



Montana Department of Corrections

Director's Office

Steve Bullock, Governor
Mike Batista, Director

Montana Department of Corrections Response to questions from April 21, 2016 Law & Justice Committee Meeting May 26, 2016

How many offenders currently have been paroled but are still housed in prison because 'contingent' conditions have not been met?

According to Board of Pardons and Parole analyst, Christine Slaughter, there are a total of 187* offenders currently incarcerated who have been paroled contingent upon meeting certain requirements.

- Women comprise 19 of the total; and 168 are men.
- Of the 187 inmates, 17 have the specific requirement of securing housing. If the offender's parole is held up due to misconduct, failure to complete treatment, acceptance to a prerelease center, or they have not yet submitted a plan, they were not included in this 17.

*Sometimes this number – which represents a snapshot – includes individuals who have recently had a parole hearing and have not had time to complete the programming required or meet the Board's conditions.

How many individuals discharge from a secure facility because they are unable to meet the requirements set by the Board to acquire parole?

Each year, approximately 70 females and 150 males exit prison at their sentence expiration with no supervision to follow. An individual may exit prison with no supervision to follow for the following reasons:

- The individual was not eligible for parole.
- The individual was paroled, returned from parole or an alternative placement due to noncompliance and then their sentence expired after returning.
- The individual was approved for parole pending completion of programming or treatment but never completed the requirements, so parole was never achieved.

It is difficult to quantify how many individuals fall into each category. Anecdotally, staff indicate that discharge from a secure facility without parole because of inability to complete requirements occurs infrequently.

Description of parenting programs available at MSP and MWP

Montana Women's Prison

MWP contracts for parenting services with The Family Tree Center in Billings. Staff resources include a Parenting Coordinator position based at MWP 32-hours per week; a Family Advocate position based at MWP 15-hours per week; a part-time Caregiver Support staff person based in the community; and additional part-time group facilitation staff as specified in the contract.

Parenting services include:

- Pre-natal support group
- Labor and delivery coaching at the hospital
- Assistance with infant placement and mother/baby bonding visits
- Post-natal support group
- Parenting classes using the Nurturing Parenting model, which is an evidence-based practice. Classes include Nurturing Babies and Toddlers and Nurturing Grade-schoolers and Adolescents
- Motherread and Journaling classes, which are evidence-based models designed specifically for incarcerated mothers and other incarcerated child caregivers (e.g., grandmothers)
- Supervised individual mother/child visits in Parenting. These visits are in addition to MWP's regular visiting hours.
- A monthly Kid's Day with age-appropriate planned activities for mothers and children
- Family Advocacy services to assist with family reunification; e.g. parenting plans
- A community-based Caregiver Support staff to coordinate services with child caregivers (relatives, foster parents, etc.) and to encourage positive relationships
- Voices of Incarceration Project to provide parenting support following incarceration
- Referrals for on-going parenting support after discharge

Montana State Prison

A comprehensive parenting program at MSP is a component of the Life Skills course. The foundation of the class is based on The Nurturing Parent Parenting Curriculum and there are 80 lessons covered. The curriculum helps to promote parenting strategies and techniques that enhance empathy, self-worth, personal empowerment and appropriate discipline. The program also helps to inform fathers how to be a good parent through all stages of their child's life, even when the child is in the womb. The curriculum promotes the prevention of child abuse and neglect, and breaking the cycle of abuse and trauma. In class, the students and instructor focus on cultural differences in parenting.

Description of trauma-based programming (using a broad interpretation because we do not have a formal definition) at MSP & MWP

Montana Women's Prison

All treatment/recovery programs considered for use at MWP are evaluated according to the following criteria: evidence-based; cognitively-focused; trauma-informed; gender-responsive; corrections-focused; and cost-effective. Specific programs at MWP that address trauma include:

- Seeking Safety – an evidence-based model to provide coping skills for trauma and substance abuse
- TAMAR (Trauma, Addictions, Mental Health, and Recovery) – a program designed specifically for incarcerated women to address trauma and co-occurring conditions
- Picking Up the Pieces – a program for processing grief during incarceration and includes material on addressing grief/loss from a cultural perspective.

Montana State Prison

Clinicians employ a “trauma-informed” perspective in their interactions with offenders. Additionally, staff have received Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACES) training.

Many groups offered are specifically tailored to trauma including:

- Combat Veterans PTSD group
- General PTSD group
- Grounding group

Other groups are more skills-focused but provide opportunities to learn coping skills for a variety of the symptoms commonly associated with trauma such as anxiety, depression, social difficulties and sleep issues. Skills-focused groups include general coping skills, Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy Group and Dialectical-Behavioral Group.

Do we have trauma-based programming that deals with racism? Specifically, for the Native American population?

Montana Women's Prison and Montana State Prison

- Medicine Wheel – A 12-step chemical dependency program emphasizing a Native American perspective and the circular and cyclical nature of life. To complete the program, inmates are required to participate in and complete 16 sessions of treatment. The sessions incorporate life skills and knowledge to live a healthy life, it increases awareness of how intergenerational trauma affects individuals, participants learn to apply cultural teachings that provide healing and hope for the future. Within these sessions they are required to progress through all 12 steps of the program. The 12 steps are completed through a combination of written exercises and group discussions. Inmates who complete

the program are issued a completion certificate. The Indian Twelve Steps: Walking the Red Road is a major focus of the program. Each of the steps is accompanied by a key principle. The twelve steps begin with an inmate admitting that they are powerless over their addiction (honesty). The final step is a pledge to help others struggling with addiction (service). The primary goal of the program is to provide inmates with a deeper understanding of the 12-step recovery process and to assist them in developing a personal recovery program. Upon completion, participants are expected to have an increased ability to define the 12-step recovery process, apply the major concepts of the program, and define and utilize the 12-steps to develop a personal recovery plan.

- talking circles with the DOC Native American Liaison
- at Montana Women's Prison - individual meetings at the inmate's request with MWP's Native American Spiritual Liaison

Where is the 10-day furlough 10-day furlough provided for in statute?

[46-23-215](#), MCA

What are the recidivism rates for men compared to women?

Recidivism in Montana is measured as a return to a secure care facility within three years of release. As it is measured on a three-year basis, the most recent statistics stem from 2011. Recidivism rates for both men and women has decreased significantly in recent years.

- Overall: 37.1%
- Men: 38.8%
- Women: 25.3%

Montana's definition of recidivism is consistent with the national definition put forward by the Association of State Correctional Administrators.

Thank you and please do not hesitate to contact the Department with any additional questions or concerns.

Adrienne Slaughter
Government Relations Director
Montana Department of Corrections
406-444-0340
aslaughter@mt.gov