

CDCR Strategic Plan



2024-2028



The California Model: Safer Communities, Inside and Out

Message from the Secretary

With prisons located throughout the state, in cities, towns, and rural areas, CDCR represents the diversity California is known for, both in our employees and the incarcerated population.

CDCR has an exceptional opportunity to improve the work environment for our valuable employees while also improving public safety for all Californians. Every employee has the potential to positively impact the lives of incarcerated individuals. Under this vision, and in line with Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-16-22, I am committed to bringing about an organization-wide shift in our correctional policy and setting. The vast majority of incarcerated people will some day return to California's communities, and we must do all we can to prepare them for success. The most exciting part? We can improve their outcomes while also making CDCR a better place to work. And in doing so, there will be fewer victims of crime, fewer returns to prison, and more peaceful communities.

We have embarked upon an approach to improving public safety called the California Model - a once-in-a-generation transformation of corrections in California. The Governor's plan to transform San Quentin State Prison into the San Quentin Rehabilitation Center is significant and ground-breaking and builds upon important changes happening throughout California as we implement the California Model statewide.

Improving Public Safety through Second Chances - We've expanded face-to-face

college statewide, implemented technology, such as secure laptops and tablets to aid in rehabilitation and education, and we created the Youth Offender Program to tailor rehabilitation to the unique needs of younger people. Eight prisons have implemented a Resource Team model, in which custody, health care staff, and incarcerated people work in concert to create individualized treatment plans while fostering a collaborative, humane environment. Every prison in the state is encouraged to implement positive programs and events in line with the California Model pillars of dynamic security, normalization, peer mentorship, and becoming a trauma-informed organization that understands the effects of trauma on those who live and work in carceral environments. We look forward to the continued roll-out of the California Model at all institutions across the state. In line with this, CDCR aims to create a violence and trauma-free environment for both staff and the incarcerated to improve outcomes for all.

Our commitment to transforming corrections is driven by the core belief that no person should be defined by any single act but rather by their ability to accept responsibility for actions and treat one another with respect; and by the conviction that our greatest asset as a community stems from our commitment to people of all backgrounds and experiences having a seat at the table, including our employees, currently and formerly incarcerated people, lawmakers, and community organizations committed to change. Working together, it is our intent to slam shut the revolving door of incarceration.

Our California Model Values

1. Normalize a Culture of Second Chances

We foster a supportive culture in our prisons to empower incarcerated individuals to transform their lives.

2. Build a Solid Foundation for Reentry

We improve public safety by ensuring incarcerated individuals receive unique, individualized programming opportunities so that they have a solid foundation for success when they return to our communities.

3. Create a Secure and Dynamic Culture for Both Staff and Incarcerated Individuals

We ensure our staff are supported, encouraged, and committed to building a positive culture in every prison and creating safe spaces for incarcerated individuals to learn and thrive.



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Our First Core Principle: Employee Equity, Development, and Support

Strategy 1. Enrich Staff Support and Wellness

Task 1: Implement proactive safety measures to reduce work-related health risks and protect employee health.

Task 2: Expand access to education and tools that assist employees with stress reduction, personal wellness, and awareness of when and how to seek professional services for mental health support.

Task 3: Improve supportive response times and resources after critical incidents to help employees navigate their response to traumatic incidents.

Strategy 2. Cultivate and Enhance Workforce Development, Training, and Succession Management

Task 1: Equip a highly qualified workforce with current, relevant, meaningful, and engaging training and professional development.

Task 2: Improve the onboarding experience and retention of quality talent with modern, welcoming orientation practices and proactive communication with new employees.

Task 3: Develop hands-on experience and growth opportunities through fellowship, internship, and apprenticeship programs.

Task 4: Promote the Succession Management and Upward Mobility Programs to recognize employee talents, support them in realizing career goals, and prepare them for senior and executive level roles.



Strategy 3. Increase Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Task 1: Assess, develop, and implement strategies to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion in our workforce and recruitment efforts.

Task 2: Continue to build on the work of the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) committee towards a diverse and inclusive workplace.

Task 3: Collect and analyze data to inform practices to more effectively advance equity and respond to identified disparities through actionable work on policies, programs, and operations.

Task 4: Engage and gather input from California communities that have been historically disadvantaged and underserved to assist with strategies to increase equity and inclusion in the workforce.

Strategy 4. Enhance Operational and Fiscal Accountability

Task 1: Strengthen operational and fiscal accountability through enhanced monitoring systems and timely technology upgrades to support increased observation, transparency, and accountability.





Our Second Core Principle: Whole Person Care, Programming, and Post-release Success

Strategy 1. Improve the Health and Well-being of Incarcerated Individuals

Task 1: Ensure all incarcerated people have the opportunity to attain their highest level of health and deliver care consistent with each patient's specific needs. Empower them with the knowledge and skills to maintain a healthy lifestyle and manage their own chronic conditions.

Task 2: Improve care for our most complex patients, including an increasingly older population.

Task 3: Use evidence-based strategies to help patients achieve and sustain sobriety by building upon the successful Integrated Substance Use Disorder Treatment program.

Task 4: Build new transitional bridges to community-based care for justice-involved Medi-Cal members to stabilize incarcerated patients' conditions and establish a plan for community-based care prior to release.

Task 5: Establish a supportive environment free from violence and trauma that allows for learning and self-improvement.

Task 6: Engage with incarcerated people, including Advisory Councils, to enhance strategies to increase diversity and equity in all aspects of incarceration, from reception to reentry.



Strategy 2. Expand Education Opportunities and Job Readiness

Task 1: Increase literacy levels inside state prisons and safely increase access to educational technology, including assessing for and addressing learning differences, to more closely match community standards.

Task 2: Expand face-to-face college. Provide opportunities for all qualified and interested students to achieve associate of arts, bachelor's, and master's degrees.

Task 3: Prepare incarcerated individuals for careers after prison by providing training and certifications in a variety of trades and connecting them with post-release employment opportunities.

Task 4: Use evidence-based strategies to increase safety and foster participation in therapeutic programming.





Our Second Core Principle: Whole Person Care, Programming, and Post-release Success (cont'd)

Strategy 3. Enhance Community Transitions

Task 1: Connect incarcerated people with community services prior to release so they leave prison with established services and support.

Task 2: Strengthen and expand relationships with employers and employment organizations to increase opportunities for sustainable careers after incarceration.

Task 3: Expand connections to community mental health services through collaboration with county behavioral health care services to coordinate transition into community services.

Task 4: Expand substance use disorder treatment services upon release from prison by providing access to community programs and services, including Medication Assisted Treatment and Cognitive Behavioral Intervention programs addressing addiction as part of the rehabilitative process upon release.

Task 5: Provide pathways to safe, stable housing opportunities through established points of contact in every community and new Medicaid opportunities.

Task 5: Promote family reunification by providing opportunities for strengthened family connections during incarceration through visiting, enhanced communication strategies, and special events focused on family relationships.



Strategy 4. Support Victims and Survivors

Task 1: Focus on strengthening and safeguarding crime victims' rights in alignment with the California Victims' Bill of Rights.

Task 2: Expand use and awareness of the Victim Offender Dialogue program and the Accountability Letter Bank by empowering victims of crime and their loved ones to engage with the responsible incarcerated person who has harmed them to address personal impacts of crime.

Task 3: Provide effective community supervision of individuals on parole as well as incarcerated people in community-based programs.

Task 4: Enhance restorative justice opportunities and rehabilitative programs that are meaningful for incarcerated individuals, individuals on parole, and victims and survivors of crime.

