrative Agency submits the collaboratively-developed and approved Application for Funds to the Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC). This application identifies where State funds will be used to implement the local Comprehensive Prisoner ReEntry Plan. The annual Application for MPRI Funds details the costs to implement the proposed solutions in priority service areas as described in the Comprehensive Plan. The MDOC thus provides both a policy framework and a funding stream for the work that, in the final analysis, is all local.

MPRI Public Education and Outreach

Nothing can be more important to taking MPRI up to scale than continual public education to change public perception about prisoners returning to our communities. Taxpayers must recognize identifying the need for services and provision of services as public protection strategies - not as coddling convicts. This requires an enormous dedication of purpose that must be carefully developed, implemented, managed, monitored and reported upon. The role of the Administrative Agency, its board, the Steering Team and the MPRI staff in the development of the MPRI Public Education Plan and its implementation is essential. Administrative boards comprised of elected and other officials offer many avenues to educate the public and special stakeholder groups. Fundamental to full community support, for example, is the support of law enforcement officials such as chiefs of police, sheriffs and prosecutors who dedicate their careers to fighting crime. Their involvement on the local Steering Team and participation in the development and execution of the Public Education Plan is essential to gain and sustain their ongoing support.

When considering implementation of the Public Education Plan, the differences in the roles of local MPRI leadership and the community coordinator should be clear. The Community Coordinator is charged with *leading the development* of the plan and community leaders should be designated, along with the coordinator, to *implement* that plan, including activities such as meeting with key stakeholder groups, legislators, the media, etc. Any one specific local stakeholder – be it the Community Coordinator or any one of the four Co-chairs - is not to be the sole or primary spokesperson for MPRI. There should be a wide variety of persons tasked with this responsibility. The process to select the various spokespersons should be the result of careful planning by the local Steering Team through their Public Education and Outreach Committee and should include many options to deliver the key messages about the MPRI so that the speaker best matches the audience.

Messages about MPRI to the public must be consistent, therefore all local MPRI community sites are expected to cooperate and collaborate with state-level MPRI education and outreach activities. The MPRI has developed key messages, presentations, issue briefs, Taking Action Briefs and a series of brochures and other printed information that are available for local use. If local MPRI community sites wish to develop their own materials, they must be consistent with these key messages and approved by the MDOC. An annual schedule for public education and outreach to the series of stakeholder groups who need to hear the message will be required in future Comprehensive Plans and will be included in future contracts.

The Local MPRI Steering Team

Beginning in Fiscal Year 2009, Steering Teams are to be approved by the MPRI Administrative Agency Governing Body as an advisory team invested with the responsibilities and authority designated by the MDOC contract. Broad based and inclusive efforts to receive nominations for Steering Team members are expected and should be done openly and transparently. As this process takes shape, the Governing Body of the Administrative Agency and the current Co-chairs of the Steering Team will need to meet to ensure a smooth transition and that the input of the Co-chairs to Steering Team membership is established. This new structure will establish that Steering Teams are a bona fide entity within the local governance structure.

The primary and essential role of the MPRI Steering Team, led by the group's four Co-chairs, is to design the Comprehensive Prisoner ReEntry Plan and monitor its implementation. It is the responsibility of Steering Team members to attend Steering Team meetings as representatives of their service area and to bring to the table the advice, concerns and input of their stakeholders. Thus, two critical expectations of the Steering Team are that members have the knowledge and expertise of the service area they represent and that they represent their networks, not just their own organizations. The four Co-chairs must ensure a robust process for the design of the plan by the Steering Team. Steering Team meetings should be focused on planning, monitoring and reporting.

The MPRI Model requires that service areas critical to former prisoners' success are fully represented on the local Steering Team. The national research is clear on the types of services that are essential and, therefore, the specialty areas that should be represented on the team who can bring their expertise and experience to the table to design a functional and sound comprehensive reentry plan. One of the key outcomes of a truly collaborative process is the absence of duplication and an ability to use existing services whenever possible so that MPRI funding is reserved for the gaps in existing services. For example, public funding streams for employment, housing, substance and mental health services are already targeted by many funding sources for the former prisoner population and efforts to tap into these streams should be maximized. Having individuals who are experienced in these service areas in terms of policies, processes, programs, funding opportunities, and the evaluation of effective approaches is essential to the local MPRI process:

- *Employment.* Employment is a critical dimension of successful prisoner reentry and is associated with lower rates of re-offending; higher wages are associated with lower rates of criminal activity¹.

