

CLASSIFICATION PROGRAMS & REENTRY



PERFORMANCE BASED PLAN

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Submitted and Approved by:

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Mission and Vision Statements

Massachusetts Department of Correction Mission Statement:

The Massachusetts Department of Correction's mission is to promote public safety by managing inmates while providing care and appropriate programming in preparation for successful reentry into the community.

Massachusetts Department of Correction Vision Statement:

The Massachusetts Department of Correction's vision is to effect positive behavioral change in order to eliminate violence, victimization, and recidivism.

Classification Division Mission Statement:

The mission of the Classification Division is to maximize public safety and successful inmate reentry through efficient classification and placement, accurate computation of records, and effective interaction with victims and internal and external stakeholders.

Program Services Division Mission Statement:

The mission of the Program Services Division is to promote public safety by facilitating effective program participation in preparation for successful reentry.

Division of Inmate Training and Education Mission Statement:

The mission of the Division of Inmate Training and Education is to prepare inmates for successful reentry by providing a comprehensive academic and vocational program continuum which is responsive to the individual risk and need of each inmate.

Reentry Services Division Mission Statement:

The mission of the Reentry Services Division is to monitor and oversee a comprehensive, collaborative, seamless, reentry strategy which promotes successful transition of our inmate population by collaborating with county, state, community and faith-based agencies in areas including, but not limited to employment, medical, and mental health care, substance abuse treatment, education and related transition programming.



Performance Based Plan Summary

The Massachusetts Department of Correction's 2015-2020 Strategic Plan includes six overarching goals. Institutions and divisions utilize strategic planning as a foundation for creating their own specific strategies and performance measures for tracking progress towards meeting each goal. The Reentry Continuum Collaborative (RCC), which consists of the Classification Division, Program Services, Inmate Training and Education, and Reentry Services, developed a supplementary performance based plan to support the overarching goal of:

Effectively prepare inmates for transition into communities to reduce crime and victimization, recidivism, and promote reentry.

The following plan is based on the male inmate population and includes performance measures that are imperative to working towards this goal.

Performance Measure

Increase the percentage of releases to the street from minimum/pre-release/electronic monitoring security from 43% to 48% for FY17.



Context

Inmates releasing from lower levels of security increase their chances of being successful, law-abiding returning citizens. A gradual reduction to the lowest level of security, without compromising public safety, allows inmates to utilize the skills they have gained through programming and reestablish their independence in the community while still under supervision.

Performance Measure

Increase the percentage of inmates released to the street from pre-release security level that served at least 6 continuous months in pre-release from 61% to 66% for FY17.



Context

Inmates that release to the street from lower security have a significantly lower recidivism rate compared to inmates that release from higher security. Additionally, while in pre-release security, inmates may be able to engage in work release programs which also have a significant impact on an inmate's successful transition to the community from incarceration. An employed inmate creates stability while incarcerated and maintaining that employment or other full time equivalency leads to a more structured and seamless transition to the society.

Performance Measure

Increase the number of step-down partnerships from 6 counties to 9 counties for FY17.



Context

Houses of Correction have a distinct advantage within the criminal justice system as they are a part of the community in which they release offenders. Each facility has established strong community partnerships within their surrounding cities and towns which strengthens reentry for their inmates. DOC inmates who meet guidelines for a transition to the house of correction in the community will eventually be releasing and will have stronger family and community support. Current county partnerships include: Berkshire, Essex, Hampshire, Hampden, Suffolk, and Worcester County.

Performance Measure

Increase the percentage of releases to the street with parole supervision from 29% to 35% for FY17.



Context

Beginning in January 2011 to the present, parole rates have incurred a significant decrease. In order to promote public safety, it is beneficial to have inmates release to the street with supervision. Parole encourages inmates to release to supportive housing plans, such as treatment and sober homes, as well as continue rehabilitation and treatment in the community.

Performance Measure

Increase percentage of releases to the street that were eligible for Substance Abuse programming and completed Correctional Recovery Academy (CRA) prior to release from 46% to 70% for FY17.



Context

Correctional Recovery Academy (CRA) is an intensive skill-based residential treatment program. The CRA targets substance abuse and relapse prevention. The program utilizes rolling admissions and combines the elements of a therapeutic community's social learning approach with an advanced cognitive behavioural curriculum.

