
Wisconsin Legislative Council

ACT MEMO



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2023 Wisconsin Act 233 [2023 Senate Bill 172]

Community Reentry Centers

2023 Wisconsin Act 233 requires the Department of Corrections (DOC) to contract with at least one nonprofit organization, for-profit entity, or public agency to establish a community reentry center that offers an initial point of contact for services for individuals released into the community from state correctional institutions. A community reentry center must be operated in a location that is easily accessible by the population served and, if available, accessible by public transportation.

The nonprofit organization, for-profit entity, or public agency contracted to operate the community reentry center (“operating entity”) must oversee, coordinate, and enter memoranda of understanding with other organizations that provide direct services to releasing individuals at each center. Under the act, organizations that provide services housed at the community reentry center must, at a minimum, be able to assess and assist the center’s clients by providing all of the following services:

- Assistance in identifying and accessing appropriate health care services and mental health services based on the client’s needs.
- Assistance in obtaining identification documents such as a birth certificate, Social Security card, state identification card, or driver’s license, including any necessary forms and instructions.
- Assistance in creating a bank account, including obtaining a debit card at the time of the client’s initial contact with the community reentry center.
- Assistance in obtaining access to emergency housing options for clients who are homeless and contacting landlords that rent to formerly incarcerated clients.
- Assistance in creating a resume, electronically submitting the resume where needed, and contacting relevant employment agencies to help clients secure employment.
- Assistance in identifying whether and how to proceed with the next level of education or vocational training appropriate to each client.
- A secured office space for DOC supervision agents to meet with clients who are on community supervision. Under the act, DOC must provide department staff to provide case management to eligible clients at the center.

The operating entity must develop multidisciplinary support teams with the organizations providing direct services to releasing individuals. These teams must review the needs and assessments individuals receiving services at each community reentry center.

Additionally, when awarding contracts to operating entities, DOC must prioritize agencies or organizations that do any of the following:

- Collaborate with organizations that provide services that will be housed at the community reentry center, or with justice-involved individuals, criminal justice coordinating councils, technical colleges, or workforce investment boards, as evidenced by letters of support.

- Propose to operate community reentry centers in counties with the highest numbers of individuals being released from incarceration to those counties.

Finally, the act includes data collection and reporting requirements. Each operating entity must gather and report the following data to DOC:

- The number of clients that participate in services provided at the community reentry center.
- Basic demographic information for the individuals served by the organizations.
- The number and type of services that were provided by the organizations.
- A comprehensive analysis of the outcomes of the services provided at each community reentry center.

DOC must then submit a report to the Legislature and Governor every two years, beginning on January 1, 2027, which examines outcomes of the services provided at each community reentry center.

Effective date: March 29, 2024

For a full history of the bill, visit the Legislature's [bill history page](#).

PJH:jal