- *Health care.* The prevalence of severe mental disorders and chronic infectious disease among the prison population is far greater than among the general populationⁱⁱ and prisoners tend to face limited access to community-based health care upon release.ⁱⁱⁱ
- *Housing.* The immediate challenge faced by releasing prisoners to secure housing is a process that is often complicated by a host of factors: the scarcity of affordable and available housing, legal barriers and regulations, prejudices that restrict tenancy, strict eligibility requirements for federally-subsidized housing. Research shows that released prisoners who lack stable housing are more likely to return to prison,^{iv} suggesting that the obstacles to temporary and permanent housing warrant the attention of policymakers, practitioners and researchers.
- *Substance abuse and mental health.* These issues among former prisoners present significant challenges to the reentry process. Studies indicate that while 83% of state prisoners have a history of drug use, only a small fraction receive treatment while incarcerated and after release and that few who had access to, and took advantage of, treatment programs in prison continue to receive appropriate treatment once they return to the community^v even though prison-based drug treatment has shown success in reducing drug use and criminal activity, especially when coupled with aftercare treatment in the community.^{vi}
- *Family relationships.* The impact of incarceration and reentry on children and families is significant since the family structure, financial responsibilities, emotional support systems, and living arrangements can be affected; incarceration can drastically disrupt spousal relationships, parent-child relationships, and family networks;^{vii} and restoring these relationships upon release poses a unique set of challenges.
- *Employment readiness.* Educational and training programs that address fundamental abilities and teach skills directly applicable to the job market contribute to successful reintegration of offenders into society^{viii} and reduce recidivism.
- In addition to service areas, the critical input of *local law enforcement officials, victim rights advocates and faith based organizations* is required in order to add balance to the comprehensive plan and public education efforts.

The strength of support from these local leaders will help sustain the MPRI Model once the six year “implementation phase” of our efforts has concluded in 2011 and these efforts will no longer be called an “initiative” as we will have changed the way we do business.

Input from experienced service providers is expected and very important. In many communities, they are some of the most knowledgeable individuals because they are “in the trenches” doing the work. However, beginning in FY 2009, Steering Team membership should not include service providers who participate in the local competitive bidding process for MPRI funds and thus have a fiscal relationship with the Administrative Agency to provide MPRI services to parolees¹. The appearance of a conflict of interest is simply too strong to overwhelm the need for their input to the process.

Given the experience and expertise of human service providers, local Administrative Agencies are encouraged to form a formal service provider advisory committee—including those providers who contract with MPRI—to seek their input on the Comprehensive Plan.² Advice by service providers should be a component of the local Advisory Council process that is designed for key stakeholder input regularly to the Steering Team. The Service Provider group should be an important committee of the Advisory Council which will allow their organized and regular input to the local MPRI process. Another option is to have the service provider group report directly to

¹ Law enforcement and other agencies which do not bid for services as they are sole source contracts are exempt from this restriction

² In some sparsely populated rural areas, it may not be possible to restrict MPRI contractors from being members of the Steering Team. This issue can be addressed with some flexibility on a case-by-case basis.

the Steering Team on a regular basis. Either way, a significant and critical role should exist for service providers to offer their observations and advice on the best way to get the job done.

Steering Teams have four designated co-chairs: a member who represents the Administrative Agency, a community-based member who represents the local MPRI Advisory Council, the Warden of the local prison that houses MPRI prisoners and who leads the prison's MPRI Facility Coordination Team, and a local management-level representative from Field Operations Administration (FOA), who leads the local FOA Coordination Team. The MDOC will appoint the Correctional Facilities Administration (CFA) and FOA representatives to the Steering Team. The FOA Steering Team Co-chair should work with local Steering Teams to determine the involvement of their staff in the local efforts pertaining to comprehensive planning, implementation and feedback about the effectiveness of the programs that are chosen as contractors in the comprehensive plan due to the critical need for complete "buy in" to the MPRI process. This cross-pollination of the community, the Administrative Agency, the Advisory Council, the prison and FOA assures balanced leadership of the Steering Team with input from key players in the process.

An MDOC representative seated on the governing body of the Administrative Agency assures that Steering Team issues in the local process will be addressed. It is required that the Steering Team Co-chairs and the community coordinator have an active role in the review of proposals submitted for funding. Others, as agreed to by the Co-chairs, may serve on the proposal review committee. The local MPRI community coordinator acts as staff to the Steering Team as an employee or contractor of the Administrative Agency. As such, it is required that the Steering Team Co-chairs work with the Administrative Agency collaboratively to select and hire the Community Coordinator as part of the standard personnel hiring process of the Administrative Agency.

