



North Carolina Department of Public Safety

Prisons

Roy Cooper, Governor
Erik A. Hooks, Secretary

Reuben F. Young, Interim Chief Deputy Secretary
Kenneth E. Lassiter, Director

MEMORANDUM

To: Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety

From: Erik A. Hooks, Secretary *EAH*
Reuben Young, Interim Chief Deputy Secretary *RFY*

Re: Lincoln Correctional Center Feasibility Study Report

Date: March 1, 2018

Pursuant to Session Law 2017-57, 16C.12, "The Department of Public Safety (DPS) shall study the feasibility of closing the Lincoln Correctional Center. DPS shall report to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety by March 1, 2018, on the findings of the study. If DPS finds the facility should be closed, it shall include in the report plans for relocating the inmates and transferring the custody and program staff and the costs of closing the facility."

After careful study the Department of Public safety finds that Lincoln Correctional Center should remain operational. Lincoln Correctional Center is an adult male minimum security facility with an offender population capacity of 236.

As part of Prisons re-missioning of various facilities, Lincoln Correctional Center was identified as an integral component for the Re-entry and Transition initiative. This initiative established select facilities to work with the offender population to put offenders in contact with community resources prior to their release. Based on the high number of offenders returning to the surrounding areas, Lincoln has been re-missioned to be a reentry facility.

The Re-entry and Transition initiative serves the portion of the offender population that will be released from prison within 12-24 months and who are not suitable for community based programs which have been the primary means of transitional services back into the community. The traditional transition process involves offenders advancing through the three custody levels within minimum custody. Level I is primarily restricted to on-site assignments. Levels II and III allow inmates to transition back into the community through participating in the community volunteer program, home leave program, study release and work release programs. Prior to this initiative, inmates who were not suitable for these programs received no or very limited transition services. Through the current program at Lincoln Correctional Center, offenders that are restricted to Level I due to the type of crime committed and/or previous negative behaviors exhibited while incarcerated, are now provided expanded avenues of transitional service that had not been previously offered. In addition to on-site transition services, a Re-entry Probation/Parole Officer is assigned to the facility to work in conjunction with prisons staff to assist in facilitating the offenders return to the community. The Probation/Parole Officer assists by making the appropriate connections to community resources while the offender is still incarcerated.

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The three basic criteria for placement in the re-entry program at Lincoln Correctional Center are: offender is not currently eligible for community based programs; offender must be within 12-24 months of release; and offender is to be released to Cleveland, Gaston, Lincoln and Mecklenburg counties which is referred to as the Catchment Area. Each offender will have developed a Re-entry Strategic Transition Engagement Plan (R-STEP). This plan includes core and elective components. Below are the core and elective components generally included:

Core Components

- Vocational/Educational Classes
- Cognitive Behavioral Intervention
- Interactive Journaling
- Compiling Transition Documents
- Regular contacts with the Re-entry Probation/Parole Officer (RPPO)
- Increased contacts with the Case Manager (CM)
- Involvement with the Local Re-entry Council
- Specific plans for housing, employment, transportation and any other barriers to re-entry.

Elective Components

- Substance Abuse Programs
- Mental Health Counseling
- Medical Needs
- Veteran Affairs
- Sex Offender Treatment
- Other concerns related to specific needs

Elective needs are specific to a particular offender and participation is determined by the case manager. During the offender's housing at Lincoln Correctional Center, the offender's assigned case manager and Re-entry Probation/Parole Officer give specific attention to the offender's R-STEP. During the last nine months of incarceration the efforts are intensified in order to provide the greatest opportunities. The R-STRP program has a current capacity of 84 offenders with plans to expand the program to serve 200 offenders.

Lincoln Correctional Center also partners with Cleveland Community College to provide vocational training for 84 offenders per semester with vocational courses to include: carpentry, electrical wiring, plumbing and welding. This program graduates approximately 15 participants at the conclusion of each semester.

Lincoln Correctional Center houses a residential substance abuse program which provides intensive 90-day substance abuse treatment to 36 offenders.

Based upon the services provided to the offender population in the western area of North Carolina, which are not provided in other facilities in this region of the state, it is not deemed feasible to close Lincoln Correctional Center. Many productive and viable programs for the offender population are being provided there.

If you have any questions about this report, please contact Karen Pardue at 984-255-6042.