

1                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to inmate reentry; amending s.  
3           944.704, F.S.; requiring the Department of Corrections  
4           to increase the number of employees serving as  
5           transition specialists and employment specialists;  
6           requiring transition assistance staff to provide job  
7           assignment credentialing and industry certification  
8           information to inmates before release; amending s.  
9           944.705, F.S.; requiring the department to establish a  
10          telephone hotline for the benefit of released  
11          offenders; requiring the department to provide a  
12          comprehensive community reentry resource directory to  
13          inmates before release; requiring the department to  
14          use geographic forecasting data to notify inmates  
15          about reentry resources before release; requiring the  
16          department to allow certain organizations to apply to  
17          be registered to provide inmate reentry services;  
18          requiring the department to adopt policies for  
19          screening, approving, and registering such  
20          organizations authorizing contracting with public or  
21          private educational institutions to assist military  
22          veteran inmates in applying for certain benefits;  
23          authorizing contracting with public or private  
24          organizations to establish transitional employment  
25          programs that provide employment opportunities to

26 recently released inmates; requiring rulemaking;  
 27 amending s. 944.801, F.S.; authorizing the department  
 28 to expand the use of job assignment credentialing and  
 29 industry certifications; requiring the department to  
 30 develop a prison entrepreneurship program and adopt  
 31 procedures for inmate admission; specifying  
 32 requirements for the program; requiring the department  
 33 to enter into agreements with certain entities to  
 34 carry out duties associated with the program;  
 35 providing an effective date.

36  
 37 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

38  
 39 Section 1. Section 944.704, Florida Statutes, is amended  
 40 to read:

41 944.704 Staff who provide transition assistance; duties.—

42 (1) The department shall increase the number of ~~provide a~~  
 43 transition assistance specialists in proportion to the number of  
 44 inmates served at each of the major institutions and shall  
 45 increase the number of employment specialists per judicial  
 46 circuit based on the number of released inmates served under  
 47 community supervision in that circuit.

48 (2) The transition assistance specialists' ~~whose~~ duties  
 49 include, but are not limited to:

50 (a) ~~(1)~~ Coordinating delivery of transition assistance

51 program services at the institution and at the community  
52 correctional centers authorized pursuant to s. 945.091(1)(b).

53 ~~(b)(2)~~ Assisting in the development of each inmate's  
54 postrelease plan.

55 ~~(c)(3)~~ Obtaining job placement information. Such  
56 information must include identifying any job assignment  
57 credentialing or industry certifications for which the inmate is  
58 eligible.

59 ~~(d)(4)~~ Providing a written medical discharge plan and  
60 referral to a county health department.

61 ~~(e)(5)~~ For an inmate who is known to be HIV positive,  
62 providing a 30-day supply of all HIV/AIDS-related medication  
63 that the inmate is taking before ~~prior to~~ release, if required  
64 under protocols of the Department of Corrections and treatment  
65 guidelines of the United States Department of Health and Human  
66 Services.

67 ~~(f)(6)~~ Facilitating placement in a private transition  
68 housing program, if requested by any eligible inmate. If an  
69 inmate who is nearing his or her date of release requests  
70 placement in a contracted substance abuse transition housing  
71 program, the transition assistance specialist shall inform the  
72 inmate of program availability and assess the inmate's need and  
73 suitability for transition housing assistance. If an inmate is  
74 approved for placement, the specialist shall assist the inmate  
75 and coordinate the release of the inmate with the selected

76 program. If an inmate requests and is approved for placement in  
77 a contracted faith-based substance abuse transition housing  
78 program, the specialist must consult with the chaplain before  
79 ~~prior to~~ such placement. In selecting inmates who are nearing  
80 their date of release for placement in a faith-based program,  
81 the department shall ensure that an inmate's faith orientation,  
82 or lack thereof, will not be considered in determining admission  
83 to the program and that the program does not attempt to convert  
84 an inmate toward a particular faith or religious preference.

85 (g) ~~(7)~~ Providing a photo identification card to all  
86 inmates prior to their release.

87 (3) ~~A~~ The transition assistance specialist may not be a  
88 correctional officer or correctional probation officer as  
89 defined in s. 943.10.

90 Section 2. Subsections (3) through (6) of section 944.705,  
91 Florida Statutes, are renumbered as subsections (4), (5), (6),  
92 and (11), respectively, and new subsections (3), (7), (8), (9),  
93 (10), and (12) are added to that section, to read:

94 944.705 Release orientation program.—

95 (3)(a) The department shall establish a toll-free hotline  
96 for the benefit of released inmates. The hotline shall provide  
97 information to released inmates seeking to obtain post-release  
98 referrals for community based reentry services.

99 (b) Before an inmate's release, the department shall  
100 provide the inmate with a comprehensive community reentry

101 resource directory, which shall be organized by county and  
102 include the name, address, telephone number, and a description  
103 of the services offered by each reentry service provider. The  
104 directory shall also include the name, address, and telephone  
105 number of existing portals of entry and the toll-free hotline  
106 number required by paragraph (a).

107 (c) The department shall expand the use of the Glacier  
108 geographic forecasting system to provide inmates with community-  
109 specific reentry service provider referrals before release.

110 (7) A nonprofit faith-based, business and professional,  
111 civic, or community organization may apply for registration with  
112 the department to provide inmate reentry services. Reentry  
113 services include, but are not limited to, counseling; providing  
114 information on housing and job placement; money management  
115 assistance; and programs addressing substance abuse, mental  
116 health, or co-occurring conditions.

117 (8) The department shall adopt policies and procedures for  
118 screening, approving, and registering an organization that  
119 applies to provide inmate reentry services under subsection (7).  
120 The department may deny approval and registration of an  
121 organization or a representative from an organization if it  
122 determines that the organization or representative does not meet  
123 the requirements of the department's policies and procedures.

124 (9) The department may contract with a public or private  
125 educational institution's Veterans Advocacy Clinic or Veterans

126 Legal Clinic to assist qualified veteran inmates in applying for  
127 veteran's benefits upon release.

128 (10) The department is authorized to contract with public  
129 or private organizations to establish transitional employment  
130 programs that provide employment opportunities for released  
131 inmates.

132 (12) The department shall adopt rules to implement this  
133 section.

134 Section 3. Subsections (4) through (6) of section 944.801,  
135 Florida Statutes, are renumbered as subsections (6) through (8),  
136 respectively, and new subsections (4) and (5) are added to that  
137 section, to read:

138 944.801 Education for state prisoners.—

139 (4) The department is authorized to expand the use of job  
140 assignment credentialing and industry certifications.

141 (5) The Correctional Education Program may establish a  
142 prison entrepreneurship program and adopt procedures for  
143 admitting student inmates. If the department elects to develop  
144 the program, it must include at least 180 days of in-prison  
145 education. Program curriculum must include a component on  
146 developing a business plan, procedures for graduation and  
147 certification of successful student inmates, and at least 90  
148 days of transitional and postrelease continuing education  
149 services. Transitional and postrelease continuing education  
150 services may be offered to program graduates on a voluntary

151 basis and shall not be a requirement for completion of the  
152 program. The department shall enter into agreements with public  
153 or private colleges, universities, or other non-profit entities  
154 to implement the program. The program shall be funded within  
155 existing resources.

156 Section 4. This act shall take effect October 1, 2019.