The Administrative Agency and its Governing Body

The primary role of the Administrative Agency is to provide the administrative support for MPRI in local sites. This support includes coordinating the competitive bid process, assuring that subcontracts are in place in a timely manner, providing liability coverage, collecting data and monitoring, evaluating and reporting on sub-contractor performance as part of a collaborative effort with Steering Team Co-chairs. The Administrative Agency is responsible for submitting the local Comprehensive Plan and annual Application for Funds developed by the MPRI Steering Team and approved by the Administrative Agency's Governing Body.

The Administration Agency's Governing Body "control" funding as the final decision for contracts rests with the Governing Body. This decision-making authority must be informed and driven by the MPRI comprehensive planning process. However, the Steering Team is responsible for the development of the comprehensive prisoner reentry plan. The two bodies must work together, using the local planning and authorization process, to produce an approved plan and arrive at agreement on the results of the competitive bid process. The role of the local Governing Body in the MPRI is to assure the process for developing the Comprehensive Plan and Application for Funds is collaborative. Thus, the seating on the Governing Body of a member who represents the MDOC – one of the two MDOC Co-chairs of the Steering Team – is critical. It is expected that an MDOC designee will represent the MPRI on the Board.³

The Governing Body has three options for their review and decisions relative to the comprehensive prisoner reentry plan and MPRI funding based on the recommendations of the Steering Team they have appointed for these purposes: 1) Accept the Steering Team recommendations in total, 2) Reject the Steering Team recommendations in total and refer them back to the Steering Team for further work, or 3) Approve some of the recommendations and send the disapproved items back to the Steering Team for additional work.

³ It is understood that in some rare circumstances, the seating of specific representatives on the Administrative Agency's Governing Body as contemplated here may not be possible and that alternative methods of involvement may be needed on a case-by-case basis. For example, some Administrative Agencies are governmental or quasi-governmental entities and have their board membership mandated by law – for example Workforce Development Boards of MWAs and county government agencies.

The Governing Body does not have the authority to change the Comprehensive Plan or to change the results of the competitive bid process in any substantial way without concurrence of the Steering Team whom the Administrative Agency's Governing Body has approved to take responsibility to prepare the Comprehensive Plan in such a way that the Board will approve it. It is essential in this process that the Governing Board and the Steering Team Co-chairs meet to discuss expectations.

While it is not expected, due to the clear expectations about collaboration between the Governing Board and the Steering Team, if a circumstance arises where there is continued disagreement after all local efforts at drafting and re-drafting have been exhausted, the MDOC can be called on to assist in facilitating an agreement. If the Administrative Agency is managing the local collaborative process well, disagreements will never rise to this level. The fact that a Steering Team Co-chair sits on the Governing Body all but assures an uneventful process.

Once approved by the Governing Body, the Administrative Agency is responsible for submitting the application to the Michigan Department of Corrections. The Administrative Agency, in collaboration with the MPRI Steering Team, is also responsible for and expected to develop and submit applications for federal, state, local and foundation funding that will further the implementation of the local Comprehensive Plan and to work with other agencies in the community who wish to raise funds for MPRI services.

The Administrative Agency is also responsible for meeting the obligations of the contract with the State as a result of funding provided based on the annual Application for MPRI Funds, and will ensure the following occur:

- Coordinating an open and competitive bid process for the services detailed in the Comprehensive Plan;
- Issuing contracts in a timely manner based on successful bids;
- When necessary and appropriate, advance payments to contractors as allowed by the Administrative Agencies rules and regulations;
- Program and fiscal monitoring and reporting to ensure program fidelity and contract compliance;
- The appointment of a management-level staff person to the Steering Team as a Co-chair to work collaboratively with the team;
- In collaboration with the Steering Team Co-chairs, the hiring of or contracting with a full time, dedicated MPRI Community Coordinator or similarly titled position with the skills and competencies needed and who, if an employee, is 100% dedicated to the work of the MPRI; or, if a contractor, has a contract which includes outcome measures designed to cover all the requirements of the Community Coordinator position as listed in this document under "The Role of the Community Coordinator";
- Ensuring that subcontractor client data systems are consistent with policies and procedures set by the State;
- Ensuring that subcontractor accounting procedures are consistent with policies and procedures set by the State;
- Submitting monthly summary invoices to the State according to policies and procedures set by the State;
- Submitting monthly reports as described by the State;
- Conducting a yearly on-site review of each subcontractor's operations and fiscal administration;
- Participating in semi-annual program reviews as prescribed by the State;
- Participating in trainings held by the statewide MPRI partners;
- Participating, with the Steering Team, in the public education and outreach effort;
- Working with the Steering Team, their boards, elected officials and other key stakeholders – especially the law enforcement community – to develop and maintain support for the MPRI as outlined in the MPRI Public Education and Outreach Plan.
- Providing office space, phone, computer and supplies for dedicated MPRI staff as appropriate and allowed; and
- Ensuring that all communications regarding the MPRI are productive and open and result in clarity of the goals, objectives and processes that comprise the MPRI.

