



Creating Safer Neighborhoods and Better Citizens

The Michigan Prisoner ReEntry Initiative (MPRI) Model Progress Snapshot

The **VISION** of the Michigan Prisoner ReEntry Initiative (MPRI) is that every prisoner released from prison will have the tools needed to succeed in the community.

The **MISSION** of MPRI is to reduce crime by implementing a seamless plan of services and supervision developed with each offender—delivered through state and local collaboration—from the time of their entry to prison through their transition, reintegration, and aftercare in the community.

The **GOALS** of the Michigan Prisoner ReEntry Initiative are to:

- **Promote public safety** by reducing the threat of harm to persons and their property by released offenders in the communities to which those offenders return.
- **Increase success rates of offenders** who transition from prison by fostering effective risk management and treatment programming, offender accountability, and community and victim participation.

Creating Safer Neighborhoods & Better Citizens: A Comprehensive Approach

Michigan is a leader in prisoner re-entry and is the first state in the nation to converge the three major schools of thought on prisoner re-entry to develop and fully implement a comprehensive model of prisoner transition planning. The MPRI Model:

- Begins with the three-phase re-entry approach of the Department of Justice's Serious and Violent Offender ReEntry Initiative (SVORI).
- Further delineates the transition process by adding the seven decision points of the National Institute of Corrections' Transition from Prison to Community Initiative (TPCI) model.
- Incorporated into its approach the policy statements and recommendations from the Report of the ReEntry Policy Council that is coordinated by the Council of State Governments.

In this way, the MPRI represents a synergistic model for prisoner re-entry that is deeply influenced by the nation's best thinkers on how to improve former prisoners' success.

To develop the MPRI Model, Michigan had the tremendous benefit of technical assistance grants from the National Governors Association (NGA) and the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) that provide substantial resources for consultation, research, training, and technical assistance. As a result of the grant from NGA, the MPRI also utilized zip-code level parolee mapping of Michigan conducted by the Urban Institute as part of our intensive strategic-planning process. As a result, the knowledge base created by the MPRI is unprecedented.

Michigan is poised for success combining a strong mandate from the Governor, a powerful policy framework, and strong community buy in. The challenge now is statewide implementation on a scale of 10,000 prisoners per year transitioning successfully from prison.

The 3 Phases and 7 Decision Points of the MPRI Model

The MPRI Model involves improved decision making at seven critical decision points in the three phases of the custody, release, and community supervision/discharge process.

GETTING READY PHASE

The **institutional phase** describes the events and responsibilities which occur during the offender's imprisonment from admission until the point of the parole decision and involves the first two major decision points:

1. Assessment and classification: Measuring the offender's risks, needs, and strengths.

PROGRESS SNAPSHOT:

Currently, every offender entering the Michigan Department of Corrections' (MDOC) Reception and Guidance Centers is assessed using the validated risk assessment, COMPAS. The COMPAS is also administered with offenders prior to parole consideration. To date, almost half of the current prisoner population have been assessed using this tool, and every offender transitioning home through MPRI is assessed prior to release.

2. Prisoner programming: Assignments to reduce risk, address need, and build on strengths.

PROGRESS SNAPSHOT:

In 2008, all active programs offered by MDOC were assessed using the Program Evaluation Tool designed by MDOC in partnership with Dr. Marilyn VanDieten, Orbis Partners and Becki Ney, Center for Effective Public Policy. This tool determines the degree to which a program curriculum is likely to reduce offender risk. In 2009, the goal is to determine the program capacity that will be required to ensure that all prisoners who need programming are able to participate prior to release.

GOING HOME PHASE

The **transition to the community or re-entry phase** begins approximately two months before the offender's target release date. In this phase, highly specific re-entry plans are organized that address housing, employment, and services to address addiction and mental illness. This phase involves the next two major decision points:

3. Prisoner release preparation: Developing a strong, public-safety-conscious parole plan.

PROGRESS SNAPSHOT:

Each prisoner that is assigned to an In-Reach Facility works with an Institutional Parole Agent and community-based Transition Team to develop an individualized Transition Accountability Plan (TAP) that describes the needs, goals, tasks, and activities that each offender will complete upon release. Approximately 60% of all returning prisoners transition through an MPRI In-Reach Facility. Most In-Reach Facilities are located near the home of the returning prisoner.

In 2009, MDOC is partnering with Family Justice and the Michigan Domestic Violence, Prevention, and Treatment Board to develop a "family-focused" model of prisoner re-entry. Research has shown that strong, pro-social supports are critical to community stability and likely to interrupt the inter-generational cycle of crime. By testing family-focused approaches, MDOC hopes to learn what works to strengthen families, encourage offender success, and keep families and communities safe.

4. Release decision making: Improving parole release guidelines.

PROGRESS SNAPSHOT:

MDOC and the Office of the Parole Board have been working with the Center for Effective Public Policy to design the packet of information that the Parole Board will review during release decision making. Once this packet has been pilot-tested in Michigan, revised parole guidelines will be considered.

STAYING HOME PHASE

The **community phase** begins when the prisoner is released from prison and continues until discharge from community parole supervision. In this phase, it is the responsibility of the former prisoner, human services providers, and the offender's network of community and social supports to assure continued success. The Staying Home Phase involves the final three major decision points of the transition process:

5. Supervision and services: Providing flexible and firm supervision and services.

PROGRESS SNAPSHOT:

In 2006, MPRI launched the Staying Home Phase. Since that time, approximately 13,000 returning prisoners have transitioned home and MDOC has invested over \$75 million in services for returning prisoners.

MDOC's Field Operations Administration has been piloting revised supervision standards. These standards are based on the principles of effective practice and are captured in MPRI's Collaborative Case Management Model. As additional parole and probation agents are trained in Collaborative Case Management throughout 2009, MDOC's policy on supervising offenders in the community will be revised to reflect these new, evidence-based standards.

6. Revocation decision making: Using graduated sanctions to respond to behavior.

PROGRESS SNAPSHOT:

Using graduated responses to offender behavior has long been a practice of MDOC; however, beginning in 2006 with the launch of MPRI, additional resources became available in the community to manage to parolee behavior. As a result, technical violations of parole conditions that resulted in a return to prison have been reduced.

7. Discharge and aftercare: Determining community responsibility to "take over" the case.

PROGRESS SNAPSHOT:

Working collaboratively with community-based partners and social support networks to develop strong connections with returning citizens is an important objective of MPRI and strategies for strengthening these connections will continue to be explored as offenders discharge from parole.

Early Indicators of the Impact of the MPRI Model

Given the investment made to implement the MPRI Model – with more yet to come to be fully up-to-scale – it has been very important to track early indicators that the MPRI Model will positively effect parolee behavior. Because of the commitment to data-driven practice, MDOC has tracked parolee success since MPRI was launched in 2005:

- When compared against parolees with similar criminal histories, offenders that transition through the MPRI Model have a 26% improvement in parolee failure.
- Since the launch of MPRI in 2005 through August 2008, almost 13,000 offenders have paroled through MPRI. Of those parolees, approximately 2,600 have been returned to prison. Compared to the baseline, this figure indicates that almost 950 fewer offenders have been returned to prison than expected.
- In 2009, MDOC will partner with an independent evaluation team to develop an evaluation of the MPRI Model that will analyze other indicators of parolee behavior (such as arrest and re-conviction rates, employment retention, access to housing, degree of supportive social networks, etc.) so that MDOC and MPRI stakeholders can better understand what works to improve offender behavior and tailor the future implementation of MPRI to incorporate the lessons learned from the evaluation.