

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA
ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH LEGISLATURE
SECOND SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 921

Introduced by McKinney, 11.

Read first time January 04, 2024

Committee: Judiciary

- 1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to criminal justice; to provide for mentorship
- 2 programs by probation and parole officers; to state legislative
- 3 purpose; to define terms; to provide duties; and to require
- 4 evaluations and reports.
- 5 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 Section 1. The purpose of sections 1 to 4 of this act is to promote
2 the rehabilitation and successful reintegration of individuals under
3 probation and parole in the State of Nebraska by emphasizing the role of
4 probation and parole officers as mentors and support figures. Sections 1
5 to 4 of this act seek to enhance the overall effectiveness of the
6 probation and parole systems by providing guidance, counseling, and
7 support to individuals under supervision.

8 Sec. 2. For purposes of sections 1 to 4 of this act:

9 (1) Director of Supervision and Services means the Director of
10 Supervision and Services appointed pursuant to section 83-1,101;

11 (2) Individual under supervision means a person on probation, a
12 parolee, or a person on juvenile probation;

13 (3) Mentorship means a supportive and rehabilitative relationship
14 between a probation and parole officer and an individual under
15 supervision, focused on providing guidance, counseling, and assistance to
16 facilitate reintegration into the community;

17 (4) Office means the Office of Probation Administration;

18 (5) Parole officer means a district parole officer appointed under
19 section 83-1,102;

20 (6) Probation has the same meaning as in section 29-2246; and

21 (7) Probation officer has the same meaning as in section 29-2246.

22 Sec. 3. (1) On or before August 1, 2024:

23 (a) The Director of Supervision and Services shall establish a
24 mentorship program for parole officers as provided in this section; and

25 (b) The office shall establish a mentorship program for probation
26 officers as provided in this section.

27 (2) The mentorship program shall emphasize the following components:

28 (a) Individualized case management and support plans for individuals
29 under supervision;

30 (b) Training for parole and probation officers in mentorship,
31 counseling, cultural competency, and restorative justice practices;

1 (c) Regular meetings between individuals under supervision and their
2 assigned parole and probation officers to discuss progress, challenges,
3 and rehabilitation goals; and

4 (d) Access to educational, vocational, and social services to
5 address the specific needs of individuals under supervision.

6 (3) Participation in a mentorship program shall be voluntary for an
7 individual under supervision.

8 (4) The director and the office shall determine eligibility criteria
9 for participation in their respective mentorship programs.

10 (5) The mentorship program shall be established and operated in
11 collaboration with relevant community organizations, mental health
12 professionals, and reentry service providers.

13 Sec. 4. (1) The Director of Supervision and Services and the office
14 shall regularly evaluate the effectiveness of their mentorship programs.
15 On or before February 1, 2025, and on or before each February 1
16 thereafter, the director and office shall each electronically submit a
17 report to the Judiciary Committee of the Legislature regarding their
18 respective mentorship programs.

19 (2) The evaluations of mentorship programs and reports shall include
20 and address the following:

21 (a) Clear Program Objectives and Outcomes. Program goals should be
22 specifically formulated and aligned with the broader goal of reducing
23 recidivism and supporting successful reintegration;

24 (b) Data Collection and Analysis. The mentorship program should
25 include collection of relevant data to assess the program's impact. Such
26 data should include, but need not be limited to, data concerning
27 recidivism rates, employment and education outcomes, housing stability,
28 substance abuse treatment and mental health outcomes, and impact and
29 success of any restorative justice programs;

30 (c) Client Feedback. The program should include means of receiving
31 and responding to feedback from individuals under supervision;

1 (d) Officer Feedback. The program should seek input from
2 participating parole and probation officers;

3 (e) Case Management Reviews. The program should include regular case
4 management reviews to assess the progress of individuals under
5 supervision and identify areas where additional support or intervention
6 may be needed;

7 (f) Comparison Groups. The evaluation should compare outcomes for
8 individuals under supervision who are participating in mentorship
9 programs and nonparticipating individuals;

10 (g) Cost-Benefit Analysis. The evaluation should analyze the cost
11 effectiveness of the program, including comparing the resources invested
12 in the program to the benefits realized in terms of reduced incarceration
13 costs and increased community safety;

14 (h) Long-Term Outcomes. The evaluation should assess the program's
15 impact on long-term outcomes, including recidivism rates over several
16 years;

17 (i) Qualitative Assessments. The evaluation and program should use
18 qualitative assessments to capture the personal stories and experiences
19 of individuals under supervision and parole and probation officers
20 involved in the program;

21 (j) Stakeholder Feedback. The evaluation and program should include
22 consultation with various stakeholders, including community
23 organizations, reentry service providers, and relevant government
24 agencies, to gather their perspectives on the program's effectiveness;

25 (k) Regular Reporting. The evaluation and program should provide for
26 regular reporting to government agencies, policymakers, and the public to
27 ensure transparency and accountability in the evaluation process; and

28 (l) Continuous Improvement. Evaluation findings should be used to
29 continuously improve the program.