



SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

SD Department of Corrections

Corrections Commission

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Parole Supervision Updates

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Parole Supervision Background

Old System Parole

- Crimes committed before July 1, 1996.
- Good time automatically applied to sentence.
- Once parole eligible, must be seen by parole board every eight months.

New System Parole

- Crimes committed after July 1, 1996.
- Presumptive Parole System
 - Complete statutory requirements to be considered compliant and can release without seeing parole board.
 - If violated or found non-compliant, must see the board at least once every two years.



Parole Supervision Process

To release to parole supervision, an offender must have **three things**:

1) Approval to release

- Presumptive
- Discretionary
- Suspended sentence release date

2) Signed supervision agreement

3) Approved release plan



Parole Supervision Statutory Requirements

Responding to violations of the supervision agreement

- **Graduated sanctioning**
 - Implemented in 2006; became mandatory via statute through Criminal Justice Initiative in 2014.
 - SDCL 24-15A-48: *The response to a violation and the sanctioning options shall be standardized and reflect graduated responses and sanctions including informal and formal responses to violations.*

Incentivizing prosocial behavior

- **Earned Discharge Credits** (Implemented 2014 through Criminal Justice Initiative)
 - SDCL 24-15A-50
- **Compliant Discharge** (implemented 2017 through Smart on Crime legislation)
 - SDCL 16-22-29: *A parolee or probationer who is eligible for earned discharge credits and serving a sentence or sentences exclusively subject to presumptive probation pursuant to § 22-6-11, regardless of date of offense, shall be discharged from probation or parole supervision upon completion of all treatment programs required as a condition of the person's probation or parole provided the parolee or probationer has been on supervision for a minimum of twelve full continuous calendar months*
- **Early Final Discharge** (implemented in 1996 as part of the New System Parole)
 - 24-15A-8: *Upon recommendation of the supervising agent, the board may grant an early final discharge from supervision for a parolee or person serving a suspended sentence under supervision of the board if the board is satisfied that an early final discharge would be in the best interests of society and the inmate.*



Parole Reform Solutions

Enhanced Compliance Unit (ECU)

- Appointed **five experienced parole agents** to this unit and added five new agents to help lower caseloads.
 - Four in Sioux Falls, One in Rapid City
- Enhanced Compliance Unit Agents will:
 - **Work late night shifts** and **one weekend shift per month.**
 - **Supervise high risk offenders** to include direct notify parolees, sex offenders, un-convicted sex offenders, violent offenders, chronic parole violators, and offenders who have served a significant sentence.
 - Work with the high-risk offenders for a minimum of 90 days to **ensure compliance** prior to transferring to another parole agent.
- **Contact requirements** will be **twice as much as required for intensive supervision** cases outlined in administrative rule to include:
 - Two personal contacts weekly
 - Two collateral contacts weekly
 - One random home check bi-weekly

Plan to request six additional agents to help ensure caseload averages meet American Probation and Parole standards.



Parole Reform Solutions (cont.)

- **Increased punishment for parole violators.**
 - Instead of treating all misdemeanors the same, we **enhanced the severity of sanctions** for DUIs, simple assault, and weapons violations that are a danger to others.
- **Enforcing accountability by continuing to revoke parole from more people who are noncompliant**, in particular with **drug use**.
- **Holding disposition hearings more frequently** and **proposing to the parole board** that they **increase the length of returns to prison**.
- **Working with parole stakeholders** on the legislation and budgetary items to further reform parole and **support local law enforcement**.



