

Jeff Zmuda, Secretary

Laura Kelly, Governor

To: The Honorable Kellie Warren, Chairwoman
Senate Judiciary Committee

From: Dr. Cris Fanning, Executive Director, Programs and Risk Reduction
Kansas Department of Corrections

Date: March 10, 2024

Re: HB2228 Re-entry and Release Planning

The KDOC supports this bill because it provides a critical bridge for incarcerated individuals reentering society by ensuring they have the necessary identification and employment-related documents before release. Lack of proper identification is a significant barrier to securing housing, employment, and essential services, often leading to recidivism. By requiring the Secretary of Corrections to assist with obtaining these documents, the bill promotes successful reintegration, reduces reliance on public assistance, and enhances public safety. This bill benefits not only returning citizens but also employers, communities, and the overall economy by fostering self-sufficiency and reducing recidivism rates.

HB2228 concerns re-entry and release planning for KDOC residents. Risk reduction, release planning, and re-entry services are provided to all residents consistent with their custody level and areas of risk and need, beginning at 16 months pre-release (or time to serve if >16 months). The Unit Team counselor is responsible for developing a Release Plan, and with higher-need residents, additional discharge planning services are provided.

95% of our residents will return to the community.

33% serve less than a year – 47% serve less than two years – 66% serve less than five years

Release Planning Components

- Risk score and profile from the Level of Service Case Management Inventory (LS/CMI) for males or the Women's Risk Needs Assessment (WRNA) for females
- Residence Plan
- Program history and progress reports
- Work history, job skills, and plan for employment after release
- Status of identification including birth certificate, social security card, and a Kansas Driver's License/Identification card (DL/ID)
- Health profile, physical and mental, and any known disabilities and medication
- Description of the resident's relevant disciplinary history
- Any known detainers that are pending and/or unresolved
- Any known victim issues that may impact the plan
- Information related to support systems (family, resources)
- Any treatment needs, including substance use and sex offenders, and plan for after-care
- Any pending obligations (restitution, child support, etc.) and plan for payment
- Plan for transportation upon release
- Behavioral Health level 4 and Medical level 3 and higher, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Medicare/Medicaid, or specialized housing needs require additional discharge planning

Initiatives

- Ensuring Release Plans are approved at all levels, and Re-entry meetings between the resident, facility case management staff, and parole case management staff occur 2 weeks prior to release
- Identifying current Release Plan components that can be done prior to 16 months: birth certificate, social security card, purposeful education and employment plans, and career readiness/work skill development
- Building on the success of DL/ID clinics to increase the number of residents releasing with their driver's license or state ID

Challenges

- Timeline restrictions from external entities, specifically Social Security and Medicare/Medicaid applications
- Methods of ensuring a resident has access to their resume and other job-seeking materials after returning to the community
- Safe housing options for our most vulnerable residents is a consistent challenge.