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Summary of the Evaluation of the Correctional Officer Recruitment Allowance (CORA)

About CORA (Correctional Officer Recruitment Allowance)

CORA (Correctional Officer Recruitment Allowance) was implemented in 2019 to improve recruitment results for correctional officers. It consists of an allowance distributed during Stage 3 of the Correctional Training Program (CTP (Correctional Training Program)). CTP (Correctional Training Program) is delivered by CTP (Correctional Training Program)'s National Training Academy (NTA (National Training Academy)) to candidates aspiring to become Correctional Officers, Primary Workers, Kimisinaw, Older Brothers, or Older Sisters. Eligible candidates receive \$400 per week during the 14-weeks in-residence training phase.

About the Evaluation

This evaluation covered the period between April 2019 and April 2023. The evaluation examined the relevance and effectiveness of CORA (Correctional Officer Recruitment Allowance) and applied a Gender-Based Analysis Plus lens. Sources of information were document review, interviews with 22 program staff, review of similar training programs, and online survey data from 308 CTP (Correctional Training Program) graduates.

Key Findings

- CORA (Correctional Officer Recruitment Allowance) is aligned with CTP (Correctional Training Program) priorities and there is a continued need to mitigate a shortage of correctional officers.
- Compared to similar training programs, CORA (Correctional Officer Recruitment Allowance) is nationally competitive.
- Since CORA (Correctional Officer Recruitment Allowance), there has been an increase in the number of applications and number of candidates completing Stage 3 of CTP (Correctional Training Program). However, the success and attrition rates have had little variation.
- After CORA (Correctional Officer Recruitment Allowance), there were minimal changes in the representation of EE (Employment Equity) groups among applicants and hires.
- CORA (Correctional Officer Recruitment Allowance) was considered a successful recruitment tool by some CTP (Correctional Training Program) graduate survey respondents. However, most considered the allowance amount insufficient to cover candidates' expenses.
- CORA (Correctional Officer Recruitment Allowance)'s payment process is complex and can lead to payment issues, especially delays.

- Consistent and reliable processes for the monitoring and reporting of CORA (Correctional Officer Recruitment Allowance)'s key performance indicators were not identified.
- There is inconsistent tracking of EE representation. EE data was not available for candidates, releases, and graduates.
- Concerns with data integrity and consistency were noted.

Recommendations

1. The Assistant Commissioner, Human Resource Management Sector should examine current payment processes for CORA (Correctional Officer Recruitment Allowance) to ensure the consistency, accuracy, and timeliness of pay to accomplish the goal of paying CTP (Correctional Training Program) Stage 3 candidates on time and accurately.
2. The Assistant Commissioner, Human Resource Management Sector should continue to monitor the impact of CORA (Correctional Officer Recruitment Allowance) on candidates' participation and decision-making in the recruitment and training process and seek opportunities to improve CORA (Correctional Officer Recruitment Allowance) to accomplish the goal of advancing recruitment results for correctional officers.
3. The Assistant Commissioner, Human Resource Management Sector should develop a performance measurement framework for CORA (Correctional Officer Recruitment Allowance). This exercise should include a review of CORA (Correctional Officer Recruitment Allowance)'s logic model, selecting reliable and relevant performance indicators, data collection, data management, and the monitoring of results. Additionally, there should be consistent collection and reporting of data on the representation of EE groups.

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