

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 Maine.



HOW ARE SERVICES FUNDED?

Correctional Agency Funding

- The Maine legislature may appropriate state funds for postsecondary education in state correctional facilities.² Postsecondary education is funded through the federal Second Chance Pell pilot program and privately funded foundation grants, such as the Sunshine Lady Foundation.
- Maine is not using Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds for postsecondary education.³

State Financial Aid

- Maine financial aid programs do not have statutory, regulatory, or policy restrictions that prevent people who are currently incarcerated from receiving aid.⁴



WHAT IS OFFERED INSIDE CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES?

Career and Technical Education and Certifications

- In partnership with the Maine Department of Corrections, the Petey Greene Program—a program that provides tutoring for incarcerated individuals—University of Maine, and Washington County Community College provide career and technical education in programs leading to an Automotive Service Excellence certification, certified logging professional certification, tutoring certification, master beekeeper certification, master gardener certification, National Center for Construction Education and Research certification, production technology certification, ServSafe certification, and WorkReady credential.⁵
- Certificates are provided through the federally funded Second Chance Pell Pilot program site at Mount Wachusett Community College.⁶

Associate and Bachelor's Degrees

- Individuals may participate in postsecondary courses through the Education Network of Maine and the Southern Maine Community College via NovaNet,⁷ a computer-based education and communications system,⁸ geared toward college credit.⁹
- Associate degrees¹⁰ and bachelor's degrees¹¹ are offered through the Second Chance Pell Pilot site at University of Maine-Augusta.¹²

Labor Market, Employer Feedback, and Outcome Data Alignment

- ➔ Maine has identified local labor market trends, employer feedback, and outcome data as the primary factors that determine the types of postsecondary education and CTE programming that are offered within the correctional facility.¹³



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, custody level, and length of sentence. Access to postsecondary services is prioritized based on an individual's release date.¹⁴
- ➔ If withdrawn from an education program for disciplinary reasons, a participant will be eligible to reenroll within six months after their withdrawal.¹⁵

Use of Criminal History in State College and University Applications

- ➔ Maine has eight state universities, seven of which used the 2019-2020 Common Application.¹⁶ All seven of these schools added questions asking applicants to disclose their criminal history: University of Maine and its five additional campuses at Augusta, Farmington, Fort Kent, Machias, and Presque Isle; and University of Southern Maine.
- ➔ Purdue University Global, which does not use the Common Application, requires students to disclose their criminal history.



WHAT INCENTIVES AND SUPPORTS EXIST TO ENCOURAGE ENROLLMENT AND COMPLETION?

Statutory or Administrative Benefits

- ➔ An individual can earn "good time" to reduce their sentence by attending postsecondary education programs.¹⁷
- ➔ Incentives for participating in postsecondary education programs include dedicated or specialized housing, exemption from work requirements, additional access to technology, and compensation for tutoring other students.¹⁸

Postsecondary Education as a Factor in Parole Decisions

- ➔ State law permits the board to consider participation in postsecondary educational activities inside correctional facilities, and/or in the community as a factor when granting or denying parole.¹⁹

Parole Conditions Related to Postsecondary Education

- ➔ The paroling authority may require an individual to participate in postsecondary education as a condition of parole.²⁰
- ➔ Post-release participation in postsecondary education can meet a parole requirement to seek or obtain employment.²¹

Support and Services in the Community

- ➔ The parole-granting agency provides information on postsecondary education, but does not provide occupational training, postsecondary education advisors and coordinators, and vocational credential testing.²²

Coursework Transfer Policies

- ➔ Maine Department of Corrections has articulation agreements with the state university system through the Second Chance Pell Program and community colleges, which state that courses offered in the correctional facilities are equivalent to those offered in the community and indicate what credits can be transferred.²³

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. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
3. Ibid.
4. Maine State Grant Program, ME Rev. Stat. 20-A § 11612.
5. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019. Email correspondence between CSG Justice Center and MDOC, December 19, 2019.
6. U.S. Department of Education, "12,000 Incarcerated Students to Enroll in Postsecondary Educational and Training Programs through Education Department's New Second Chance Pell Pilot Program," news release, June 24, 2016, <https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/12000-incarcerated-students-enroll-postsecondary-educational-and-training-programs-through-education-departments-new-second-chance-pell-pilot-program>.
7. "Programs/Services: Education," State of Maine Department of Corrections, accessed May 13, 2019, <https://www.maine.gov/corrections/facilities/bcf/BCFEduc.htm>.
8. Ellis King, "Prison Education - 2000," Maine is Technology, Maine Department of Corrections, accessed December 12, 2019, https://www.maine.gov/newsletter/backissues/Mar2000/prison_education__2000.htm.
9. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
10. U.S. Department of Education, "12,000 Incarcerated Students to Enroll;" University of Maine Augusta, "University of Maine Augusta Awards 20 Degrees at Maine State Prison," news release, January 16, 2019, <https://www.uma.edu/news/university-of-maine-at-augusta-awards-20-degrees-at-maine-state-prison/>.
11. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019; University of Maine Augusta, "University of Maine Augusta Awards 20 Degrees at Maine State Prison," news release, January 16, 2019, <https://www.uma.edu/news/university-of-maine-at-augusta-awards-20-degrees-at-maine-state-prison/>.
12. U.S. Department of Education, "12,000 Incarcerated Students to Enroll;" University of Maine Augusta, "University of Maine Augusta Awards 20 Degrees at Maine State Prison," news release, January 16, 2019, <https://www.uma.edu/news/university-of-maine-at-augusta-awards-20-degrees-at-maine-state-prison/>.
13. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
14. "Prisoner Education Programs," Policy Number 24.5, Chapter 24: Programs and Services, 2017, 5, <https://www.maine.gov/corrections/PublicInterest/policies.shtml>; The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
15. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
16. 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.
17. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
18. Ibid.
19. CMR 03-208-001; The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state parole-granting agencies, July 12, 2019.
20. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state parole-granting agencies, July 12, 2019.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.