The Role of the Local MPRI Community Coordinator

Community Coordinators are the essential staff to the MPRI process at each site. The Community Coordinators can be employees or contractors of the Administrative Agencies or employees or contractors of third-party agencies. The Community Coordinators are responsible for staffing the Steering Team and assisting with the development and implementation of the locally-approved Comprehensive Plans. Their responsibilities include coordinating and monitoring the use of Comprehensive Plan funds, the effectiveness of the service delivery system, outreach to and education of the public, and collaboration with service providers, justice system professionals and the public.

While each Steering Team and Administrative Agency is encouraged to design locally-specific approaches to these general areas of performance, it is the essential responsibility of the Community Coordinators to coordinate the local MPRI process. Therefore, all duties performed by the Community Coordinator must be focused on MPRI and, given the competencies required to meet this responsibility, the staff must be at a professional level and be remunerated commensurate with the high expectations for comprehensive planning, public education design and execution, and management responsibilities.

Community Coordinators must be clear about how Administrative Agencies will support them in meeting performance objectives and how the performance and quality of the work is to be implemented, managed, monitored, evaluated and reported. While Community Coordinators may have titles that are reflective of other staff in Administrative Agencies' personnel and contracting structure, if employees, they must be full-time employees dedicated to the MPRI process. The MDOC includes in their annual contracts adequate funds for this purpose. The essence of MPRI is local decision making, and that local decision making must be highly coordinated, highly collaborative, dedicated to high-quality performance, documented, and the subject of clear communication. This is why the role of the Community Coordinators is so crucial to the process.

It is critical to the success of the MPRI that the Community Coordinators are provided continual education and training. This includes formal training events – which must be informed by experience of the Community Coordinators – as well as regular statewide capacity building meetings to discuss what they are learning at the local level.

Leadership Development and Capacity Building: Defining and Sharing What Works

The MDOC will provide opportunities for Administrative Agency Directors, Steering Team Co-chairs, and Community Coordinators and other designated local MPRI staff to meet on a regular basis as professionals engaged in this difficult work. All local stakeholders can benefit from meeting regularly and sharing ideas and successful and unsuccessful approaches to their work; advise on the training that is needed, the timing of training and the content; and to keep up to date on the news of statewide MPRI business, as well as to simply provide an opportunity for fellowship.

The Michigan Council on Crime and Delinquency - MDOC's contractor for capacity building - is responsible for coordinating and staffing these meetings and making certain the most informed 'best practices' stakeholders are invited to attend. In terms of process, all of the local and state stakeholders will be polled regularly for their ideas on topic areas and appropriate audiences for these capacity building sessions and the meetings will be designed accordingly to be inclusive and issue oriented.

The Local MPRI Advisory Council

Advisory Councils should be in place at each MPRI community site to create a strong base for community support and to act as a vehicle for public education. In response to the MPRI Model, many MPRI community sites have already developed such local councils whose members have a shared interest in the success of the

initiative. Those involved in these groups are often local citizens who lack the time or the position to be involved in day-to-day operations or to be involved in the Steering Team. Often they are family members of prisoners, local faith-based members, victims of crime, or retired corrections or justice officials who simply want a formal way to be involved and show their support. And, as stated, the Advisory Council represents an opportunity for service provider input to the process, especially through a specifically named committee of the Council.

These groups are not intended to be as “staff intensive” as the Steering Teams since they would likely need to meet less regularly, for example as part of an annual public event where the successes of the local MPRI are highlighted and positive press is generated. Many non-profit boards have these types of events every year.

