

**Nebraska Department of Correctional Services
Vocational & Life Skills Program
Quarterly Report**

DATE: October 1, 2014

TO: Dave Heineman, Governor
Patrick J. O'Donnell, Clerk of the Legislature

FROM: Dawn-Renee Smith, Reentry Administrator

RE: Vocational & Life Skills (VLS) Program

Pursuant to Neb. Rev. Statute 83-904, the following provides a report on aid distributed under the Vocational & Life Skills Program.

Number of Individuals Receiving Programming	None
Types of Programming	N/A
Cost per Individual	N/A
Number of Individuals Successfully Completed Programming	N/A

Funds not expended:

NDCS received funding July 1, 2014, for the vocational and life skills program and to staff the reentry program. Since that time, the reentry administrator has been hired (dedicated full time to the position August 25th) and the VLS administrator has been selected (still transitioning from previous position into this one) to oversee the VLS program and fund. The reentry administrator has worked with State Personnel to develop position description questionnaires (PDQ) for the reentry manager, grants monitor, reentry support specialist and is in the process of creating PDQs for the reentry case managers who will work directly with inmates to prepare their individual reentry plans.

LB 907 requires NDCS, in consultation with the Board of Parole, to adopt and promulgate rules and regulations for the vocational and life skills program. A copy of the draft rules is attached. The public hearing for promulgation of the rules and regulations is scheduled for October 30, 2014 at 9:00 a.m. at the NDCS Central Office.

The VLS administrator, while transitioning from his current position, is researching the Nebraska job market to ensure the programming proposed will lead to employment. The reentry administrator has been and will be meeting with local reentry networks (Reentry Alliance of Nebraska (RAN) and the Douglas County Reentry Initiatives Council), and numerous community-based providers and community colleges.

The reentry administrator and VLS administrator are currently working to develop the grant announcement and structure a grant review committee in order to begin to fund VLS programming. Consultation with State Probation for this process has been helpful. The draft grant announcement and proposed grant review committee will be provided to the Board of Parole for review once completed. The goal is to have the announcement and committee structure in place to release as soon as the rules and regulations have been adopted.

Also during this time, the reentry administrator is working to design the reentry plan and develop a plan for system-wide implementation. Contact has been made with several state departments of corrections regarding their reentry programs (i.e., Iowa, Ohio, Virginia).

cc: Mike Kenney, Director
Senator John Wightman, Chair, Executive Board of the Legislature
Esther Casmer, Chair, Board of Parole
Larry Wayne, Deputy Director
Levi Bennett, VLS Administrator
File

NEBRASKA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

TITLE 71 – DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

Chapter 1 – Rules and Regulations

001 Rules relating to the administration of the Vocational and Life Skills Program. Under provisions of Legislative Bill 907, One-hundred third Legislature, Second Session, 2014, the following rules and regulations shall govern the procedures for the NDCS Vocational and Life Skills Program.

001.01 Definitions

001.01A Grant Recipient – shall mean a qualifying provider with a qualifying program as defined in Section 001.02

001.01B Department – shall mean the Department of Correctional Services

001.01C Vocational Training – shall mean an organized training provided with the intended result of learning a job skill and obtaining employment

001.01D Life Skills Training – shall mean an organized training provided with the intended result of preparing an individual for employment

001.01E Participant – shall mean a state inmate, parolee, felony probationer or former state inmate or felony probationer up to 18 months after his/her discharge from a state prison, parole or state probation

001.02 Qualified Provider

To be eligible, the provider and program must meet at least one of the requirements 001.02A-D and at least one of the requirements in 001.02E-F

001.02A The provider must be a community-based organization

001.02B The provider must be a community college

001.02C The provider must be a federally-recognized or state-recognized Indian tribe

001.02D The provider must be a non-profit organization

001.02E The provider's proposed program must provide vocational training with the desired result of participant employment

001.02F The provider's proposed program must provide life skills training with the desired result of participant employment

001.03 Grant Application Process

The grant application must include at least the following information; the Department may request additional information in the application or following submission of the application:

- A description of the provider and its primary function
- A description of the program for which funds are being requested
- A plan for collecting data and evaluating the effectiveness of the proposed program
- A detailed budget for the program, including requested funds and other funds used for the same program

001.04 Award Limits

The Department will determine the grant award based on the grant recipient's application and ability to meet the program objectives.

001.05 Disbursements

Vocational and Life Skills Program grants shall be disbursed as outlined in the grant announcement and grant award document. Grant awards may be increased up to the full amount requested if additional funds are available during the fiscal year.

001.06 Performance Requirements

The grant recipient shall submit reports (including financial reports meeting the requirements outlined in the grant award document and special conditions) to the Department on a quarterly basis and a final performance report upon completion of the grant award cycle. The reports shall include, but are not limited to, the following components. Monitoring of the project is required.

- The types of programming
- The cost per participant for the program, service or training provided
- The number of participants served, including the number of participants who successfully completed the program
- The effectiveness of the program or progress toward evaluation of same

001.06A The Department will monitor the progress of the program in accordance with grant requirements. The Department shall conduct site audits regularly and review business records pertaining to the awarded program and general accounting practices of the grant recipient.

001.07 Fund Disposal

The Department shall retain any funds not distributed to community-based organizations, community colleges, federally-recognized or state-recognized Indian tribes or nonprofit organizations for future distribution. These funds shall not be used for any purpose other than grant awards to providers.