

Postsecondary education has been proven to reduce recidivism and promote more successful transitions back into communities for adults returning from incarceration.¹ 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 Delaware.



HOW ARE SERVICES FUNDED?

Correctional Agency Funding

- The Delaware legislature may appropriate state funds for college programs in state correctional facilities.² Postsecondary education is funded through federal sources, such as the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.³
- Delaware did not apply for/receive Second Chance Pell pilot funding.⁴

State Financial Aid

- Three of Delaware's financial aid opportunities have a statutory restriction pertaining to people who have been convicted of a felony: the Student Excellence Equals Degree Scholarship, the Delaware State Inspire Scholarship, and the Delaware Advance Scholarship.⁵ Therefore, individuals with previous convictions—even upon their release—are ineligible for these three awards. The state provides other awards that incarcerated students may be eligible for.⁶



WHAT IS OFFERED INSIDE CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES?

Career and Technical Education and Certifications

- Delaware Department of Correction and Department of Education provide career and technical education in programs leading to a Delaware Department of Transportation flagging certification; National Center for Construction Education and Research certification, specifically for core and masonry; Occupational Safety and Health Administration certification; and ServSafe certification.⁷

Associate and Bachelor's Degrees

- Delaware does not provide associate and bachelor's degrees.⁸

Labor Market, Employer Feedback, and Outcome Data Alignment

- Delaware identified local labor market trends as the primary factor that determines the types of postsecondary education and CTE programming that are offered within the correctional facility.⁹



WHAT RESTRICTIONS OR BARRIERS ARE IMPOSED ON ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION?

Statutory or Administrative Requirements, Permissions, and Restrictions

- ➔ Participation in postsecondary education programs is based on custody level, behavior during incarceration, and possible licensure requirement barriers.¹⁰
- ➔ If withdrawn from an education program for disciplinary reasons, a participant will be eligible to reenroll within six months to one year after their withdrawal.¹¹

Use of Criminal History in State College and University Applications

- ➔ Delaware has two state universities. University of Delaware used the 2019-2020 Common Application and requires applicants to disclose their criminal history.¹² Delaware State University, which did not use the Common Application, also requires students to disclose their criminal history.



WHAT INCENTIVES AND SUPPORTS EXIST TO ENCOURAGE ENROLLMENT AND COMPLETION?

Statutory or Administrative Benefits

- ➔ Individuals can earn “good-time allowance,” “early release,” or “earned credit” to reduce their sentence by attending postsecondary education programs.¹³

Postsecondary Education as a Factor in Parole Decisions

- ➔ Participation in postsecondary education can be considered in early release or parole decisions.¹⁴
- ➔ State law permits the parole board to consider postsecondary educational activities during incarceration as a factor when deciding whether to grant or deny parole.¹⁵

Parole Conditions Related to Postsecondary Education

- ➔ State statute and the rules of the Board of Parole allow the board to impose any conditions of parole, which could include mandating pursuit or completion of postsecondary education.¹⁶

Support and Services in the Community

- ➔ The parole-granting agency provides occupational training, information on postsecondary education, postsecondary education advisors and coordinators, and vocational credential testing.¹⁷

Coursework Transfer Policies

- ➔ DOC has an articulation agreement with University of Delaware’s Inside-Out prison exchange program coordinated by the Delaware Department of Education.¹⁸

1. Lois M. Davis et al., *Evaluating the Effectiveness of Correctional Education: A Meta-Analysis of Programs That Provide Education to Incarcerated Adults* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2013), https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR266.html.
2. 14 Del. C. § 2400 et. seq.; 11 Del. C. § 6531A.
3. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
4. *Ibid.*
5. SEED Program, 14 Del. C. § 3404A(a)(2) and 4 Del. C. § 3406A(a)(4); Delaware State Inspire Scholarship, 14 Del. C. 3412A(a)(2); Delaware Advance Scholarship, 14 Del. C. § 3424A(a)(5).
6. Vera reported that the Delaware Higher Education Office also administers 13 other scholarships for Delaware residents that do not have statutory bans, Lauren Hobby, Brian Walsh, and Ruth Delaney, *A Piece of the Puzzle: State Financial Aid for Incarcerated Students—Technical Appendix* (New York: Vera Institute of Justice, 2019), 16.
7. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Ibid.*
12. The Common Application, an undergraduate college application system, recently removed its required criminal history question, but maintains its questions on disciplinary infractions. However, colleges on the Common Application can add questions regarding criminal conviction or disciplinary information to their individualized applications.
13. 11 Del. C. § 4381; The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
14. CDR 62-000-001 (referring to Decision-Making Guidelines section, individual’s efforts to improve their education and vocational skills may be a factor in deciding whether to grant or deny parole).”
15. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state parole-granting agencies, July 12, 2019.
16. Del. Code tit. 11 § 4346; “Rules,” Delaware Board of Parole, accessed June 5, 2019, <https://boardofparole.delaware.gov/rules/>.
17. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of parole-granting agencies, July 12, 2019.
18. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.