

Give Incarcerated Women Meaningful Access to Programming to Improve Their Success on Reentry

Policy Background

Nearly 10,000 women are incarcerated in Texas prisons.¹ Typically, these women have fewer programming options, as well as less access to programs, than men.

Texas' 2019 Legislature took strong first steps to expand in-prison programming for women; specifically, [HB 3227](#) required the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) to develop and implement policies that would increase and promote women's access to educational, vocational, substance use treatment, rehabilitation, life skills training, and pre-release programs. However, women report a limited number of spaces in new programs.

Now, the Legislature must take the next step. Success on reentry is built on stability, with education and job skills being a crucial component. Women need access to the tools to live safe, productive, self-sustaining lives in the community.

Proposed Solution

Texas leaders should ensure that incarcerated women, including women in state jails, can access a full range of programming options within 45 days of arriving at their facilities.

Relevant Bills

- **Bill Number:** [HB 967](#) [Allen]
Bill Caption: Relating to program accessibility for female inmates of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.
Materials: [Fact Sheet produced by the Texas Women's Justice Coalition](#)

Other Materials

- TCJE report: [Motherhood and Pregnancy Behind Bars: Texas Must Rethink How It's Treating Mothers and Families \(opens in a new tab\)](#)[May 2022]

1 Texas Department of Criminal Justice, *Inside TDCJ*

(opens in a new tab)

[see *High Value Data Sets*]; approximately 9,600 women were incarcerated as of November 2022.