REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE
Pursuant to P.A. 252 of 2014
Article V, 409(3)
Workforce Development Program Results

Sec. 409(3). By March 1, the department shall provide a report to the senate and house appropriation subcommittees on corrections, the legislative corrections ombudsman, and the senate and house fiscal agencies detailing the results of the workforce development program.

The Department has developed collaborations with Workforce Development Agency (WDA), Michigan Works!, and local Reentry Steering Teams, comprised of local community leaders, representatives from Correctional Facilities Administration, Field Operations Administration, service providers and community stakeholders. The Department continues to actively engage with state agencies and local entities in the ongoing development of relevant programming for prisoners.

The newly-established positions of Employment Counselor and Employment Readiness Instructor are charged with training and liaising between the prisoners and the community. The Employment Counselor is responsible for two simultaneous strands of activity: the development of a Workforce Development Referral Packet and the concomitant outreach into the community, post-secondary institutions, and engagement with employers. They also facilitate the issuance of Employability Certificates. The Employment Readiness Instructor provides training in employability soft skills, computer literacy, financial literacy, and in the various aspects of workforce development, including resume writing, job search and job interviews. They also provide individual instruction on community reentry concerns.

The Workforce Development Referral Packet is initiated at the Reception Center. The prisoner is also provided the first orientation to vocational training and post-secondary education opportunities. Throughout the period of incarceration, targeted prisoners follow a prescribed programming path which is designed to promote employment upon release.

To ensure programming is responsive to community needs, real-time software which identifies job openings at the local level, labor market information and local community agencies and contacts are utilized.