



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

HEIDI E. WASHINGTON
DIRECTOR

DIRECTOR'S OFFICE MEMORANDUM 2021 - 14

EFFECTIVE: January 1, 2021

DATE: December 16, 2020

TO: Executive Policy Team
Administrative Management Team
Wardens

FROM: Heidi E. Washington, Director

SUBJECT: Vocational Village

SUPERSEDES DOM 2020 - 17 (effective 01/01/2020)

The Department implemented a Vocational Village at the Richard A. Handlon Correctional Facility (MTU) and the Parnall Correctional Facility (SMT) designed to give offenders intensive, hands-on job training experience in high-demand trades, and assist them in securing employment.

Offenders in a Vocational Village will have full days of work and classroom instruction. The specialized trades include the following, which are not all-inclusive, and may be subject to change:

- Automotive Technology
- Building Trades - Carpentry, Plumbing, Electrical, Concrete, and/or Masonry
- Computer Numeric Control (CNC)/Machine Tool/Robotics
- Welding
- Forklift Operations/Warehousing
- Computer Service Technology
- Commercial Driver's License (CDL)/Truck Driving

Offenders will be screened prior to acceptance into a Vocational Village. The following criteria will be used to determine eligibility:

- Offenders must have a recommendation for Career and Technical Education (CTE) programming.
- Academic programming is complete.
- Vocational Counseling indicates the offender has an interest and aptitude for the particular trade and the offender agrees to participate in the specific trade.
- Jobs related to the vocational trade are available in the offender's county of parole.
- Offender must have at least 6 months to his Parole Board Jurisdiction (PBJ) date.
- Offender must not have more than 24 months to his PBJ date.
- Offender must be 12 months Class I misconduct free or as determined by the Warden.

- Offender must have completed all core programming, or the core program(s) needed must be available during times that do not conflict with the vocational instruction schedule.
- Offender must be classified to general population.
- Offender must not have pending charges or an active detainer.
- Offender must not be serving a determinate sentence.
- Offender must not have STG I status.

ADMISSION PROCESS

In addition to the screening criteria, an application and agreement to participate in this program must be completed by the offender, noting educational and employment goals. This application will be reviewed by a panel consisting of representatives from Offender Success Administration and the Warden or Deputy Warden from the facilities containing Vocational Villages. The panel will determine whether the offender meets the criteria and whether they will approve or deny the application. All offenders who are accepted into the program will be housed in the dedicated units reserved for participants and will attend meals, yard, and programming together.

Offenders will attend vocational trade classes Monday through Friday, with hours of classroom instruction set to model an average work day that they will experience upon release. Offenders attending a vocational trade during the day will complete Core programming based on their programming recommendations at times that do not conflict with the offender's vocational training, including evening hours when available.

The Employment Readiness Program will be offered to offenders in a Vocational Village. The Employment Readiness Program will ensure the offender has the soft skills that are important to the success of the offender upon release. Employment Readiness will focus on resume writing, interviewing skills and mock interviews.

All staff members who have a role in the success of the Vocational Village will be required to complete Collaborative Case Management (CCM) training. Parole Board members will be educated regarding the vocational and core programming aspects of the unit and will be informed regarding each offender's participation in the program. Offenders participating in the Vocational Village shall receive a P-70 In-Reach parole if granted positive parole action by the Parole Board.

OFFENDER EXPECTATIONS AND INCENTIVES

Offenders housed in the Vocational Village are expected to maintain acceptable attendance and academic standards set by their instructors. They will also be required to maintain acceptable behavior in the housing unit. Offenders may be removed from the Vocational Village for unacceptable behavior or lack of progress in the program. For offenders housed in the Vocational Village, the following incentives may be offered, if available (This is not an all-inclusive list and may be subject to change):

- Late night telephone use
- Late night J-pay use (email access)
- Extended J-pay use (additional time)
- Pool table
- Ping pong table
- Additional hours in the gym and weight pit

- Leader dog program
- Pop/Sandwich machine
- Popcorn machine
- Early morning “*Insanity*” work out classes (held in the dayroom)
- Late night dayroom for studying
- Gaming Systems within the unit

COORDINATION WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS AND EMPLOYERS

With the goal of creating a pipeline of qualified candidates, designated education staff will work to coordinate career fairs and employer tours to bring in prospective employers and trade associations to see the vocational programs offered and meet with offenders who have completed or are nearing completion of a vocational trade. After completing the trade, the offender will remain at the Vocational Village site to allow the Employment Counselor to work with the offender to obtain employment prior to parole. Employers will have the opportunity to recruit and interview potential employees prior to parole.

TRACKING OUTCOMES

Until an automated system can be fully implemented, the Vocational Village designated education staff and the field agents shall be responsible for tracking graduates of the Vocational Village.

The Vocational Village education staff shall track and record the following data:

- The number of offenders who receive an offer of employment prior to release;
- The number of offenders who successfully complete their trade and Employment Readiness classes;
- The number of offenders who were unsuccessful and the reason for removal.

This data will be maintained in an Excel spreadsheet and sent to the Offender Employment and Opportunities Unit on a monthly basis. The Offender Employment and Opportunities Unit will review and analyze the data and provide reports on job placement, current employment, and job retention.

The Vocational Village field agents shall track and record the following data in the appropriate tabs in OMNI. The data for each offender should be reviewed and updated at least monthly:

- The current employment status of the offender, including employment start date.
- The name of the employer for each offender and the field of work.
- The current wage of the offender.
- Any violations of parole by the offender.
- If the offender successfully completes parole.
- If the offender is returned to prison as a result of a technical violation of parole and the date of return.
- If the offender is returned to prison as a result of a new prison commitment and the date they were returned.

VOCATIONAL VILLAGE PAY SCALE

Offenders who participate in the Vocational Village will not be allowed to have a job while in Vocational Village but will be compensated for participating in vocational programming. Offenders in Vocational Village will be paid as follows:

CTE	Daily Rate
Tier I	0.94
Tier II	1.08
Tier III	1.14
Tier IV	1.31

Once an offender demonstrates proficiency in a tier, they will move to the next tier of the pay scale as determined by the assignment supervisor.

OFFENDER SCHEDULES

Offenders are informed during the application process that the daily schedule of the Vocational Village programs may prevent them from participating in some activities. Daily schedules may also prevent them from having visits during the routine Monday through Friday work week as the visits may conflict with the trade or core programming. Typical visiting hours for offenders in the program will be on Saturday and Sunday. Additional visits on the weekends may be allowed if approved by the Director.

PAROLE SUPERVISION FOR VOCATIONAL VILLAGERS

The Field Operations Administration (FOA) shall designate agents within each office to supervise parolees who have completed programming within a Vocational Village. These agents shall be knowledgeable of the Vocational Village Program and put an emphasis on maintaining positive relationships with employers through efforts including, but not limited to, regular contact with employers, scheduling appointments with parolees to minimize work disruptions, and ensuring that parolees are receiving appropriate assistance in addressing potential barriers to employment.