

**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 Kentucky.



### HOW ARE SERVICES FUNDED?

#### Correctional Agency Funding

- The Kentucky legislature may appropriate state funds for college programs in state correctional facilities; additionally, a special line item in the state budget—funded by the correctional facilities' commissary sales—funds career and technical programming and college courses.<sup>2</sup> Postsecondary education is also funded through federal sources, such as the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act.<sup>3</sup>
- Kentucky is not using Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds for postsecondary education and did not apply for/receive Second Chance Pell pilot funding.<sup>4</sup>

#### State Financial Aid

- The Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship may not be awarded to individuals convicted of a felony.<sup>5</sup> Statutorily, incarcerated individuals are deprioritized from receiving funding through the other financial aid awards until funds are provided to all other nonincarcerated eligible students.<sup>6</sup>



### WHAT IS OFFERED INSIDE CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES?

#### Career and Technical Education and Certifications

- The Kentucky Department of Corrections provides career and technical education in auto technology, carpentry, computer science, collision repair, electrical, horticulture, HVAC, introduction to computer technology, masonry, Microsoft Office, small engine technology, and welding.<sup>7</sup>

#### Associate and Bachelor's Degrees

- Associate degrees are offered through Bellarmine University<sup>8</sup> and the Kentucky Community and Technical College System.<sup>9</sup>
- Kentucky does not provide bachelor's degrees.<sup>10</sup>

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

- Kentucky has not identified local labor market trends, employer feedback, or outcome data as the primary factors that determine the types of postsecondary education and CTE programming that are offered within the correctional facility.<sup>11</sup>



## 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 behavior during incarceration and type of offense. For example, certain CTE courses may be unavailable for participants based on the type of offense they were convicted of.<sup>12</sup>
- ➔ If withdrawn from an education program for disciplinary reasons, a participant will be eligible to reenroll within six months after their withdrawal.<sup>13</sup>

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

- ➔ Kentucky has eight state universities, three of which used the 2019-2020 Common Application and did not ask applicants to disclose their criminal history.<sup>14</sup>
- ➔ Three of the five state colleges and universities that do not use the Common Application require students to disclose their criminal history: Morehead State University, University of Louisville, and Western Kentucky University.



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

### Statutory or Administrative Benefits

- ➔ An individual can earn “educational good time”<sup>15</sup> or “sentence credits” for 90 days<sup>16</sup> per completion of a postsecondary education program or 7 days per month for exceptional performance in postsecondary education programs.<sup>17</sup>

### Postsecondary Education as a Factor in Parole Decisions

- ➔ The parole board may consider educational and employment history and job skills as a factor when granting or denying parole.<sup>18</sup>

### Support and Services in the Community

- ➔ The parole-granting agency does not provide occupational training, information on postsecondary education, postsecondary education advisors and coordinators, and vocational credential testing.<sup>19</sup>

### Coursework Transfer Policies

- ➔ Kentucky Department of Corrections does not have articulation agreements with schools offering programming in correctional facilities to ensure that courses offered in correctional facilities are equivalent to those offered in the community and that credits fully transfer.<sup>20</sup>

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](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR266.html).
2. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. KRS § 164.7871; KRS § 164.7874(7)(d) and (8)(e).
6. KRS §164.767.
7. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
8. Ibid.
9. "Eastern Kentucky Correctional Complex," Kentucky Department of Corrections, accessed April 12, 2019, <https://corrections.ky.gov/Facilities/AI/EKCC/Pages/inmateprograms.aspx>; The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
10. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. 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.
15. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
16. KRS § 197.045(1)(a)(2).
17. KRS § 197.045(1)(b)(2).
18. Policy Number KYPB 10-01(L)(7), and (8) <https://justice.ky.gov/Documents/Parole%20Board/Policies%20and%20Procedures/KYPB%2010-01%20ParoleReleaseHearings%20eff%2012-4-15.pdf>; The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state parole-granting agencies, July 12, 2019.
19. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of parole-granting agencies, July 12, 2019.
20. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.