

Vera Institute of Justice

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.vera.org/publications/second-chance-pell-experimental-sites-initiative-update>

Policy Issue Resources

Publication

Postsecondary education in prison has been shown to contribute to successful reentry for people who have been incarcerated, while promoting public safety. The Second Chance Pell (SCP) Experimental Sites Initiative, launched by the U.S. Department of Education in 2015, provides need-based Pell grants to people in state and federal prisons through partnerships with 65 colleges in 27 states. The Vera Institute of Justice (Vera) is providing technical assistance to the participating colleges and corrections departments, helping to ensure that these programs are providing quality higher education both in prison and post release. This fact sheet outlines the outcomes through fall 2017 both in expanding enrollment, course offerings, and degrees awarded as a result of the initiative.

**Data updated as of August 2018*

Colleges participating in SCP are offering a growing variety of certificates and degree-granting programs to an increasing number of incarcerated students, leading to 954 credentials issued since the start of the initiative.

People who participate in postsecondary education in prison describe the experience as transformative and become positive role models in prison.

People who participate in education programs in prison are more likely to be employed after release and their family members are more likely to pursue higher education.

Colleges participating in SCP are offering a combined 82 certificates, 68 AA/AS/AAS degrees, and 21 BA/BS degrees.

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