

With criminal justice reform a part of the national dialog, preparing prisoners with meaningful employment skills is a growing priority within the corrections environment. Among the many initiatives to address this issue in Michigan, Michigan State Industries (MSI) is a manufacturer operating within the Michigan Department of Corrections that has been providing work opportunities to prisoners since 1943, one of fifty such programs in the country.

MSI is regulated under the Correctional Industries Act of 1968 and is authorized to engage in manufacturing, sales and service to 501(c)3 non-profit organizations, governmental institutions, the federal government and tribal nations. MSI frequently turns down projects where they would compete with private sector businesses.

Michigan State Industries (MSI) provides products and services to customers as provided by law at prices that meet or exceed customer expectations, while providing professional growth opportunities for staff and marketable job skills to prisoners detained by the Department of Corrections.

MSI provides prisoners an opportunity to improve their workplace skills through employment assessments and certifications, and to participate in continuous quality improvement. MSI's focus is successful prisoner employment upon parole or release within Michigan with the goal to realize 0% recidivism through 100% employment for MSI parolees within 30 days.

MSI is self-supporting. It receives no funds from sources other than its own sales. Thus, MSI's success depends on producing quality goods and services delivered in a timely fashion to our customers at a fair price.

By decreasing recidivism rates, MSI's programs reduce costs to Michigan citizens, resulting in savings for both the judicial and corrections systems. And when adults in custody have productive activities to occupy their time, our prisons are safer. Perfecting marketable skills and being recognized for positive job performance are important components in rebuilding a person's character.



MICHIGAN STATE INDUSTRIES
Building Bridges to Success

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Optical Lab



The MSI Optical Laboratory serves the needs of the MDOC population.

The MSI Optical Laboratory is supervised by a Trades Instructor under an agreement to provide optical wear for all MDOC prisoners and staff. The lab has been producing quality eyewear since 1977. Our services include general vision and prescription eyewear, and single vision, bifocal and trifocal lenses, all manufactured to each individual's prescription.

MSI pays for prisoners to take the test required to earn their American Board of Opticianry Certification. The pass rate for this certification for MSI-trained optical lab technicians has been 100% for many years. Upon their release, many of the men who participated in our program have attained positions in the field.

The Optical Laboratory also sorts donated glasses, lenses and frames for redistribution to the needy in Michigan as well as for mission trips to countries such as Dominica, Liberia and Mexico.

This laboratory currently employs thirteen prisoner employees, six of whom are board certified, seven of whom are currently in training for certification.

MSI is "Building Bridges to Success" by providing real opportunities for Michigan adults in custody, educating and empowering them to become law-abiding, tax paying citizens through successful work skills training.

- *We instill and promote a positive work ethic.*
- *We provide opportunities for prisoners to learn marketable skills and gain from experience.*
- *We contribute to the economic self-sufficiency of working prisoners and their families.*

Through employment with MSI, prisoners at the Optical Lab develop both hard (industry-specific) and soft (social) skills, preparing them for employment after incarceration.

Soft Skills:

Decision Making
Communication
Teamwork
Reliability
Accountability
Punctuality
Adaptability
Listening
Literacy/Numeracy

Hard Skills:

Machine Operation
Machine Maintenance & Repair
Office Clerk
Order Fulfillment
Shipping & Receiving
Lens Finishing
Polishing & Coating
Ophthalmic Lab Technician
Healthcare Support Worker

