

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE
Pursuant to P.A. 64 of 2019
Section 310 (1)
Reentry Strategic Action Plan

Sec. 310. (1) By February 1, the department shall provide a report to the senate and house appropriations subcommittees on corrections, the senate and house fiscal agencies, the legislative corrections ombudsman, and the state budget office which details the strategic plan of the department. The report shall contain strategies to decrease the overall recidivism rate, measurable plans to increase the rehabilitative function of correctional facilities, metrics to track and ensure prisoner readiness to reenter society, and constructive actions for providing prisoners with life skills development.

(2) The intent of this report is to express that the mission of the department is to provide an action plan before reentry to society that ensures prisoners' readiness for meeting parole requirements and ensures a reduction in the total number of released inmates who reenter the criminal justice system.

Introduction – Mission and Vision

The Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) plays a critical role in Michigan's criminal justice system through achieving its mission in creating a safer Michigan by holding offenders accountable while promoting their success. The MDOC's vision in promoting offender success requires development of effective criminal justice policies and creating/implementing opportunities for offenders to be successful starting in prison/jail and continuing into community supervision. The MDOC expands this vision further to establish meaningful partnerships at the federal, state and local levels through both public and private entities, in developing services, interventions and programs, all within the framework of sound management using proven fiscal practices and outcome-oriented strategies.

The MDOC prioritizes education, training, and cognitive programming to change offender behavior to promote employment, self-sufficiency, and long-term success. Key metrics associated with Offender Success (OS) include vocational training completions, prisoner programming completions/waitlists, offender post-prison/jail employment, and recidivism.

In 2014, the MDOC created the Offender Success Administration, uniting the coordination of all reentry planning and services within one administration. Centralizing these functions has allowed the Department to coordinate strategic planning and services amongst various MDOC administrations and in partnership with other entities throughout the State. The result has helped not only to support high parole rates but also producing the lowest recorded recidivism in Michigan's history, leading to over a 10% decline in the prison population in the last five years.

Strategies – Achieving Public Safety through Promoting Offender Success

Vocational Villages - One of the most public examples of the Offender Success model in action in creating positive learning communities, within prisons, for offenders who are motivated about completing career and technical education and obtaining employment upon release prison-release. Offenders participating in Vocational Village programming are housed together in one unit that acts as a therapeutic learning environment designed to support their success. Offenders have a full day of training and classroom

instruction intended to mimic a typical workday outside prison walls and receive state and nationally recognized certifications in their trade. Most importantly, the MDOC actively works with offenders and employers to help secure offers of employment and intensive pre-release planning to identify any wrap around/supportive services such as housing, transportation, work clothing/tools that will be needed so that offenders can immediately work toward stability and self-sufficiency. The MDOC currently operates two vocational villages at the Parnall Correctional Facility and the Richard Handlon Correctional Facility, while a third is under construction at the Women's Huron Valley Correctional Facility. Recent expansions of the VV model include implementing the Last Mile Coding Program, DTE Energy Line Clearance Training Program, and improving both a statewide application/screening process for enrollments and data collection and tracking for Vocational Village population tracking employment rates.

Creating Employment Opportunities, Prison to Parole – The MDOC has also intensified its statewide job development strategies to both prepare and connect returning offenders with employment as close to their prison release date as possible. Employment Readiness programs for offenders in prison include basic computer and simulated web skills, along with digital and financial literacy. The completion of a resume as well as a Workforce Development Packet is also prepared in preparation of a prisoner's release to assist employers in selecting job candidates. The Workkeys test is being utilized by offenders to assist in determining if the requirements of the Michigan Compiled Law 791.234d has been met. Recent enhancements include implementing updated Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) and Microsoft Digital Literacy (MDL) programs, resume workshops, Prisoner Program Information Network (PPIN) upgrade, EDOVO tablet expansion and Brainchild handheld learning devices. New training programs for women offenders will also be provided covering; cosmetology, 3D Printing/Robotics, cohort teaching model for academic programs. The MDOC was selected to host the 2019 National Leadership Correctional Education Association (CEA) Conference this past year in recognition in leading efforts in creating and implementing education, training and employment opportunities for MDOC offenders.

To strengthen post-prison increase employability the department has developed a partnership with Department of State to issue offenders Birth Certificates, Social Security Cards and State of Michigan ID cards. Within MDOC's Offender Success Administration, the Offender Employment and Opportunity Unit works directly with employers, training schools and other workforce partners in creating training/employment opportunities and placing offenders, who qualify, into higher paying jobs with partnerships with over 700 employers statewide with committed to hire returning offenders. Job placement tools such as candidate listings have been implemented listing offenders that completed a Career and Technical Education Program or worked in a Michigan State Industries Factory while incarcerated to connect those to employment opportunities in their respective fields. Offender Success Administrative Agencies (OSAAs), under performance-based contracts with the MDOC, provide employment training, job development/placement services and other services to address employment barriers such as homelessness, transportation, health and behavioral health care assistance with over 1,200 offenders provided services this past year. Data tracking for job placement, job retention and average hourly wage at job entry are tracked as key measures for success with a cumulative job placement rate of 52% for parolees enrolled in post-prison employment services.

