



JOHN R. KASICH
GOVERNOR
STATE OF OHIO

IMPROVING OHIO'S CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

The State's Prison Reforms and Innovative Programs to Assist Ex-Offenders Draw National Recognition

Governor John R. Kasich's administration received national recognition for a wide range of innovative reforms that improve prison safety, address inmates' mental health and addiction issues, strengthen opportunities for released offenders to transition into jobs and operate our system with a more business-like efficiency that delivers cost savings to taxpayers.

REDUCING OVERCROWDING AND IMPROVING SECURITY IN OHIO'S STATE PRISONS

- **Transitioning More Ex-Offenders into Jobs:** The Kasich Administration has focused on policies that help those with criminal convictions get back on their feet, become productive members of society and take part in the state's economic success. Previously, about 22,000 ex-offenders had to wait as long as one year after leaving the prison system to apply for and receive a Certificate of Qualification for Employment, which helps them obtain employment in certain fields. Today, the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction has established criteria for certain offenders (those with vocational skills or other exceptional program accomplishments) to apply to the courts for the needed certification immediately upon release.
- **Providing Resources to Local Communities for Enhanced Reentry and Diversion Efforts:** Knowing that nearly half of individuals committed to Ohio prisons were sent there for one year or less, and about half of those were the lowest level of felony offences, Gov. Kasich created the Targeted Community Alternatives to Prison Program (T-CAP), providing local communities with resources to manage low-level, non-violent and often drug-addicted Ohioans in more effective local community settings. As a result, two-thirds of all counties in the state are now participating.
- **Nationally Recognized for Achieving Industry Standards:** Ohio's prison system was recognized by the American Correctional Association as one of only two state correction agencies to achieve full ACA accreditation and Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) compliance.

STRENGTHENING PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS

- **Collateral Consequences:** Gov. Kasich signed cutting-edge legislation in 2012 to reduce crime in Ohio, decrease offender recidivism, increase public safety, strengthen families, and expand job opportunities for the estimated two million Ohioans with a non-violent felony or misdemeanor conviction. This effort addressed collateral consequences that have long existed beyond the direct sentence resulting from a crime, an important step toward increasing job opportunities for Ohioans who have paid their debt to society and want to change their lives. Ohio now leads the nation in taking a common sense approach to restoring Ohio citizens who have made a mistake in their past and are eager to live their lives as hard-working, contributing members of the community.

- **Developing New Ways to Help Prisoners Reach Their Full Potential:** Ohio was among the first in the nation to develop reintegration units into its prisons, where inmates are assigned to work and perform community service at least 8 to 10 hours per day.
- **Reducing Recidivism by Treating Addiction in Ohio's Prisons:** Ohio created a unique partnership where addiction specialists deliver services inside prisons and continue those after release. A high percentage of Ohio's prison inmates have histories of drug or alcohol addiction, and those who don't overcome their addiction have a higher likelihood of re-entering prison after their release. By leveraging the clinical expertise of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Ohio is expanding services and getting inmates the help they need to overcome their addiction while they are serving their sentences and provide a seamless transition of services and support to ensure sustained recovery after their release.
- **Strengthening Community-Based Partnerships:** Ohio has expanded funding and increased community-based partners to provide additional diversion opportunities for offenders and help them transition successfully back to the community. New efforts are matching offenders with employers, mentors, faith-based partners and community support groups to help them successfully transition into the community following their release. In addition, Ohio enacted comprehensive and public safety-focused sentencing reforms to rehabilitate inmates and better help them compete for jobs.
- **Expanding Job Opportunities with "Ban the Box" Required for State Government Hiring:** Ohio state government has removed from their employment applications a requirement or box that asks applicants to disclose whether or not they have a prior criminal conviction. This change allows the state to focus on policies that create opportunities for all Ohioans to get back on their feet, become productive members of society and take part in the state's economic renaissance. The General Assembly has followed up on this policy change and now all public employers are required to remove the checkbox from their employment applications.

DRIVING OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES

- **Delivering Cost Savings to Taxpayers:** Ohio sold and privatized a prison, outsourced operations, privatized food service and merged two facilities that were adjacently located.
- **Creating Stronger Partnerships with the Department of Youth Services:** The Department of Youth Services and the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction now share non-core, back-office administrative functions and office space, driving efficiencies and directing more money to their separate and distinct core missions.

