

AN ACT

relating to providing inmates of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice with information regarding reentry and reintegration resources.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter C, Chapter 501, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 501.0971 to read as follows:

Sec. 501.0971. PROVISION OF REENTRY AND REINTEGRATION INFORMATION TO INMATES. (a) The department shall identify organizations that provide reentry and reintegration resource guides and shall collaborate with those organizations to prepare a resource guide that is to be made available to all inmates. At a minimum, the department shall collaborate with:

(1) nonprofit entities that specialize in criminal justice issues;

(2) faith-based organizations; and

(3) organizations that:

(A) offer pro bono legal services to inmates; or

(B) are composed of the families and friends of inmates.

(b) The department shall make the resource guide available in the Windham School District libraries and in each of the following areas of a correctional facility:

(1) peer educator classrooms;

1 (2) chapels;
2 (3) reintegration specialist offices; and
3 (4) any area or classroom that is used by the
4 department for the purpose of providing information about reentry
5 to inmates.

6 (c) The department shall make available a sufficient number
7 of copies of the resource guide to ensure that each inmate is able
8 to access the resource guide in a timely manner.

9 (d) The department shall identify organizations described
10 by Subsection (a) that provide information described by Subsection
11 (e) and shall collaborate with those organizations to compile
12 county-specific information packets for inmates. The department
13 shall, within the 180-day period preceding the date an inmate will
14 discharge the inmate's sentence or is released on parole, mandatory
15 supervision, or conditional pardon, provide the inmate with a
16 county-specific information packet for the county that the inmate
17 designates as the inmate's intended residence.

18 (e) At the minimum, a county-specific packet described by
19 Subsection (d) must include, for the applicable county:

20 (1) contact information, including telephone numbers,
21 e-mail addresses, physical locations, and mailing addresses, as
22 applicable, of:

23 (A) workforce offices, housing options, places
24 of worship, support groups, peer-to-peer counseling groups, and
25 other relevant organizations or agencies as determined by the
26 department and the collaborating organization;

27 (B) agencies and organizations that offer

1 emergency assistance, such as food and clothing banks, temporary
2 bus passes, low-cost medical assistance, and overnight and
3 temporary housing; and

4 (C) agencies and organizations that offer mental
5 health counseling; and

6 (2) information necessary for the inmate to apply for
7 governmental assistance or benefits, including Medicaid, social
8 security benefits, or nutritional assistance programs under
9 Chapter 33, Human Resources Code.

10 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2015.

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 578 passed the Senate on April 9, 2015, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0; and that the Senate concurred in House amendment on May 13, 2015, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

Secretary of the Senate

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 578 passed the House, with amendment, on May 5, 2015, by the following vote: Yeas 145, Nays 0, two present not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House

Approved:

Date

Governor