Parole Supervision Statistics

Parole population (April 30th): 3360

- Average caseload of 68 parolees per agent
- Average caseload of 57 parolees per reentry agent
- Total Absconders: 107, 3.1% of entire population

In CY2025, 921 revocations were written by parole agents

- **18 weekly average**

In April 2026, 161 revocations were written by parole agents

- **40 weekly average**

Admissions to prison due to parole violations (April – May 2026)

- **Weekly admissions increased by 168%** between April 5th (19) and May 2nd (51)
- Of the admissions through May 7th, **40% of offenders** had a most serious offense of **Possession of a Controlled Substance**
 - Aggravated Assault was second highest at 8%
 - Unauthorized Ingestion of Controlled Substance at 6%





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Smarter Supervision Initiative Grant

Associate Director Bridget Coppersmith
Office of Planning & Analysis

Smarter Supervision Initiative Grant

- The Smarter Supervision Initiative is a statewide initiative designed to **strengthen parole supervision** throughout South Dakota.
- **Focus Areas**
 - Reporting and data capacity
 - Community partnerships
 - Parole agent training
- First step completed with submission of a federal grant application totaling **\$891,721** to the **Bureau of Justice Assistance** in March.
- **Governor Larry Rhoden** and **Lt. Governor Tony Venhuizen** both submitted **letters of support** as part of the grant application.
- **Council of State Governments Justice Center** submitted a **letter of interest** to serve as the technical assistance and subrecipient partner for the award.





Pheasantland Opportunity Plan

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Pheasantland Industries

Pheasantland Opportunity Plan



Combines industry **certifications**, leadership **development**, and community **partnerships** to create a **ready workforce** pipeline aligned with **community** and **employer** needs.

Program Overview

- Goal: **Reduce recidivism** through **skill development**, industry recognized **certifications**, and **community** partners.
- Partner with local employers to identify **workforce needs** and develop **training programs** aligned with local labor market demand.
- Work with offenders within four years of release to implement an **individualized, comprehensive work readiness plan** to prepare for post-release employment opportunities.
- Leverage industry and community partnerships for **long term reentry success**.



Pheasantland Opportunity Plan

The Pheasantland Opportunity Plan (POP) builds a direct pipeline from training to community-based employment.



Certification and Workforce Development Programs:

- Forklift Certification, Active
- Pallet Jack Certification, Active
- OSHA 10 Workplace Safety Certification, In Development
- OSHA 30 Workplace Safety Certification, In Development
- Warehouse/Logistics Fundamentals, Active
- Leaders of Tomorrow, Active
- Author of My Life, In Development
- Communication Skills, Launched May 18
- Interview and Job Readiness Prep, In Development



Pheasantland Opportunity Plan Highlights





Seminary Program

Director Amber Pirraglia
Division of Prison Operations

Seminary Program

The Prison Fellowship Academy



Based on nearly 50 years of experience in prisons, we provide research-based resources that encourage participants, regardless of their faith, to consider their story alongside the Gospel.



Incarcerated men and women find fellowship and practice learned values with others on the same journey.



As dedicated staff and volunteers from local churches come alongside those in prison, they encounter Jesus together and experience transformative renewal.





FORGE Initiative

Warden Alex Reyes

Mike Durfee State Prison

FORGE: A Youth Development Initiative

Mission

“Through a relentless commitment to **build a better tomorrow**, we forge opportunities for **growth** and **transformation**, empowering individuals to take charge of their path. A path which through **respect**, we forge bonds that **fuel progress**, and with **gratitude**, **honor** the lessons that make us who we are. A path where **strength**, **independence**, and the **courage** to embrace change shape the future.”

Future **O**ppportunity **R**espect **G**ratITUDE **E**mpowerment



FORGE: 7 Habits on the Inside

- **Evidence-based program** designed to **transform** the **culture** within jails and prisons.
- By teaching the 7 Habits to both staff and inmates on parallel tracks, the program creates a **shared language** that fosters mutual understanding and promotes a **safer, more harmonious environment**.
- This initiative addresses the **institutional culture**, which often breeds a victim mentality and adversarial relationships, by **empowering individuals** to take responsibility for their actions and choices.



FORGE: 7 Habits on the Inside/Mentorship

The program has shown remarkable results, including:

- A significant **reduction** in **recidivism** rates (other states).
- A **decrease** in **incident reports** and staff **turnover**.
- Enhanced **safety** and **well-being** for both inmates and staff.

- **FORGE**

- Mentors: 11 current
- Mentees: 31 current





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Thank you!