American Correctional Association

PUBLIC CORRECTIONAL POLICY ON CORRECTIONAL INDUSTRY PROGRAMS

1999-1

Introduction:

Correctional industry programs, whether operated by the public or private sector, help enhance public safety, reduce recidivism, lower prison operating costs, save taxpayers’ dollars, provide offenders with job skills and training, develop offenders’ work ethic, promote restorative and/or reparative justice, reduce offender idleness and add value to the local community.

Policy Statement:

ACA fully supports correctional industry programs at the federal, state and local levels designed for the training and skill development of offenders working in correctional industry programs and the employment of ex-offenders returning to the community, and opposes legislation that would limit or restrict legitimate work training opportunities for offenders without offering new authority to create additional training opportunities. Correctional industry programs, using sound business practices, should:

A. Recognize that the goals of industry programs include:

1. Developing offender work ethic and employability skills;
2. Professionally managing programs that replicate the private sector as closely as possible;
3. Promoting career development and employment opportunities for offenders that allow for self-sufficiency upon reentry; and
4. Improving safety in institutions for staff and offenders by reducing offender idleness.

B. Promote and adhere to statutes and regulations regarding the development, manufacturing, marketing, distribution, and delivery of correctional industry products and services;

C. Support legislation encouraging the employment of offenders during and beyond their period of correctional supervision;

D. Promote collaboration with employers, labor organizations, and other relevant agencies and organizations to overcome barriers to successful reentry;
E. Support investment of revenue to improve and/or expand overall correctional industries operations, maintain and upgrade equipment and help support offender training programs that lead to employment upon reentry;

F. Create a mutually supportive environment between correctional industry programs, both public and private, and the host institution;

G. Provide opportunities for offenders that promote good work habits, career development and other learning experiences that can lead to employment upon reentry to support themselves and their families;

H. Provide working conditions that mirror the private sector regarding both training and safety, ensuring that all federal and state mandates in that regard are met, if not exceeded;

I. Ensure that business practices in an industry operated by either the public or private sector are comparable to those in the industry at large; and

J. Recognize that offenders in correctional facilities are excluded from coverage under the Fair Labor Standards Act and therefore cannot claim entitlement to minimum wage under the act (except those inmates employed in the Prison Industries Enhancement Certificate Program (PIECP) and work release programs).

This Public Correctional Policy was ratified by the American Correctional Association Delegate Assembly at the Winter Conference in Nashville, Tenn., Jan. 20, 1999. It was last reviewed and reaffirmed at the 2019 Winter Conference in New Orleans, LA on January 15, 2019.