



HB 1515/SB 2405

TDCJ SUNSET FACT SHEET

April 2025

The proposed Sunset legislation for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice is a concerted effort to move the department toward data-driven rehabilitative approaches and structural efficiencies that allow for safe and healthy population management for correctional officers and those incarcerated. The requirements put forth by HB1515 and SB2405 call for the department to be more comprehensive and intentional in providing post-secondary education, rehabilitative programming, structural capacities, and reentry planning. While this is notably not a “light lift” to ask of the department, there are still places and sections in the current language that can be improved, strengthened, and made more explicit to help legislators ensure that the department can meet these goals.

To this end, **Texas Appleseed recommends the following changes per section and the addition of new sections to strengthen the legislation’s** attempt to effectively integrate the provision of post-secondary education into the Windham School District's roles and responsibilities.

CHANGES PERTAINING TO THE PROVISION OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

SECTION 3

- ✓ Incorporate language that allows for data collection, evaluation, and reporting on the district’s attempt to license qualified students if applicable prior to release.
- ✓ Add language to include post-secondary education to also be evaluated on a bi-annual basis.

SECTION 6

- ✓ Amend language to reflect entering into data sharing agreements instead of MOUs and delineate which agencies the district shall, at minimum, enter into an agreement with to evaluate and provide services accordingly and effectively.

NEW SECTION(S)

- ✓ Adds language codifying the official transfer of post-secondary education responsibilities to Windham School District, as well as language that establishes the post-secondary education advisory board.
- ✓ Creates an affirmative defense to parole revocation for nonpayment of post-secondary education reimbursement requirements.

CHANGES PERTAINING REHABILITATIVE PROGRAM INVENTORY & EVALUATION

SECTION 10

- ✓ Include faith-based programs in the department’s charge to inventory and evaluate programming currently being provided within department facilities.
- ✓ Change language to stipulate a specific time period with updating programming information from “continuously” to “an annual basis.”

- ✓ Amend language to require collaboration with external researchers for the purpose of program evaluation and performance.
- ✓ Add language that requires that in addition to performance criteria, a performance scale be created as well.
- ✓ Distinguish between subsequent convictions and subsequent confinements for the purpose of data collected and analyzed.
- ✓ Incorporate language into the data requirements collected to include risk and needs levels.
- ✓ Amend language to reflect entering into data sharing agreements instead of MOUs and delineate which agencies the Department shall, at minimum, enter into an agreement with to evaluate and provide services accordingly and effectively.

SECTION 12

- ✓ Add language to require that institutions' capacities be informed by research-supported supervision practices and that said capacities be set within 31 days of the bill taking effect.

SECTION 15

- ✓ Add language to stipulate that all volunteer and faith-based programs are subject to evaluation criteria established by the department in their program inventory and evaluation process.

SECTION 20

- ✓ Include language that requires the department to consider and report on the criminogenic needs of the population when evaluating and reporting on programming and services offered to the incarcerated.

NEW SECTION(S)

- ✓ Requires the inclusion of the Correctional Managed Health Care Committee to be included in the entities responsible for establishing, providing, and monitoring continuity of care programs for those incarcerated with a history of substance use disorders.

CHANGES PERTAINING TO PAROLE & REENTRY

SECTION 33

- ✓ Incorporate language that requires the department to show those on an ITP which programs are targeted at the needs as assessed by the TRAS, SUDs, and Occupational/Employment assessments.

SECTION 34

- ✓ Include language that incorporates former parolees as consultants in determining the efficacy of special conditions.

Contact information:



Natasha Malik, Esq., Staff Attorney
Criminal Justice Project
nmalik@texasappleseed.org
www.TexasAppleseed.org

Cole Meyer, MPAff., Policy Analyst
Criminal Justice Project
cmeyer@texasappleseed.org
www.TexasAppleseed.org