

## **Transcript: “A Message from IG Horowitz: BOP’s Management of Inmate Placements in Residential Reentry Centers and Home Confinement,” November 2016**

Hello. I’m Michael Horowitz, Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Justice.

Our office frequently conducts audits and reviews of how the Federal Bureau of Prisons releases inmates and helps them transition back into society. For example, just this year we examined the BOP’s untimely release of inmates, and also its Release Preparation Program. We also conduct audits of individual halfway houses around the country.

Today, our office issued a systemic review of BOP’s use of halfway houses, formally known as residential reentry centers, and home confinement. The BOP uses halfway houses and home confinement prior to inmates’ release into the community to help them transition back into society.

BOP’s policy is to make halfway house and home confinement decisions based on individual inmate risks and needs, the safety of the community, and available resources. Those policies appeared reasonable to us.

However, our audit found that the BOP’s actual decisions did not always take all of these considerations appropriately into account. For example, we found that the BOP did not fully consider inmates’ security classification and risk of recidivism, which are useful data points for understanding inmates’ need for the transitional services that halfway houses offer.

As a result, low-risk, low-need inmates are far more likely to be placed in halfway houses than high-risk, high-need inmates. We found that BO P placed only 6% of eligible minimum and low-security inmates directly into home confinement. Among all eligible inmates, only 4% were placed directly into home confinement.

This is particularly concerning given that BOP guidance, as well as the research we reviewed, found that low-risk inmates may not benefit from spending time in a halfway house. Among other things, these low-risk inmates can be exposed to higher-risk offenders in those facilities.

Underutilizing home confinement also results in fewer available spaces in halfway houses for higher-risk inmates who have a strong need for transitional services. This is a problem because it increases the likelihood that these high-risk inmates will be released directly into the community when their sentence is completed, without first receiving the benefits of a halfway house.

Today’s report also identified other concerns, including:

- The BOP is at or above its contracted capacity for both halfway houses and home confinement;
- The BOP does not have performance measures that evaluate the efficacy of these programs, and

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- The BOP does not have adequate procedures in place to monitor the services provided by halfway house contractors.

To learn more about our findings and to see our 5 recommendations for the program, please visit our website, [oig.justice.gov](http://oig.justice.gov), where you can read the full report.

Thank you for joining us.