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July 29, 2019

VIA EMAIL

Bryan P. Stirling, Director
South Carolina Department of Corrections
Post Office Box 21787
Columbia, South Carolina 29210

RE: Follow-up to July 24, 2019 Subcommittee meeting

Dear Director Stirling:

The Department of Corrections Ad Hoc Subcommittee appreciates the S.C. Department of Corrections' (SCDC) partnership in the oversight process. As follow-up from the meeting on July 24, 2019, we seek some additional information about the agency. Please provide this information by Friday, August 16, 2019. In SCDC's responses, if the information applies differently to male and female inmates, please indicate any differences. Please do not include information in SCDC's responses which may endanger the safety of inmates or agency staff.

Release of Inmates

1. Please provide the number of inmates held past their maxout date during the last five calendar years.
2. Over the last three years, what is the average amount an inmate has withdrawn to zero out their Cooper Trust Fund Account upon release (i.e., amount with which the inmate leaves the prison)?
3. Over the last three years, how many inmates, incarcerated for 60 days or more, maintained a zero balance in their Cooper Trust Fund Account throughout their incarceration?

Employee Training

4. Please provide information on how SCDC evaluates the effectiveness of training provided to employees in classification and other areas if different (e.g., testing)?

Education for Inmates - Palmetto Unified School District (PUSD)

5. Is initial training required of newly appointed members of the board? If yes, please explain.
6. Is annual training required of members of the board? If yes, please explain.
7. Please provide minutes from board meetings during the last twelve months.
8. Would SCDC oppose posting minutes from the board meetings on SCDC's website?
9. Of the current board members, who is the longest serving? When was the member first appointed?
10. If the General Assembly required appointment of board members by region, what regions would SCDC recommend be used and why?
11. Why does SCDC pay adult education teachers less than Education Finance Act teachers?
12. Do teachers in the PUSD have the opportunity for step increases in salary like in other school districts in the state? If not, why not?
13. Please provide information on the vacancies, as a percentage of total teacher positions, in PUSD and comparable school districts in the state.
14. For each funding source in slide 86 of SCDC's Programs, Reentry, and Rehabilitative Services presentation (i.e., federal, state, and local), please explain why comparable school districts receive two to ten times as much per student as PUSD.
15. Please provide documentation related to when, during the last three years, SCDC had to restrict inmate enrollment in an education program.
16. When does SCDC anticipate having the results of the Test of Adult Basic Education for all inmates? When this information is available, please provide an updated chart, similar to the one on slide 75 of SCDC's Programs, Reentry, and Rehabilitative Services presentation.
17. Please explain the potential causes for the number of inmates on the waiting list for educational courses and discuss the anticipated impact utilization of tablets in SCDC facilities may have on this number.
18. Once SCDC receives information from the tablet provider, or by October 21, 2019, whichever is earlier, please provide an update on whether inmates, who are willing to pay to take college courses, will be able to do so via the tablets.

Programs - Academy of Hope

19. Please list recommendations Mr. Andre Norman, CEO, Academy of Hope, has (e.g., improved staff training) for ways in which SCDC can improve.
20. Please provide dates/intervals in which Mr. Norman reviews the metrics for the Academy of Hope (e.g., staff assaults, inmate assaults, weapons found, and lock in on time) to gauge the program's progress and provide the data reviewed on those intervals.
21. What are the measurable outcomes, if any, Mr. Norman believes the Academy of Hope must achieve, at a minimum, for he and his team to consider the program a success?
22. What must occur for Mr. Norman and SCDC to consider the Academy of Hope a program they would recommend as a model to other states around the country?

Programs - Training and Employment of Inmates Upon Release

23. Is SCDC aware of any challenges inmates who receive commercial driving license training while incarcerated, face when seeking employment as a truck driver? If so, please explain the challenges as well as any ideas for how SCDC, or the General Assembly, may address those issues.
24. What other state agencies does SCDC collaborate with to determine the skills employers in the state need to assist SCDC in determining the type of training that may be most beneficial to inmates upon release? For each agency, please list the types of information SCDC receives.
25. Currently, does SCDC have information on skills employers are looking for, by county? If not, could this type of information, if it was available, assist SCDC in suggesting training to inmates based on the county in which the inmate anticipates returning upon release?
26. Currently, does SCDC have information on employers located on bus routes, by county? If not, could this type of information, if it was available, assist SCDC in suggesting training to inmates based on the county in which the inmate anticipates returning upon release?

Conditions for Inmates (sunlight, hygiene, meals, air conditioning, and pest control)

27. Currently, are there windows at any of the SCDC facilities, through which inmates would otherwise receive natural light, that are obstructed (e.g., blocked, painted over)? If so, at which institutions and why?
28. What hygiene items, if any, are available to inmates free of charge (e.g., toilet paper, toothbrush and toothpaste, feminine products, etc.)? What hygiene items are available for purchase at the canteen and how much does each cost?
29. Are there any state or national associations that prescribe standards relating to inmate personal hygiene for correctional facilities? If so, please provide information on where the Committee can access those standards.
30. Once SCDC makes a final decision, or by October 21, 2019, whichever is earlier, please provide an update on SCDC's analysis of providing inmates three meals a day on the weekend as opposed to two meals.
31. Does the Department of Health and Environmental Control, other entities, or SCDC internally have requirements or standards related to pest control in SCDC facilities that house inmates? If so, what are those requirements and how does SCDC ensure compliance?
32. In regards to temperature ranges in SCDC facilities that house inmates, please answer the following:
 - (a) Does the Department of Health and Environmental Control, other entities, or SCDC internally, have requirements or standards;
 - (b) If requirements or standards exist, how does SCDC ensure compliance; and
 - (c) In the past year, has the temperature gone above or below those requirements or standards in any unit for more than 24 hours?
33. In addition to posting the Department of Health and Environmental Control inspection grade for SCDC cafeterias on SCDC's website, what other information could SCDC post to communicate to inmate families, and the public about meals inmates are receiving and quality assurances required of the food in those meals (e.g., page on the website dedicated to information about meals including daily menu at each facility, types of inspections required of food, etc.)?

Death of Inmate

34. When an inmate dies while in SCDC custody, does SCDC or another entity determine the cause of death? If it is another entity, what entity is it and does that entity perform its own independent investigation to make the determination? Are there any other entities who could investigate the death, if they desired?
35. Are other inmates allowed to do anything to mourn when other inmate passes away?

Visitation (processing; notification)

36. On average, how long does it take to process inmate visitors? What factors if any, may increase or decrease this time?
37. On average, how long does it take to post information on SCDC's website to inform visitors that a facility is on lockdown or otherwise not accepting visitors? Is this information communicated directly to individuals who regularly visit/volunteer/lead programs? If so, how?
38. Currently, can an individual provide information online to SCDC and receive an email or other notification when one or more facilities they regularly visit goes on lockdown or is not accepting visitors? If not, would SCDC be willing to research options that may allow this type of notification?

End of Study

39. Please maintain a list of any internal changes SCDC makes during the oversight study process (e.g., classification system, release date calculations and audits to prevent future occurrences of early release and release after maxout date; adding Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) back to the inmate intake process) and provide this information after the last Subcommittee meeting.

In responding to these questions, please remember the Committee's expectations, which are provided in the Committee's Standard Practice 9. The Subcommittee looks forward to working collaboratively with SCDC during the oversight process. Thank you and your team for your service to the citizens of South Carolina.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edward R. Tallon Sr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Edward R. Tallon Sr.
Subcommittee Chair

cc: Department of Corrections Ad Hoc Subcommittee Members