As local Advisory Councils have evolved, their primary role is to inform a broad base of stakeholders about the development and implementation of MPRI in the local community as a means to generate broad-based public support and as a forum for essential public education about the MPRI. Within this role, it is the responsibility of the Advisory Council members to attend Advisory Council meetings and participate in reaching out to the public at-large to educate them about MPRI in their community. The primary expectation of the Advisory Council is that members are interested in understanding MPRI and will share their knowledge of MPRI within their network. Ideally, the chairperson of the local MPRI Advisory Council sits as a Co-chair on the Steering Team and would be a community- or faith-based representative with no financial interest in the Comprehensive Prisoner ReEntry Plan. If the local Steering Teams currently include a community advocate who does not meet this guideline, there is no need to change, but efforts should be made to do so at the appropriate time.

MDOC Coordination Teams

Two MDOC coordination teams provide dedicated focus on parole and prison operations. Both of these teams operate in collaboration with the local Steering Team – particularly the Co-chairs – and consistent with the Local Comprehensive ReEntry Plan. Both teams are encouraged to meet as regularly as necessary in order to assure operational integrity of the MPRI and to include community representatives in their meetings as needed.

- *MPRI Prison Facility Coordination Team*

The primary role of the MPRI Prison Facility Coordination Team is to assure that the MPRI Model for Phase I and Phase II is implemented in the local prison facility. The team’s membership includes the Warden of the facility (or his/her designee) who sits as the Steering Team Co-chair, the MPRI Facility Coordinator, and other CFA staff that have direct responsibility over the programming and implementation of MPRI in the facility. In general, the primary issues that need to be addressed, consistent with the Model include, but are not limited to:

- Assessment and classification: Measuring the offender’s risks, needs, and strengths;
- Inmate programming: Assignments to reduce risk, address need, and build on strengths; and,
- Inmate release preparation: Developing a strong, public-safety-conscious parole plan.

- *MPRI FOA Coordination Team*

The primary role of the MPRI FOA Coordination Team is to assure that the MPRI Model is fully implemented locally. The FOA team will be led by the local FOA representative who sits as the Steering Team Co-chair. It will have in its membership, MPRI agents (from the field and facility), local supervisor(s) and other FOA staff as appropriate to address local issues and needs. These responsibilities in general include, but are not limited to:

- Supervision and services: Providing flexible and firm supervision and services;
- Revocation decision making: Using graduated sanctions to respond to behavior; and,
- Discharge and aftercare: Working collaboratively to ensure that an appropriate transition plan is in place when the MDOC role is over due to the discharge of the former prisoner from parole supervision.

ENDNOTES

- ⁱ Jared Bernstein and Ellen Houston, *Crime and Work: What We Can Learn from the Low Wage Labor Market* (Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute, 2000); Bruce Western and Petit, “Incarceration and Racial Inequality in Men’s Employment,” *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 54, no. 3 (2000): 3-16.
- ⁱⁱ National Commission on Correctional Health Care, *The Health Status of Soon-to-Be-Released Inmates: A Report to Congress*, Vol. 1 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, 2002).
- ⁱⁱⁱ Theodore M. Hammett, Sheryl Roberts, and Sofia Kennedy, “Health-Related Issues in Prisoner Reentry to the Community,” *Crime and Delinquency* 47, no. 3 (2001): 390-409.
- ^{iv} Stephen Metraux and Dennis P. Culhane, “Homeless Shelter Use and Reincarceration Following Prison Release: Assessing the Risk,” *Criminology and Public Policy* 3 (2004): 201-22.
- ^v Laura Winterfield and Jennifer Castro, *Returning Home Illinois Policy Brief: Treatment Matching* (Washington, DC: The Urban Institute, 2005).
- ^{vi} Gerald G. Gaes, Timothy J. Flanagan, Laurence L. Motiuk, and Lynn Stewart, “Adult Correctional Treatment,” in *Prisons*, edited by Michael Tonry and Joan Petersilia (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1999); Lana D. Harrison, “The Challenge of Reintegrating Drug Offenders in the Community,” paper presented at the Urban Institute Reentry Roundtable, Washington, DC, October 2000.
- ^{vii} Jeremy Travis, Elizabeth M. Cincotta, and Amy L. Solomon, *Families Left Behind: The Hidden Costs of Incarceration and Reentry* (Washington, DC: The Urban Institute, 2003).
- ^{viii} For example, see: Washington State Institute for Public Policy; *Evidence-Based Public Policy Options to Reduce Future Prison Construction, Criminal Justice Costs, and Crime Rates* (October 2006); and Richard P. Seiter and Karen R. Kadela, “What Works, What Does Not, and What Is Promising,” *Crime and Delinquency*, July 2003.