



Prison Reform Update

November 15, 2018

Presented to the Joint Legislative Oversight
Committee on Justice and Public Safety

Framework

- ▶ Established Five Workgroups to Focus Efforts in Strategic Manner
 - Enhancing Security Policies and Practices
 - Reducing Contraband in Prison Facilities
 - Increasing Hiring and Retention
 - Improving Training for New and Veteran Employees
 - Improving Communication with Internal and External Stakeholders
- ▶ Established Prison Reform Advisory Board
- ▶ Retained Senior Executive Advisor for Prison Reform

Enhancing Security Policies and Practices

- ▶ Enhancing restrictive housing and disciplinary sanctions against offenders who assault staff
 - Modified policies in August 2018
 - Placement in restrictive housing for a minimum of 12 months, upon final review and decision of the Director's Classification Committee
 - Subject to forfeiture of time credits awarded to date, and ineligible to earn time credits on current term of incarceration
 - Suspension of visitation privileges for minimum of 12 months; allowed only non-contact visits when visitation privileges are restored
 - Placement on Interstate Compact Program list for out-of-state housing consideration for minimum of five years

Enhancing Security Policies and Practices

- ▶ Purchasing radios, batons and pepper spray to fully equip certified staff (correctional officers and case managers) in facilities at all custody levels
- ▶ Piloting personal body alarm “man-down” technology at three facilities – radio use for all staff and lanyards for visitors
- ▶ Distributed 4,100 whistles to non-certified staff who are currently not assigned radios
- ▶ Deploying stab resistant vests for 13,000 certified staff
 - 4,700 vests shipped to close security facilities
- ▶ Installing more cameras to improve surveillance
 - Nearly 900 cameras installed since April 2017. Funding approved for additional 3,000 cameras. Design and deployment planning underway.

Enhancing Security Policies and Practices

- ▶ Conducting unannounced security assessments based on new audit standards
- ▶ Reviewing and modifying security policies and procedures
 - Prisons and Correction Enterprises policies reconciled to eliminate discrepancies
 - Tool and key control policies modified and re-issued; piloting web-based tool inventory application at Harnett CI and Nash CI
 - Offender job and program assignment policy modified and re-issued
- ▶ Initiating pilot use of tasers for supervisory staff at four close security prisons
- ▶ Revalidating the offender classification instrument, with technical assistance from the National Institute of Corrections.

Re-missioning Facilities to Meet Population and Operational Needs

- ▶ Converting Lanesboro Correctional to a female facility and re-naming it Anson Correctional Institution
- ▶ Converting Eastern and Southern Correctional Institutions from female to close custody male facilities
- ▶ Re-opening North Piedmont Correctional Center for Women to temporarily house minimum custody females, will convert it to house Confinement in Response to Violation (CRV) females
- ▶ Re-purposing Neuse Correctional temporarily to house female offenders while transition is in progress

Re-missioning Facilities to Meet Population and Operational Needs

- ▶ Anticipated Timeframe
 - Eastern and Southern females already re-located to Neuse and North Piedmont
 - Eastern and Southern to receive close custody males in early 2019
 - Females transfer to the new Anson Correctional in Spring 2019

Reducing Contraband in Prison Facilities

- ▶ Visiting prisons in other jurisdictions (federal and state) to observe contraband detection strategies
- ▶ Examining all aspects of mailroom operation
 - Stopped delivery of original envelopes to offenders; providing envelope photocopies and approved contents
- ▶ Installing Managed Access radio frequency technology to detect, intercept, and block use of unauthorized cellphones at two facilities
 - Pursuing mobile manage access capability at other locations
- ▶ Identifying tailored contraband reduction strategies for facilities based on physical plant and facility mission

Improving Training for New and Veteran Employees

- ▶ Updating Basic Correctional Officer curriculum, with expansion to six weeks anticipated in January 2019
- ▶ Continuing to schedule new correctional officers in Basic Training during second week on job
 - Adding training classes and sites as needed; agreement with NC Forest Service to sub-lease training facility in Kinston adding additional training capacity
- ▶ Continuing implementation of Field Training Officer Program, with nearly 450 FTOs selected and trained.
 - Nearly 750 new hires have completed the 120-hour hands-on training program

Improving Training for New and Veteran Employees

- ▶ Conducting situational awareness in-service training for all Prisons staff
 - Completed 4-hour situational awareness training for nearly 300 Correction Enterprises staff
- ▶ Prioritizing supervisory training and adding more classes to accommodate need
 - Conducted training for more than 500 supervisory staff in 2018

Increasing Hiring and Retention

- ▶ Modifying hiring process and developing targeted recruitment strategies for facilities with highest vacancy rates
- ▶ Utilizing exit survey data to develop retention initiatives
- ▶ Promoting professional development activities and improving workplace morale through a new Facility Enhancement Fund
- ▶ Implemented a Prison Employee Recognition Program to honor employees for exemplary service on the job and in the community

Improving Communication with Internal and External Stakeholders

- ▶ Piloting use of email accounts by correctional officers at two facilities
- ▶ Conducting more frequent meetings and conference calls to ensure consistent message from leadership
- ▶ Correction Enterprises and Prisons leadership engaging in more regular communication and collaboration
 - Enterprises plant managers more integrated into facility management teams
- ▶ Promoting corrections as a profession through video and updated recruitment material



Closing Remarks/Questions

For more information, visit the Prison Reform page
on the DPS website: www.ncdps.gov