

**Minnesota Rehabilitation and Reinvestment Act  
Frequently Asked Questions  
February 2021**

**Q. What is the Minnesota Rehabilitation and Reinvestment Act?**

A. The Minnesota Rehabilitation and Reinvestment Act (MRRA) is a new approach to Minnesota's sentencing that allows people committed to the Department of Corrections (DOC) to earn early release and earned supervision abatement by successfully completing goals identified in their Individualized Rehabilitation Plan. The money saved will be reinvested in our corrections system, victim and crime prevention programs, and the state general fund.

At its core, the Rehabilitation and Reinvestment Act is about moving from measuring success by *the time people spend* in prison to *how they spend their time*. Rewarding those who invest in themselves with shorter sentences is good for public safety and it's smart management -- and proven strategy that is good for people under DOC care and the Minnesota communities they return to.

**Q: How does the Minnesota Rehabilitation and Reinvestment Act work?**

A: The Minnesota Rehabilitation and Reinvestment Act has four key components.

First, people committed to the Department of Corrections work with staff to create an **Individualized Rehabilitation Plan**. The plan sets clear, personalized goals that must be achieved to qualify for the potential of earned release. Some examples of rehabilitation work include substance abuse treatment, mental health counseling, vocational skills training, or education.

With **Earned Release**, people can earn a reduction in their sentence by achieving the goals identified in the Individualized Rehabilitation Plan.

Next, **Earned Supervision Abatement** is a similar incentive program for supervised release. Here a person on supervised release demonstrates success by achieving goals set in a supervision plan and can see their time of supervised release decrease.

Finally, money that would typically pay for the longer periods of incarceration and supervised release will be placed in the **Justice Reinvestment Fund** to invest equally in four areas: the correction system, crime reduction, victim services and the state's General Fund. Once the policy is fully implemented, Minnesota has the potential to commit up to \$10 million each year to the Justice Reinvestment Fund.

**Q: How do you know it will work?**

A: Minnesota's Challenge Incarceration Program (CIP) and the experience of 38 other states with earned release policies gives us confidence that the Minnesota Rehabilitation and Reinvestment Act can have a positive impact for our corrections staff, people incarcerated, and for the communities they return to.

There will always be exceptions to a rule, but consider the proven results of CIP, a voluntary program for incarcerated Minnesotans who meet specific criteria. People who participated in the rehabilitation program were:

- 32 percent less likely to reoffend with a new felony conviction.
- 35 percent less likely to be reincarcerated for a new crime.
- And the state spent, on average, \$4,600 less per participant.

The results are a local example of the good public safety and smart management benefits of the Minnesota Rehabilitation and Reinvestment Act.

**Q: What are rehabilitative programs?**

A: Under this policy, everyone committed to the Department of Corrections who is eligible will be evaluated by corrections staff to inform their Individualized Rehabilitation Plan.

The Plans will be customized to each person's needs and challenges, but examples of the potential rehabilitative programs include:

- Substance abuse treatment and counseling
- Mental health counseling
- Vocational skills training
- Education such as access to high school graduation testing and college courses

**Q: Is the program available to everyone under DOC's care?**

A: No, a majority of people under DOC's care would be eligible for earned release and earned supervision abatement under the policy as it's drafted. People convicted of violent crimes such as homicide and criminal sexual conduct would not be eligible to participate.

**Q: Will this policy make Minnesota weak on crime and public safety?**

A: Not at all. The truth is, it's just the opposite. States with earned incentive release programs see their public safety improve as recidivism rates hold steady or decline after implementing earned incentive programs.

The Minnesota Rehabilitation and Reinvestment Act will also support safety in our correctional facilities in two ways: First, inmates incentivized with potential earned release are likely to behave better as they work toward release. Second, corrections officers will be able to focus their effort on the most high-need individuals, rather than spreading staff across a larger prison population.

