

Chapter 946

(Senate Bill 623)

AN ACT concerning

Prison Education Delivery Reform Commission

FOR the purpose of establishing the Prison Education Delivery Reform Commission to develop recommendations relating to education and its impact on the criminal justice system; and generally relating to the Prison Education Delivery Reform Commission.

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That:

- (a) There is a Prison Education Delivery Reform Commission.
- (b) The Commission consists of the following members:
 - (1) three members of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President of the Senate;
 - (2) three members of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of the House;
 - (3) the Secretary of Public Safety and Correctional Services, or the Secretary's designee;
 - (4) the Secretary of Juvenile Services, or the Secretary's designee;
 - (5) the Attorney General, or the Attorney General's designee;
 - (6) the Public Defender of Maryland, or the Public Defender's designee;
 - (7) a representative of the Maryland Judiciary, appointed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Maryland;
 - (8) the Secretary of the Maryland Higher Education Commission, or the Secretary's designee;
 - (9) the Secretary of Labor, or the Secretary's designee;
 - (10) the State Superintendent of Schools, or the State Superintendent's designee; and
 - (11) the following members, appointed by the Governor:

- (i) a national expert on correctional education issues;
- (ii) a representative of a foundation with expertise in correctional education systems;
- (iii) a representative of local law enforcement agencies;
- (iv) a representative of the Maryland State's Attorney's Association;
- (v) a representative of an adult prison services provider bureau;
- (vi) a representative from a restorative justice organization;
- (vii) a representative from the Goucher College Prison Education Partnership;

(viii) a representative of Maryland Correctional Enterprises;

~~(vii)~~ (ix) two individuals who are or were under the supervision of the Division of Correction; and

~~(viii)~~ (x) any other member with expertise relevant to the work of the Commission.

(c) The Governor shall appoint the chair of the Commission.

(d) The Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services shall provide staff for the Commission.

(e) A member of the Commission may not receive compensation as a member of the Commission.

(f) The Commission shall:

(1) convene an advisory stakeholder group that includes organizations with experience in:

- (i) criminal justice policy reform;
- (ii) advocating for individuals with learning disabilities and those from marginalized communities; ~~and~~
- (iii) restorative justice; and
- (iv) peer recovery and support services;

(2) work with the advisory stakeholder group, including conducting roundtable discussion forums seeking public input in all geographic regions of the State;

(3) develop an education-focused statewide framework of policies to invest in strategies to increase public safety and reduce recidivism of adult offenders, using a data-driven approach;

(4) research best practices for the primary, secondary, postsecondary, and career or vocational education of those who are subject to the criminal and juvenile justice systems;

(5) identify measures to mitigate risk factors that contribute to adult contact with the criminal justice system, with a focus on education; ~~and~~

(6) evaluate current workforce programs in which incarcerated individuals participate and the programs' effectiveness in training for employment opportunities that result in living wages; and

~~(6)~~ (7) request technical assistance from:

- (i) the Abell Foundation;
- (ii) the Annie E. Casey Foundation;
- (iii) the Council of State Governments;
- (iv) the Vera Institute of Justice;
- (v) the Coalition on Adult Basic Education;
- (vi) the RAND Corporation; and

(vii) other organizations similar to the organizations under items (i) through (vi) of this item.

(g) (1) On or before June 1, 2025, the Commission shall submit an interim report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

(2) On or before January 1, 2026, the Commission shall submit a final report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June 1, 2024. It shall remain effective for a period of 2 years and 1 month and, at the end of June

30, 2026, this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.

Approved by the Governor, May 16, 2024.