Performance Measure

Increase percentage of releases to the street that were eligible for Criminal Thinking programming and completed Criminal Thinking Program prior to release from 27% to 40% for FY17.



Context

The Criminal Thinking Program is a cognitive behavioral approach which focuses on altering pro-criminal thinking patterns that have been identified as separating those who are serious repeat inmates from those who are not. The program focuses specifically on countering criminal sentiments by developing pro-social alternatives.

Performance Measure

Increase percentage of releases to the street that were eligible for Anger Management programming and completed Violence Reduction Program prior to release from 33% to 40% for FY17.



Context

Violence Reduction Program targets cognitions that contribute to violent behavior. The goals of the program are to decrease violent behavior and the likelihood of institutional disturbances. During the program, inmates identify the specific cognitions which have led to their violent behavior. Once identified, inmates are taught pro-social strategies and skills to diminish the likelihood of continued violence.

Performance Measure

Increase the percentage of releases to the street mandated to register as a sex offender that participated in Sex Offender Treatment Program (SOTP) from 53% to 60% for FY17.



Context

SOTP is a comprehensive program with multiple phases that provides a wide range of services including therapy groups, psycho educational classes, behavioral treatment, educational and vocational services, and supplemental groups and activities within therapeutic community settings.

Performance Measure

Decrease the percentage of inmates that decline to engage in MATRI services prior to release from 68% to 60% for FY17.



Context

MATRI provides pre-release treatment and post-release referral for opioid-addicted and alcohol-addicted inmates at participating sites in the MA DOC. The program involves prison-based residential and non-residential substance abuse treatment and collaboration with community based clinics to provide aftercare treatment. The goal is to facilitate transition into an outpatient substance abuse treatment program which employs a multi-faceted approach to treatment including the use of the medication Vivitrol/Naltrexone, counseling, and aftercare referral to community based providers. Inmates participating in the program must be engaged in substance abuse treatment for the duration of their incarceration.

Performance Measure

Increase percentage of releases to the street that were admitted without a High School Equivalency (GED/Hi-SET) or HS Diploma that release with completing the Hi-SET from 24% to 30% for FY17.



Context

MA DOC offers a full continuum of academic programming that includes instruction to increase English language proficiency and Adult Basic Education Skills for the purpose of providing inmates with a pathway to achieve a high school equivalency credential. In addition, inmates who have obtained a high school equivalency are eligible to pursue vocational education and training opportunities as well as post-secondary education which further promotes the likelihood of successful reentry.

Performance Measure

Increase the percentage of releases to the street that were eligible for vocational programming that completed a vocational program (building trades, welding, culinary arts barber, auto body repair, automotive repair, small engine repair, IT essentials) from 17% to 25% for FY17.



Context

MA DOC provides numerous vocational programs that offer either a certificate or a license. Vocational education and training opportunities present inmates with career pathways that promote the likelihood of post-release employment and successful reentry.

Performance Measure

Increase the percentage of inmates released to the street with self-reported employment from 7% to 15% for FY17.



Context

Inmates releasing to the street with employment have a greater likelihood of re-establishing themselves in the community, as they are able to support themselves financially and become tax paying citizens.

Performance Measure

Context

Increase percentage of inmates released to the street with verified MA Health from 72% to 80% for FY17.



Ensuring inmates release to the street with MassHealth allows one to obtain medical, mental health, and substance abuse appointments in the community, which are necessary to maintain quality of life in the community.

Performance Measure

Context

Increase percentage of releases to the street with a medical or mental health issue that have a follow-up appointment upon release from:

- i 61% to 70% by 2017 for Mental Health appointments for FY17
- i 64% to 70% by 2017 for Medical appointments for FY17



Scheduling appointments for inmates prior to release provides the foundation for an inmate to have support services established in their community. These appointments are crucial for inmates to maintain stability and quality of life in the community.

Performance Measure

Context

Increase the percentage of releases with an assessed substance abuse need or high Texas Christian University Drug Screen (TCUD) score that release to Residential Treatment or Sober Home from 21% to 30% for FY17.



Assisting inmates with a substance abuse need, release to residential treatment or sober home encourages one to continue with their substance abuse treatment post-release. This increases the probability of maintaining sobriety in the community.

Performance Measure

Context

Decrease the percentage of releases to a shelter placement from 6% to 4% for FY17.



