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UDC and Davis County Expands Programming and Reentry Services for Parole Violators

The Utah Department of Corrections, in coordination with Davis County Sheriff's Office, expanded opportunities for programming and reentry services to address individuals' risk factors when they return to prison for parole violations.

The goal is to reduce core criminogenic risk factors for those who violate parole. Individuals who violate parole represent the largest admission group for the Utah Department of Corrections.

In 2021, admissions from parole violators represented about two-thirds (67%) of all admissions to prison, while admissions from probation made up 18% of admissions.

“We are excited to help these individuals be better equipped for success when they return to their communities,” said Brian Nielson, executive director with the Utah Department of Correction. “We are grateful for the collaboration with the Davis County Sheriff's Office, and we look forward to expanding these opportunities in other areas of the state in the future.”

Data shows that parole violators returning to prison on technical violations stay on average for eight months. The added programming and reentry services will address their core needs within a six month timeframe.

“Oftentimes our standard programs for addressing criminogenic needs take longer than the average stay of someone returning for a parole violation,” said Lena Gustafson, the deputy programming director with the Utah Department of Corrections. “Corrections offers so much to every individual we supervise based on their assessed needs, and we’re excited to add more programming and reentry services to our repertoire to address those returning for a short stay for parole violations.”

The core program that will be offered—Living in Balance—is customizable, comprehensive, and evidence-based, and takes approximately six months to complete.

- Customizable: Designed to be effective in both group and individual settings, it can be used in all levels of care and program types. It is designed so that clients can enter the program at any point in the cycle of sessions.
- Comprehensive: There are 47 sessions, each covering one specific topic. Clients are taught information about treatment and recovery, skills to handle feelings and emotions, information about preventing relapse, practical living skills, and how to manage distorted thinking and behaviors.
- Evidence-based: Developed by Danya International and tested as part of a NIDA-funded project, Living in Balance is a clinically validated, evidence-based program that has been proven to retain clients in treatment and reduce alcohol and other drug use.

Davis Behavioral Health, which contracts with the Davis County Sheriff’s Office, will help to administer the support and classes specializing in mental health and peer support resources.

"We're excited to partner with the Department of Corrections in this very important endeavor," said Chief Arnold Butcher with Davis County Sheriff’s Office. “We believe this is a great opportunity to enhance the programs already offered at our facility. The Living in Balance curriculum will enhance safety throughout our community as we can work with parole offenders much sooner.”

Other services provided will specifically address reentry needs, such as navigating parole, improving financial literacy, enhancing their work portfolio, resume, interviewing skills, and partnering with the Department of Workforce Services and Vocational Rehabilitation Services for other relevant needs.

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