



State of Wisconsin
2021 - 2022 LEGISLATURE

LRB-6560/P3
MJW:emw&wlj

PRELIMINARY DRAFT - NOT READY FOR INTRODUCTION

1 **AN ACT** *to create* 20.410 (1) (df) and 301.098 of the statutes; **relating to:** creating
2 a program to establish and operate community reentry centers and making an
3 appropriation.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill is explained in the NOTES provided by the Joint Legislative Council in the bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

JOINT LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PREFATORY NOTE: This bill was prepared for the Legislative Council Study Committee on Increasing Offender Employment Opportunities. The bill requires the Department of Corrections (DOC) to create a community reentry center program and contract with nonprofit organizations to operate these centers. A community reentry center is a community site offering individuals who are being released from a state correctional institution initial points of contact for each of the following: health services, identification services, financial services, housing services, employment services, education services, and supervision services.

To be eligible for a DOC contract, a nonprofit organization must operate the community reentry center in a location easily accessible by public transportation and by the population it serves, and provide initial points of contact for all the services listed above. The bill requires DOC to provide staffing by supervision agents to any community reentry center operating under a contract with the agency.

The bill also requires DOC to create a report analyzing the effectiveness of the community reentry center program, which must include data assessing its impact on recidivism rates and a cost-benefit analysis. DOC must submit the first report by 2027, and must submit a report every two years thereafter.

1 **SECTION 1.** 20.005 (3) (schedule) of the statutes: at the appropriate place, insert
2 the following amounts for the purposes indicated:

	2023-24			2024-25
3 20.410 Corrections, department of				
4 (1) ADULT CORRECTIONAL SERVICES				
5 (df) Community reentry center pro-				
6 gram	GPR	A	-0-	-0-

7 **SECTION 2.** 20.410 (1) (df) of the statutes is created to read:
8 20.410 (1) (df) *Community reentry center program.* The amounts in the
9 schedule to establish and operate community reentry centers under s. 301.098.

NOTE: The bill creates an appropriation for DOC to pay for contracts it signs with nonprofit organizations that operate community reentry centers, but does not appropriate any funds. The Legislature would either need to fund the appropriation in the future, such as in the next budget, or DOC will have to pay for the contracts out of its existing agency appropriations.

****NOTE: Is this funding structure consistent with the committee’s intent?

10 **SECTION 3.** 301.098 of the statutes is created to read:
11 **301.098 Community reentry center program. (1)** In this section:
12 (a) “Community reentry center” means a community site that offers initial
13 points of contact for all of the following services to an individual at the time of his or
14 her release from a state correctional institution upon completion of his or her
15 sentence or to parole or extended supervision: health, identification, financial,
16 housing, employment, education, and supervision.

NOTE: The bill defines “community reentry center” as a site that offers initial points of contact for health services, identification services, financial services, housing services, employment services, education services, and supervision services. By defining

“community reentry center” in this way, the bill requires all of these services to be provided in order to qualify to contract with DOC.

****NOTE: Does the committee want to require that all of these specified services be provided at the site?

1 (b) “Nonprofit organization” means an organization described in section 501 (c)
2 of the Internal Revenue Code that is exempt from federal income tax under section
3 501 (a) of the Internal Revenue Code.

4 (2) The department shall create a community reentry center program. Under
5 the program, the department shall contract with nonprofit organizations to establish
6 and operate community reentry centers.

NOTE: The bill requires DOC to contract with multiple nonprofit organizations to create community reentry centers, but does not impose any further conditions on DOC contracts.

****NOTE: Does the committee want to allow DOC to contract for a single community reentry center, rather than requiring multiple reentry centers?

****NOTE: Does the committee want to give DOC direction on where these centers must be located? For instance, that one must be located within Milwaukee?

7 (3) To receive a contract under sub. (2), a nonprofit organization shall operate
8 a community reentry center in a location that is easily accessible by the population
9 served and accessible by public transportation that provides, at a minimum, all of
10 the following initial points of contact relating to the following services for individuals
11 at the time of release from a state correctional institution upon completion of his or
12 her sentence or to parole or extended supervision:

NOTE: The bill requires a nonprofit organization to provide “initial points of contact relating to” specific health, identification, financial, housing, employment, education, and supervision services before it may contract with DOC.

****NOTE: Does the committee want to require that all of these specified services be provided at the site?

13 (a) Health: assistance in identifying and accessing appropriate health care
14 services and mental health services based on the individual’s needs.

1 (b) Identification: assistance in obtaining identification documents such as the
2 individual's birth certificate, social security card, state identification card, or driver's
3 license, if eligible, including any necessary forms and instructions.

4 (c) Financial: assistance in creating a bank account, including obtaining a debit
5 card at the time of the individual's initial contact with the community reentry center.

6 (d) Housing: assistance in obtaining access to emergency housing options for
7 homeless individuals and contacting landlords that rent to formerly incarcerated
8 individuals.

9 (e) Employment: assistance in creating a resume, electronically submitting the
10 resume where needed, and contacting relevant employment agencies to secure
11 employment.

12 (f) Education: assistance in identifying whether and how to proceed with the
13 next level of education or vocational training the individual may want or need.

14 (g) Supervision: a station for department supervision agents to facilitate the
15 explanation and signing of the individual's rules and the assignment of the
16 individual to his or her department supervision agent.

17 **(4)** The department shall provide staffing by department supervision agents
18 to any community reentry center operated under sub. (3).

NOTE: The bill requires DOC to provide agents at the community reentry center site, but does not specify any minimum amount of time they must be present.

****NOTE: Would the committee like to require DOC agents to be present for a minimum period of time, such as requiring agents to be on site for a minimum number of hours per week or for a certain percentage of time that the center is open and providing services?

19 **(5)** (a) In this subsection, "recidivism" means any of the following:

20 1. A return to prison upon revocation of extended supervision, parole, or
21 probation.

1 2. A conviction for a crime that was committed within 3 years of release from
2 confinement.

3 (b) By January 1, 2027, and biennially thereafter, the department shall submit
4 to the governor and to the chief clerk of each house of the legislature for distribution
5 to the appropriate standing committees under s. 13.172 (3) a comprehensive report
6 that analyzes the effectiveness of the program under this section. The report shall
7 include data assessing the impact of the program on recidivism rates in the area
8 served by contract recipients and a cost-benefit analysis of the program.

 NOTE: The bill requires DOC to report on how the community reentry center sites
 have impacted recidivism and conduct a cost-benefit analysis of the program. The initial
 report is not due until 2027, which allows for several years of recidivism data to be
 collected prior to the initial report.

 ****NOTE: Is the report content and time frame consistent with the committee's
 intent?

9 **SECTION 4. Effective date.**

10 (1) This act takes effect on the day after publication, or on the 2nd day after
11 publication of the 2023 biennial budget act, whichever is later.

 NOTE: The bill delays the effective date of the bill until after passage of the budget
 because state law generally prohibits bills that appropriate more than \$10,000 from
 being passed prior to the budget.

12 **(END)**