By decreasing the number of releases to a shelter (temporary housing), MA DOC is increasing the number of releases to permanent and transitional housing, which provides releases with stable living situations and allows one to become integrated within a community.



Classification Strategies

- i Utilize monthly performance measures to monitor and measure the number of inmates who transfer to minimum security and pre-release security, as well as returns to higher custody.
- i Increase partnerships with county facilities to improve and expand step-down efforts, while increasing work-release collaborations.
- i Evaluate point base classification system to maximize the amount of inmates in minimum security or below.
- i Apply a discretionary override for any appropriate inmate who is otherwise suitable for placement in lower security.
- i Monitor monthly performance measures to include Earliest Release Dates for inmates transferred to pre-release.
- i Gather pre-release population data to formulate protocols to increase pre-release length of stay.
- i Work with facilities to expedite board reviews for inmates moved to higher custody due to a pending investigation status.
- i Schedule meetings and tours with counties who are not involved with the step-down initiative.
- i Establish a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with counties that can offer pre-release and reentry services.
- i Ensure inmates are meeting their programming needs prior to parole review.
- i Release inmates to the Transitional Treatment Program (TTP).



Programming Strategies

- i Program Services will identify inmates with unmet need areas that cannot be met at their current facility and are within specified time frames to their release date. The Classification Division will be notified of these inmates for a classification review to a custody level/facility that offers programming corresponding with an inmate's unmet need area(s).
- i Review and monitor inmate programming needs at each facility, and apply programming resources to facilities that have the greatest need.
- i Continue to utilize and expand Program Engagement Strategy (PES) as a means of ensuring inmates participate in programming.
- i Train staff on Motivational Interviewing techniques to encourage inmates to participate in programming.
- i Conduct audits of inmate case plans in conjunction with the Policy Development and Compliance Unit (PDCU) facility audit schedule.
- i Collaborate with the Office of Technology Information Services to automate case plan recommendations within IMS.
- i Implement trainings and provide technical assistance in regards to proper case plan processes and tasks.
- i Work in partnership with the Massachusetts Parole Board to ensure parole releases are informed of the MATRI program.
- i Increase number of inmates that engage in substance abuse treatment, in-turn increasing the number of inmates that are eligible for the MATRI program.
- i Collaborate with external stake holders, such as outpatient clinics, to increase the number of clinics in the community providing treatment to inmates with MATRI services.
- i Implement monthly MATRI informational sessions to promote and educate the inmate population on MATRI services and benefits.
- i Increase the number of vocational programming opportunities available to the inmate population.



Reentry Strategies

- i Collaborate with Division of Inmate Training and Education to align work experience, and vocational programming with potential job opportunities in the community.
- i Develop classroom time at Pre-Release facilities for inmates to job search and apply for positions in their releasing community by matching skills acquired during their pre-release employment.
- i Track MassHealth approvals weekly and monthly to evaluate the percentage of approvals.
- i Continue partnership with MassHealth to develop comprehensive strategies designed to support MassHealth's screening and approval process.
- i Maintain communication with the institutions to identify barriers to the approval of eligible MassHealth applications.
- i Prepare and train identified Correctional Program Officers (CPO's) at facilities that will specialize in MassHealth applications.
- i Track outpatient appointments prior to the inmates release and verify follow up appointments.
- i Partner with health care vendor to develop comprehensive strategies designed to support the vendor staff's ability to identify releasing inmates with medical, and/or mental health, and/or substance abuse issue(s) that require an outpatient appointment.
- i Maintain close communication with the Departments Medical and Mental Health Division to identify barriers to the process of making appropriate outpatient appointments prior to the inmates release.
- i Develop tracking method and mechanism to verify follow-up appointments within a designated time frame.
- i Utilize an inmate's need assessment to identify the potential for an unstable living environment at release.
- i Implement a training plan for the Housing Search Specialist that is specific to identifying inmates at risk of homelessness based on the need assessment and a thorough dialogue with the releasing inmate.
- i Provide institutional staff with a list of inmates to review and revisit housing options for any inmate at risk for homelessness or releasing to a shelter.
- i Network, build, and strengthen relationships with housing programs, such as Western Mass Coalition to End Homelessness
- i Divert inmates at risk for homelessness to recovery or sober homes when appropriate.
- i Collaborate with affordable housing providers in Western Massachusetts to increase post release placement of complex cases.