

Prison Incentive Options

A century ago, America had high ambitions for its prisons. In President Calvin Coolidge's second state of the union address, he envisioned prisons that provide Americans "with special training in order to reestablish in them the power to pursue a law-abiding existence in the social and economic life of the Nation."

Today, America's prisons fall far short of that vision. Roughly 8 in 10 released prisoners re-offend within 6 years. People often commit worse crimes after release: 22 percent of drug offenders and 29 percent of property offenders committed a violent crime within 5 years of release. Of formerly incarcerated people, approximately 27 percent are unemployed. Prisons are critically understaffed. 1 in 3 correctional officer positions are vacant in many state departments of corrections, and some prisons are only at 50 percent staffing. Correctional officers are suffering physically. Their life expectancy is 63 years old; their suicide rate is three times that of police officers; and 1 in 3 suffers from depression and PTSD.

Top-down, one-size-fits-all policies will not fix America's prisons. Instead, we need policies that empower the people working in prisons to create innovative approaches to rehabilitation and give them ownership of their success. Policy incentives should hold prisons accountable to outcome-based measurements and reward prisons when they find solutions that work.

CICERO SOLUTIONS



Reduce recidivism with incentive structures based on outcomes.



Increase officer retention and wellness with financial rewards and reference-based health care pricing.

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States can adopt a funding and reward structure which gives prison administrators and correctional officers real incentive to deliver on specific, measurable outcomes. Facilities which reduce the total number of recidivists within 5 years of release, or see returns on lesser charges, will receive tiered awards. Facilities will be rewarded in proportion to an increase in the average time between incidents of incarceration for all releasees compared to the facilities' historic baselines. Facilities will be rewarded for successfully preparing people for employment by achieving increased employment rates for parolees above the facilities' baseline measurements.



Increase officer retention and wellness with financial rewards and reference-based health care pricing.

Facilities which decrease their vacancy rates and increase retention rates will be awarded financially. The additional funds could go towards an officer wellness fund that offers extra perks or direct bonuses to all officers—this structure encourages improvements to workplace culture and gives current officers ownership over the successes of new recruits. Adopting a reference-based health care pricing design allows employees to directly benefit by choosing a lower-priced provider. If an employee chooses a provider that offers a lower price than the established reference price, they are given a cut of the savings through reduced deductibles or direct cash payment.



The Cicero Difference

Cicero will leverage its best-in-class multi-state government affairs program to educate state leaders across the country on state solutions to align prison administrators and stakeholders towards data-driven, accountable practices that will reduce recidivism, increase job satisfaction, and save money. Cicero's Public Safety team is led by **Devon Kurtz** and overseen by **Judge Glock**, PhD, a former professor and Cicero's Senior Policy Director.