

**P**ostsecondary education has been proven to reduce recidivism and promote more successful transitions back into communities for adults returning from incarceration.<sup>1</sup> However, currently incarcerated and reentering adults often face barriers to receiving high-quality postsecondary education. The Council of State Governments Justice Center, with support from Lumina Foundation, conducted an intensive 50-state scan and survey of the statutory, financial, and administrative policies and practices that impact the provision of postsecondary education for this population. This fact sheet outlines the research findings for California.



### HOW ARE SERVICES FUNDED?

#### Correctional Agency Funding

- The California legislature may appropriate public dollars for postsecondary education taught by staff from community colleges in state correctional facilities.<sup>2</sup> Postsecondary education is also funded through federal sources, such as the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, and the Second Chance Pell pilot program.<sup>3</sup>

#### State Financial Aid

- California's Cal Grant program and Middle Class Scholarship Program have statutory restrictions that prevent people who are currently incarcerated from receiving the awards.<sup>4</sup> The California College Promise Grant, which waives enrollment fees and provides assistance for books and supplies for the state's community colleges, is available to incarcerated students.<sup>5</sup>



### WHAT IS OFFERED INSIDE CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES?

#### Career and Technical Education and Certifications

- The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation provides career and technical education in programs leading to American Welding Society certification, Automotive Service Excellence certification, Energy Savings Company certification, and Inter-Industry Conference on Auto Collision Repair certification.<sup>6</sup>

#### Associate and Bachelor's Degrees

- Individuals may participate in postsecondary correspondence courses to gain college credit through a number of colleges, including California Coast University (a private institution), Coastline Community College, Lassen Community College, Ohio State University, and Taft College.<sup>7</sup>
- Associate degrees are offered through Antelope Valley College,<sup>8</sup> Bakersfield College,<sup>9</sup> Cerro Coso Community College,<sup>10</sup> Chaffey College,<sup>11</sup> Feather River College,<sup>12</sup> Folsom Lake College,<sup>13</sup> Hartnell College,<sup>14</sup> Imperial Valley College,<sup>15</sup> Lake Tahoe Community College,<sup>16</sup> Merced College,<sup>17</sup> Norco College,<sup>18</sup> Palo Verde College,<sup>19</sup> Pattern University (a private institution),<sup>20</sup> Pitzer College (a private institution),<sup>21</sup> San Joaquin Delta College,<sup>22</sup> Solano Community College,<sup>23</sup> and West Hills College Coalinga.<sup>24</sup>
- Associate degrees are offered through the Second Chance Pell Pilot site colleges at California State University, Los Angeles;<sup>25</sup> Columbia College;<sup>26</sup> Cuesta College;<sup>27</sup> and Southwestern College.<sup>28</sup>
- A bachelor's degree is offered through Pitzer College.<sup>29</sup>
- A bachelor's degree in communication studies is offered through the Second Chance Pell Pilot site college at California State University, Los Angeles.<sup>30</sup>
- College courses are offered through the College of the Redwoods.<sup>31</sup>

### Labor Market, Employer Feedback, and Outcome Data Alignment

- ➔ California has identified local labor market trends and employer feedback as the primary factors that determine the types of postsecondary education and CTE programming that are offered within the correctional facility.<sup>32</sup>



### WHAT RESTRICTIONS OR BARRIERS ARE IMPOSED ON ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION?

#### Statutory or Administrative Requirements, Permissions, and Restrictions

- ➔ Participation in postsecondary education programs at Palo Verde College for individuals in Ironwood State Prison is based on length of stay.<sup>33</sup>
- ➔ Access to career technology programs is prioritized based on an individual's release date.<sup>34</sup>
- ➔ If withdrawn from an education program for disciplinary reasons, a participant will be eligible to reenroll within six months after the withdrawal.<sup>35</sup>

#### Use of Criminal History in State College and University Applications

- ➔ California has 32 state universities, and none used the 2019-2020 Common Application.<sup>36</sup> None of these state universities require students to disclose their criminal or disciplinary history.<sup>37</sup>



### WHAT INCENTIVES AND SUPPORTS EXIST TO ENCOURAGE ENROLLMENT AND COMPLETION?

#### Statutory or Administrative Benefits

- ➔ Individuals can earn milestone credits<sup>38</sup> and education merit credits<sup>39</sup> to reduce their sentence by attending postsecondary education programs.<sup>40</sup>

#### Postsecondary Education as a Factor in Parole Decisions

- ➔ There are three types of felony sentences in California: death and life without possibility of parole; indeterminate sentences; and determinate sentences.<sup>41</sup> Under indeterminate sentencing, an individual goes to the parole board after completing their minimum sentence.<sup>42</sup> Determinately sentenced individuals may also be paroled under the Youthful Offender or Elderly Parole process.<sup>43</sup>
- ➔ State law permits the Parole Board, the Division of Adult Parole Operations, and the local county courts, all of which have jurisdiction over all or some parole decisions, to consider postsecondary educational activities during incarceration when deciding whether to grant or deny parole.<sup>44</sup> These agencies and courts often grant parole contingent on completion of a postsecondary education program while incarcerated.<sup>45</sup>

#### Support and Services in the Community

- ➔ The parole-granting agency provides occupational training and information on postsecondary education, but does not provide postsecondary education advisors and coordinators or vocational credential testing.<sup>46</sup>

#### Coursework Transfer Policies

- ➔ California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation does not have formal articulation agreements with any community colleges, colleges, or universities concerning continuing education after release.<sup>47</sup> However, certain course credits earned may be transferrable to an educational institution after release.<sup>48</sup>

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