

The Oregon Accountability Model

Work and Programs Component

The Oregon Accountability Model encompasses the simultaneous, coordinated and efficient implementation of many Department of Corrections initiatives and projects that provide a foundation for inmates to lead successful lives upon release.

The Oregon Accountability Model has six components. Each of these components stands on its own as a project or a part of the Oregon Department of Corrections' organization and culture. However, woven together these six separate components form a stronger fiber that strengthens the department's ability to hold inmates/offenders accountable for their actions and DOC staff accountable for achieving the mission and vision of the department.

The Work and Programs Component of the Oregon Accountability Model

Research shows meaningful work is known to contribute to the success of inmates upon release. The department's correctional programs contribute to inmates' preparedness for work. Department programs include education, cognitive change, vocational training, mental health, and alcohol and drug treatment. These programs give inmates a solid foundation of skills and attitudes they need to gain employment and succeed in the workplace. Most Oregon inmates have a job while incarcerated to further develop practical work habits while providing on-the-job experience.

Work

Work assignments expose inmates to good work habits, valuable skill building, teamwork and a realistic understanding of employer expectations, all of which contribute their success upon release. Inmate work activities fall into four categories:

Oregon Corrections Enterprises (OCE)

OCE is a semi-independent state agency charged with operating the department's industries programs and private partnerships. OCE manages commercial laundry operations, a garment factory, a furniture factory, a metal shop and a services division.

Oregon Corrections Enterprises also partners with private sector businesses to employ inmate labor and develop industries both inside and outside of correctional institutions.

Institution-Based Small Business

Many prisons have small, self-supporting businesses that fulfill a demand of the department. Inmates who participate in these endeavors develop specific work skills that are transferable to Oregon's labor market. These programs largely support DOC operations and other agencies within the State of Oregon. Some examples are mattress repair, boot repair, wood products, sewing, mending and embroidery

The mission of the Oregon Department of Corrections is to promote public safety by holding offenders accountable for their actions and reducing the risk of future criminal behavior.

Community Work Crews

Prisons throughout the state partner with agencies, municipalities and non-profits to make very tangible contributions to Oregon communities while inmates gain valuable work experience. Work accomplished by community crews includes:

- Community beautification projects
- Maintenance and upkeep of city, county and state parks, greenways and highway litter patrol
- Forest and wetlands restoration
- Fire fighting and fire camp support
- Project assistance with Oregon Food Bank

DOC is committed to ensuring that community work crews do not displace civilian workers or replace workers who have been laid off or terminated.

Community Service Projects

Charitable work is performed by inmates as a service to Oregon communities. These offer opportunities for inmates to demonstrate responsible work ethics and habits. The tasks enable inmates to repay a portion of their debt to society by improving the quality of life in our communities. Beneficiaries of community service projects include:

- American Red Cross
- Museums
- Boys & Girls Clubs
- Little League
- Cemeteries
- Social services agencies
- American Cancer Society

Programs

To prepare people for living and working in the community, the Department of Corrections assesses every inmate at intake and uses the information to create a corrections plan for each person. The plan specifies the programs each inmate should complete before release to increase their chances for success in the community.

Education

English as a Second Language (ESL): ESL focuses on improving English language skills of inmates who are non-native English speakers.

Adult Basic Education (ABE): ABE targets inmates with very limited literacy skills. It is designed to develop reading, writing, computing, communication, problem solving, and other skills necessary to function in a work setting.

General Education Development (GED): Inmates are encouraged to earn their GED while incarcerated. The GED has five subject areas: writing skills, social studies, science, interpreting literature and the arts, and math.

Work-Based Education Programs: Work-based education combines hands-on work experience with classroom vocational instruction.

Alcohol and Drug Treatment

The department offers five levels of alcohol and drug services to inmates. In order of increasing intensity, they are: Alcohol and drug education, twelve step meetings, group treatment, pre-release day treatment, and residential therapeutic communities.

Mental Health

Several levels of mental health treatment are available in Oregon prisons along with individualized case management. Mental health services are targeted to inmates with severe or persistent mental illness or who show high suicide potential.

Religious Services

A wide range of services in more than 30 religious faiths are available to inmates. Chaplains and volunteers provide study programs, music programs, serious illness/death notifications, and pastoral counseling to meet the mandates of the U.S. Constitution, Oregon State Constitution, and judicial decisions.

Cognitive Classes

High-risk offenders generally lack the cognitive, behavioral, and social skills necessary for success as productive members of society. In order to reduce recidivism, periods of incarceration need to be augmented by programs designed to address these deficits. Programs such as Breaking Barriers, Pathfinders, and Cognitive Self-Change make up the continuum of cognitive programs available to inmates.

The Oregon Accountability Model

The ultimate goal of the Oregon Accountability Model is to improve public safety. The model ties together many concurrent and interrelated efforts of the department and its partners into a cohesive strategy to reduce recidivism and influence inmates to become productive citizens.