Evidence-Based Programming - All offenders coming into the prison system are screened by MDOC staff who develop a plan, including program recommendations, to mitigate the offender's risk upon release. Evidence-based core programming are available throughout the MDOC to help offenders better understand their behavior and develop tools to reduce their risk so that they can safely return to the

community. Examples of programs for male offenders include Violence Prevention Programming (VPP), Thinking for a Change (T4C), the Michigan Sex Offender Program (MSOP), Batterers Intervention Programming (MIDVP), Outpatient and Advanced Substance Abuse Treatment (ASAT). Evidenced based gender responsive programming for the female populations includes Beyond Violence (BV), Seeking Safety, Meridians (a program for women who have used force in intimate partner relationships), ASAT, and a cognitive restructuring program titled Moving On. In addition to gender-responsive programming, the Women’s Huron Valley Correctional Facility (WHV) partnered with the National Resource Center on Justice Involved Women to conduct the Gender Informed Practice Assessment (GIPA). The results provided the Department an opportunity to advance gender-informed, evidence-based practices for incarcerated women, which led to a strategic plan specifically for WHV.

Community-based programming is also available at the Detroit Reentry Center (DRC). The Prisoner Programming Centralization Unit developed and tracked programming completion metrics with the goal of over 90% completion for each Core Program. The unit also created quality assurance metrics and staff training for programming recommendations and monitored fidelity and quality assurance for program delivery in correctional facilities to insure evidence-based practices in all Core Programs.

The Office of Community Corrections (OCC) is in the planning stages of building upon the many achievements of the Offender Success Model by addressing the risk, needs, skill development and opportunities for long term self-sufficiency for probationers. The MDOC’s goal is to make a person’s first contact with the criminal justice system be their last. To kick off this process and fill the residential instability needs barrier, OCC developed and implemented the Road to Success pilot in Genesee County in collaboration with New Paths Inc., Genesee County Continuum of Care, and Genesee County Mental Health Specialty Court. The OCC applied for a federal Innovations in Supervision Initiative Grant and was awarded funding to apply our strategic plan in partnership with Muskegon Sheriff Department and Muskegon Prosecuting Attorney’s office to reduce violent crime and recidivism.

Housing and Homelessness – Implementing housing strategies to both prepare and connect returning homeless offenders with both transitional and permanent housing opportunities with the goal of achieving permanent supportive housing as close to their prison release date as possible. The MDOC contracts with OSAs to provide over 1,000 transitional housing beds at over 300 locations across the state, coupled with case coordination and rental start-up services with approximately 3,000 parolees served annually. The MDOC collaborates with local Housing Continuum of Care (COCs) and the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) to provide project-based Housing Choice Vouchers for parolees with approximately 86 parolees currently in vouchered housing.

Strategic Partnerships in Action – Promoting Offender Success through Effective Collaboration

Employment, Housing, Health & Behavioral Health Care, Social Supports – The MDOC maintains service contracts with Ten (10) Offender Success Administrative Agencies (OSAA), providing services to paroled offenders throughout the entire state. Agencies under contract are a mix of local Workforce Development Boards and Human Service Agencies who receive MDOC funding, combined with OSAA leveraged funding in brokering an array of employment, housing, health and behavioral health care and supports for approximately 6,000 paroled offenders per year.

College Partnerships - Increased partnerships with colleges to provide post-secondary education to eligible prisoners. Under a pilot program with the U.S. Department of Education U.S. colleges and

universities were granted the ability to offer Pell Grants to offenders in state and federal prisons. Delta, Mott Community and Jackson College were awarded nearly 1500 Pell Grants are partnering with the MDOC to deliver post-secondary education. These offer associate degrees and certificates in business, entrepreneurship, social work, science, arts and general studies. Calvin College is offering a privately funded four-year degree in ministry leadership. The MDOC offered letters of support to nine Michigan colleges and universities interested in taking part in the expansion of the Pell Grant Experimental Sites Program

Trucking Industry - Increased partnerships with Commercial Driver License (CDL) schools such as Pinnacle Truck Driver Training, Fleet Compliance Group, Suburban Truck Driver's Training School, Tri-Area Trucking, Coast to Coast, US Truck Driver's Training and Midwest Truck Driver's Training School are training parole and probation compliant candidates. Over 25 trucking companies statewide have hired returning citizens through these partnerships and training efforts.

Employer Hiring Events – Collaborating with local employers to participate in hiring events throughout the state held at both MDOC and local community venues.

Housing and Homelessness – The MDOC collaborates with the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) and their network of Continuum of Care (CoC) bodies and Housing Assistance Resource Agencies (HARAs), Safe and Just Michigan, Michigan Coalition to End Homelessness, the Fair Housing Center and Recovery Park (Detroit) in providing Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8) to eligible offender offenders, rental screening and assistance and planning and support to access fair, affordable housing for returning offenders throughout Michigan.

Job Training and Placement - Center for Employment Opportunities is providing both transitional jobs and job placement for offenders in the Detroit area. In addition, the Michigan Secretary of State is providing Mobile Units visiting prison facilities to provide offenders with a Driver's License and State Identification to ensure they have necessary documentation to obtain employment.

In conclusion, the MDOC's reentry strategic action plan has made significant advances this past year in creating and strengthening partnerships with federal, state and local entities in developing and implementing evidence-based programs and services targeting the risks and needs of prisoners, parolees and probationers. Moving forward, on-going efforts continue in achieving clear social indicators of success such as increased employment, stable housing and positive changes in health and behavioral health care.