IOWA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

2014-2018
STRATEGIC PLAN

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PREFACE

The Department of Corrections (DOC) is responsible for nine prisons housing approximately 8,100 offenders and eight Community Based Corrections (CBC) Districts who supervise about 30,000 offenders on any given day.

Additionally, the DOC is responsible for Iowa Prison Industries, a not-for-profit program that teaches incarcerated offenders valuable manufacturing job skills.

Iowa's adult correctional system carries out its legal mandate of protecting the public and promoting offender rehabilitation through a continuum of institution and community evidence based services and interventions. This continuum is designed with recognition that for most offenders, reentry planning starts upon admission to the corrections system. The effective and efficient management of offenders in accordance with their risk and criminogenic needs (those needs that contribute to criminality) is accomplished through targeted programming, release preparation, and transition services. Success in these endeavors assists offenders to become productive members of the community and makes it less likely that they will re-offend, resulting in lowered recidivism rates. In 1990 the Department's prison recidivism rate was 44.7% and today it is 30.3%. Our overall desired outcome is to reduce the prison recidivism rate to 25% during the next five years by focusing resources toward our highest risk offenders.

The priority areas contained in this plan are guided by our Corrections Road Map:

Offender success is our goal.
Reentry is our process.
Evidence Based Practices are our tools.
Staff is our most important asset.

OUR VISION

An Iowa with No More Victims.

OUR MISSION

To advance successful offender reentry to protect the public, employees and offenders from victimization.

OUR VALUES & BELIEFS

- People can change.
- Every person should be treated with dignity and respect.
- Our efforts help make people safer.
- We must work as a team if we are to succeed.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: AT A GLANCE

- Focus resources toward individuals most likely to reoffend.
  - Incarcerate only those who need it.
  - Staff in correlation to offenders' risk levels.
  - Expand effective community supervision.

- Focus on evidence based and research-informed practices for improved offender reentry.
  - Invest in program models that reduce recidivism.
  - Expand continuous quality improvement processes.
  - Seek housing options for geriatric and seriously mentally ill offenders.
  - Expand collaboration with other agencies and organizations.

STRATEGIES, GOALS & DESIRED OUTCOMES

Strategic Priority #1:
Focus resources toward individuals most likely to reoffend.

Strategic Goals

1. **Incarcerate only those who need it.**
   - Provide offenders' assessed needs to the court prior to sentencing.
   - Support sentencing options that divert appropriate offenders to intensive community based supervision including specialty courts.
   - Use objective assessments to inform decisions for supervision levels, release recommendations and discharge.
   - Implement prison based treatment programming earlier for long term offenders.
   - Concentrate on short term transitional goals for low risk offenders.
2. **Staff in correlation to offenders' risk levels.**
   - Develop workload formula that provides for staffing sufficient to offenders' assessed needs and risk levels.
   - Completethe opening of the new Iowa Correctional Institution for Women – Programs Building and Minimum Live Out Support Building.
   - Reposition resources and offenders to maximize the Department's ability to reduce recidivism and increase staff and offender safety.
3. **Expand effective community supervision.**
   - Adjust CBC caseloads to levels that support increased success rates.
   - Deploy techniques that enhance offenders' motivation and capabilities to complete treatment successfully.

Desired Outcomes

- Public safety and crime reduction
- Offender accountability

Strategic Priority #2:
Focus on evidence based and research-informed practices for improved offender reentry.

Strategic Goals

1. **Invest in program models that reduce recidivism.**
   - Seek better treatment opportunities for mentally ill offenders.
   - Use cognitive behavioral and social learning models.
   - Expand capacity to determine offender treatment program effectiveness.
2. **Expand continuous quality improvement processes.**
   - Measure process, practice, outcomes.
   - Monitor the quality and performance of implemented program models to ensure recidivism reduction outcomes.
3. **Seek housing options for geriatric and seriously mentally ill offenders.**
   - Engage other agencies and organizations in dialogue about offender reentry options.
   - Work with community treatment service providers to share medical information about discharging offenders.
4. **Expand collaboration with other agencies and organizations.**
   - Engage ongoing support in natural communities and from other social service agencies at the state and local levels.
   - Expand partnerships with community colleges to provide basic education (GED/Literacy) and Life Skills (soft job skills) to all offenders; provide the opportunity for all offenders to participate in certified vocational training programs/apprenticeship program (where the offender works in the field as they learn); increase computer literacy and expand computer based learning opportunities.
   - Expand the number of Iowa Workforce Development staff working with offenders during the last six months of incarceration; increase the number of institutional career fairs.
   - Participate in the state's mental health re-design; work with Department of Human Servicesto enroll all offenders in health insurance and benefits.
   - Increase opportunities for faith-based and community organizationsto positively impact offenders in prison and in the community.

Desired Outcomes

- Public safety and crime reduction
- Responsible use of taxpayer dollars; good return on investment
- Quality services and continuous improvement in delivery of services

OUR SUCCESS TO-DATE

The Department of Corrections has been actively engaged in strategic planning since 2004. This plan reflects the Department's effort to align its activities and operations with the Governor's Leadership Agenda and the principles of Accountable Government.

Recidivism Reduction

A common thread running through all the DOC's strategic plans, including this one, is recidivism reduction. The following statistics compare the current return rate to prison with recidivism rates from FY2004:

- The return rate to prison is 30.3%, down from 33.9% (a total reduction of 3.6 percentage points).
- Women offender reentry efforts have helped cut recidivism rates by 7.4 percentage points for this group.
- African-American offender reentry efforts have helped cut recidivism rates by 11.8 percentage points for this group. Currently there is no statistically significant difference in the return rate to prison for African-American offenders compared with White Non-Hispanic offenders.
- Mental health offender reentry efforts have helped cut recidivism rates by 16.0 percentage points for chronically mentally ill women and by 9.6 percentage points for chronically mentally ill men.

Current return rates are for FY2010 releases tracked through FY2013. Recidivism reductions are as compared with FY2004 releases tracked through FY2007.

Responsible Resource Management

Focusing efforts on evidence based practices, targeting resources toward reducing recidivism for the highest risk offenders, and collaborating with other agencies promotes responsible management of resources.

- The prison population has declined by 6.2%, from 8,611 offenders at yearend FY2004 to 8,074 at yearend FY2013.
- The total community based corrections population has increasedby 4.4%, from 29,012 offenders at yearend FY2004 to 30,297 at yearend FY2013.