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NEBRASKA JUDICIAL BRANCH PROGRAM AND PROJECT QUICK LOOK

Nebraska Probation Reporting Centers

Reporting centers across Nebraska were created to establish a central location for a continuum of services accessed by probationers under supervision in their communities as a means of providing community safety, accountability and rehabilitation. By pooling state and county resources, these reporting centers provide structured programming that targets an individual's need in areas such as: substance abuse, behavioral health, educational and employment opportunities, cognitive-behavioral restructuring, and a variety of classes and groups designed to reduce their risk to reoffend and enhance their ability to be successful, tax paying citizens. These programs and services are evidence-based and tailored to meet the needs of individuals and are provided by local community stakeholders. Reporting centers engage high-risk clients and low level felons in structured supervision activities targeted to reduce the likelihood of the individual to reoffend. Nebraska reporting centers are intended to increase community safety while reducing the high cost of incarceration and prison overcrowding in Nebraska.

Origin & Authorization

Beginning in 2006, seven reporting centers were opened serving the District and County Court's higher-risk offenders in the following locations: *Bellevue, Nebraska City, Lincoln, Omaha, South Sioux City, Kearney, and Lexington*.

An additional reporting center was opened in Gering in 2012, and in 2014, three more reporting centers were opened in *Columbus, Norfolk, and Grand Island*.

2016 brought the expansion of five more reporting centers to the State bringing the total to sixteen. The locations included: *Beatrice, Hastings, and North Platte* with an additional reporting center in *Omaha* and in *Lincoln*.

Reporting centers are funded by a combination of general fund (staff), cash fund (services through offender fees) and county dollars (operations) under:

- Nebraska Revised Statute 47-624 (Develop reporting centers in Nebraska)
- Nebraska Revised Statute 47-624.01 (Plan for implementation and funding of reporting centers)
- Nebraska Revised Statute 90-540 (Legislative intent to fund Nebraska Probation reporting centers)

Program Overview

Reporting centers serve high-risk to re-offend populations such as Specialized Substance Abuse Supervision (SSAS) clients, individuals sentenced to a term of post-release supervision (PRS) upon release from incarceration, and individuals supervised in the state and/or county problem-solving courts (PSC).

The Core programming components offered in each reporting center include:

- Substance Abuse Interventions (Pre-Treatment/Relapse Groups)
- Employment and Educational Classes
- Life Skills Programming
- Cognitive-behavioral groups focused on changing criminal thinking behavior
- Victim Impact Programming designed to increase victim empathy and personal responsibility

Reporting centers bring together probation staff and focused community providers to strategically supervise probationers in their communities. Supervision strategies, include the use of regular and random drug/alcohol testing; consistent meetings and groups; targeted risk-reducing programming and classes in a central location that is open days, evenings and on weekends. All reporting centers have teleservice capability, allowing for shared interaction across Nebraska.

Reporting centers also offer ancillary programming in the following areas:

- Parenting
- Anger Management
- Money Management
- Mental health counseling
- Domestic Violence Classes
- Trauma groups

Priorities

Nebraska Probation utilizes individualized approaches focused on evidence-based principles and practices (EBP), and employs a dedicated and skilled professional staff to meet this goal.

- Reporting centers utilize highly skilled and trained professional probation staff who are primarily responsible for the supervision of the highest risk to re-offend clients. Probation Officers develop and provide tailored case management strategies, programming referrals, random drug and alcohol screening, and supervise the activities of probationers in the community through home and field visits.
- Probation Officers work collaboratively with substance abuse, behavioral health, and specialized treatment and programming providers, including law enforcement and public organizations in their communities as an extension of supervision, behavioral change, compliance, and client success.
- Across the country, research projects and state agency driven research endeavors have continuously demonstrated a correlation between the use of reporting centers and intensive interventions with targeted programming in reducing the likelihood of probationers violating their conditions of probation and/or reoffending.

Accomplishments

- Due to the success of the Nebraska State Probation's reporting center model, funding was allotted to expand reporting centers to sixteen locations across the State (LB907; LB605).
- During calendar year 2018, there were over 85,000 Reporting Center visits to access programming and groups.
- Each successfully discharged reporting center client who does not reoffend and returns back to their community and neighborhood contributes to the overall impact on community safety and reduces the fiscal cost of incarceration and the problem of prison overcrowding.

Looking Forward

The Legislature has tasked the Office of Probation Administration with expansion of community correction alternatives across Nebraska as a means of reducing prison overcrowding while keeping community safety as a priority through offender rehabilitation and accountability (LB605 and Justice Reinvestment).

- Additional centers in large metro areas, such as, Omaha and Lincoln to accommodate transportation needs and services to parameter communities.
- Expansion into communities serving 15,000+ populations currently not resourced, such as Fremont.
- Rural areas without reporting centers are in need of access to reporting center services either through addition of specialized staff, contractual services, or access to teleservices, such as O'Neill and York.
- Advanced technology access for individual use through smart phones and personal computers.
- More services focused on specific responsibility needs, such as language barriers, gender and age specific programming.
- Continued focus on selection of highly skilled, local providers.

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References

Nebraska Supreme Court Website: www.supremecourt.nebraska.gov/4504/community-based-programs-and-field-services