Access in Corrections Education

DEVELOPING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR CHANGE

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Objectives

• Familiarized with the unique landscape of a state prison system

• Differentiate between a systems approach versus location specific and which one may be best for you.

• Strategies for addressing challenges
Washington DOC Education Snapshot

• 11 Prison Facilities
  ◦ 8 Major facilities
  ◦ 3 “camps”

• 8 Current Colleges and Universities
  ◦ 3 colleges serve two prison facilities apiece

• 36.6 Mile Average Distance Prison to Main Campus
  ◦ Longest = 83.6 miles
  ◦ Shortest = 5.5 miles
Statistics

• Disabilities in Higher Education
  ◦ 12,000 Freshmen in 1988
  ◦ 25,000 in 2000.\(^1\)
  ◦ 1/5 of all undergraduates 2019.\(^2\)

• Disabilities in Prison Populations\(^3\)
  ◦ 40% reported having a disability
  ◦ 20% reported having a cognitive disability
  ◦ Females reported higher rates
  ◦ Younger individuals reported the highest rates of cognitive disabilities (25.5%)
Prisons and the ADA

• Covered entity (State and local Government)*
• 28 CFR § 35.130(3)
  ◦ Discrimination through contracts or other arrangements
• 28 CFR § 35.152
  ◦ Specific ADA language for prisons and jails

The rules apply to us too!
Washington Laws

• 2SHB 1044 (2021)
• RCW 72.09.460(8)
  ◦ The department shall establish, by rule, a process for identifying and assessing incarcerated individuals with learning disabilities, traumatic brain injuries, and other cognitive impairments to determine whether the person requires accommodations in order to effectively participate in educational programming, including general educational development tests and postsecondary education. The department shall establish a process to provide such accommodations to eligible incarcerated individuals.
The Gameplan

1. Map the Process
2. Identify/Engage Key Stakeholders
3. Assign Tasks
4. Progress Checks
5. Closeout
Identify Key Stakeholders

• For college staff: Who at the Prison/Department is your contact?
  ◦ Superintendent
  ◦ Facility ADA Coordinator
  ◦ DOC Education Services Administrator/Director

• Who from your college needs to be involved
  ◦ Program Dean/Director
  ◦ Faculty
  ◦ Program Support Staff
  ◦ Campus Leadership
Project Management

• Set Clear Objectives
• Roles and responsibilities
  ◦ What can I do?
  ◦ What do I need others to do?
• What do Others Need to be Successful?
• Check-ins
• Closeout Criteria
Success and Challenges

• Successes
  ◦ Campuses are involved
  ◦ General Processes Created
  ◦ Division of Responsibilities
  ◦ Engagement of DOC ADA

• Challenges
  ◦ Maintaining Momentum
  ◦ Cohesive system vs. local practices
  ◦ Siloing of Resources
  ◦ Corrections Culture
Questions?

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References

