



OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

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DOJ OIG Releases Report on the Federal Bureau of Prisons' Release Preparation Program

The Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of the Inspector General (OIG) announced today the release of a report examining the effectiveness of the Federal Bureau of Prisons' (BOP) Release Preparation Program (RPP). The DOJ OIG identified several weaknesses in the BOP's implementation of the RPP that hinder the BOP's efforts to successfully transition inmates back into the community.

The RPP is a reentry program consisting of classes, instruction, and other assistance for inmates relating to health and nutrition, employment, personal finance, community resources, release procedures, and personal growth and development. Every BOP-operated prison is required to provide an RPP, and most sentenced inmates at BOP-operated prisons are required to participate in the program.

The specific findings in today's report include:

- **The BOP does not ensure that RPPs across its institutions meet inmate needs.** The BOP policy does not provide a nationwide RPP curriculum, or even a centralized framework to guide curriculum development. Rather, it leaves each BOP institution to determine its own RPP curriculum, which has led to widely inconsistent curricula, content, and quality among RPP courses. Moreover, the BOP does not use a systematic method to identify specific inmate needs when determining the curriculum each inmate is to receive.
- **Less than a third of inmates required to participate in the RPP actually complete the entire program.** We found that there are often few incentives for inmates to participate and no repercussions for those who refuse or choose not to complete the program.
- **The BOP does not adequately leverage its relationships with other federal agencies to enhance RPP efforts.** Currently, the BOP has only one formal, national agreement with another federal agency, the Social Security Administration, to assist inmates in obtaining services they need upon release. As a result, when inmates need assistance, institutions are left to contact federal agencies on an ad hoc basis at the local level, such as by

contacting a local Department of Veterans Affairs office to assist a veteran inmate who needs to reinstate benefits upon release.

- **The BOP does not measure the effect of the RPP on recidivism.** The BOP does not currently collect comprehensive re-arrest data on its former inmates, has no performance metrics to gauge the RPP's impact on recidivism, and does not currently make any attempt to link RPP efforts to recidivism. Such analyses would help the BOP know whether the RPP is effectively accomplishing its objective of reducing recidivism.

The report makes seven recommendations to the BOP to help improve the implementation of its RPP. The BOP agreed with all of the recommendations.

Today's report is available on the OIG's website at the following link: <https://oig.justice.gov/reports/2016/e1607.pdf>.