

Vera Institute of Justice

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.vera.org/publications/postsecondary-education-in-prison-fact-sheet-for-correction-leaders>

Policy Issue Resources

Publication

Starting in 1994 with the passage of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act, students in state and federal prisons were barred from accessing Pell Grants, which provide financial aid for postsecondary education. In July 2016, the Second Chance Pell Experiment reinstated Pell Grant eligibility for some incarcerated students.

Vera is currently working with correctional institutions and their partnering colleges and universities selected for the experiment to provide quality postsecondary education in a corrections setting. This fact sheet is to inform corrections leaders of the benefits of postsecondary education and to explain how the Second Chance Pell Experiment works.

Postsecondary education programs in prison which provide academic and career-technical courses improve facility safety in addition to the reentry and workforce outcomes of participating students.

Incarcerated people who participate in prison education programs are 43 percent less likely to recidivate than those who do not.

Prisons with college programs have fewer violent incidents, creating safer working conditions for staff and safer living environments for incarcerated people.

When parents including those who are incarcerated complete college, their children are more likely to do so, thereby disrupting the typical cycle of poverty and incarceration.

PUBLICATION

VIDEO

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