

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **6477**



Introduced by Representative LEILA M. DE LIMA

AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING PRISON REFORM AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE
IN THE PHILIPPINE CORRECTIONAL SYSTEM AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines' correctional system has long been plagued by chronic problems—congestion, violence, corruption, and inadequate rehabilitation mechanisms—that have turned prisons from centers of reformation into breeding grounds for further criminality and social decay.

As a State Party to various United Nations treaties and instruments concerning persons deprived of liberty, the Philippines is duty-bound to translate its international commitments into domestic legislation. These include adherence to globally recognized standards that establish benchmarks for humane detention and indicators of successful rehabilitation. Among these, the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (*the Nelson Mandela Rules*) serve as a comprehensive guide for policymakers and implementers to ensure that imprisonment becomes an opportunity for correction and genuine reform, rather than a source of further harm.

Yet, despite these international and local obligations, the country continues to have one of the most overcrowded prison systems in the world, far exceeding accepted human rights standards for detention.

As of June 2025, data from the Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) show an average congestion rate of 242%, with 53,854 persons deprived of liberty (PDLs) confined in facilities built for only 15,732 inmates.¹ The New Bilibid Prison (NBP) alone—designed for 9,885 inmates—currently houses 22,909 PDLs, representing a 132% congestion

¹ Statistics on Prison Congestion as of 30 June 2025, Bureau of Corrections. Retrieved from: <https://bucor.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Statistics-on-Prison-Congestion-as-of-30-June-2025-07152025.pdf>

rate.² These conditions stand in stark violation of the minimum standards set by the Nelson Mandela Rules. Similarly, the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) reported in May 2025 that it manages 426 jails nationwide, with an average congestion rate of 296%, despite modest improvements in recent years³.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has likewise underscored that extreme overcrowding, poor ventilation, and inadequate access to healthcare continue to fuel the spread of communicable diseases, particularly tuberculosis and skin infections, within detention facilities.⁴

On the global stage, the 2025 Global Prison Trends Report by Penal Reform International (PRI) identifies the Philippines as among the countries with the highest prison occupancy levels, warning that chronic overcrowding undermines rehabilitation, endangers human rights compliance, and erodes public trust in the justice system.⁵

These conditions reflect not merely deficiencies in infrastructure but a systemic failure to reform the penal system—one that remains overly punitive, under-resourced, and disconnected from its constitutional and humanitarian purposes.

Thus, this proposed measure.

This bill seeks to institutionalize prison reform and restorative justice as the guiding framework of the Philippine correctional system. It endeavors to shift the paradigm from a punitive approach into a restorative one. Guided by the principles of human dignity, proportional justice, and restorative accountability, the measure upholds the humane treatment of all PDLs and ensures their access to adequate healthcare, education, legal assistance, and decent living conditions, consistent with the standards set under the Nelson Mandela Rules.

A similar measure was filed in the 17th Congress by this Representation as Senate Bill No. 2130 and in the 18th Congress as Senate Bill No. 180, which articulated the vision of a humane and rights-based correctional system. This proposed measure builds upon that foundation and responds to the continuing humanitarian and governance crisis in Philippine prisons and jails—a crisis that persists, and in some cases, has worsened as recent data show.

Finally, this measure envisions a correctional system that transforms prisons from mere places of confinement into genuine spaces of transformation and hope. By institutionalizing reform, rehabilitation, and reintegration, this bill fulfills the constitutional mandate to “value the dignity of every human person” and ensures that justice is both humane and restorative.

² id at 1

³ International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) (20 June 2025). Philippines: Understanding challenges in detention through Health Information System. Retrieved from: <https://www.icrc.org/en/article/philippines-understanding-challenges-detention-through-health-information-system?>

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Penal Reform International (May 2025). Global Prison Trends. Retrieved from: https://cdn.penalreform.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/PRI_Global-prison-trends-2025.pdf?

The immediate passage of this measure is earnestly sought.


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Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

Chapter I
Title, State Policy and Definition of Terms

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the “*Prison Reform Act of 2025.*”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - The State recognizes that the maintenance of peace and order, the protection of life, liberty, and property, and the promotion of the general welfare are essential for the enjoyment by all the people of the blessings of democracy. The State likewise values the dignity of every human person and guarantees full respect for human rights. To ensure adherence to these avowed policies, the State, through this Act, undertakes to establish a just, proportionate, effective, and human correctional system, with the following objectives:

- a) Prioritize the rehabilitation of persons deprived of liberty as domestic translation of the obligation to treat with humanity and with respect for inherent dignity, all persons deprived of liberty, as found in United Nations human rights conventions to which the Philippines is State Party and in fulfilment of the constitutional guarantee of full respect for human rights; and
- b) Institutionalize transformational policy direction in the Philippines’ corrections system founded on the principle of restorative justice in order to reduce the risk of recidivism and other vulnerabilities to crime commission, violence, and diseases.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* - As used in this Act, the following terms have the corresponding meanings, as follows:

- a) *Criminogenic needs* - refers to characteristics, traits, problems, or issues of an individual that directly relate to the individual's likelihood to re-offend and commit another crime. This includes static factors such as age at the time of first arrest, criminal history, socio-economic background and dynamic factors such as lack of respect for authority, anti-social behavior, lack of literacy or job skills, or other expressed non-conformist behaviors, values, and attitudes that are correlated with criminal activity;
- b) *Recidivism Risk Level* - refers to the degree of probability of reoffending or committing another crime;
- c) *Risk Assessment* - refers to the process of evaluating the recidivism risk level of an offender, and provides an empirical estimate of whether an offender has a sufficiently high likelihood of again committing crime to justify incapacitation;
- d) *Custodial Duty* - refers to the duty to ensure that persons deprived of liberty remain within the premises of prisons and jails while serving sentence or undergoing trial. It encompasses the duty to protect them from violence that may occur from individual- or group-initiated operations within the facilities. It also compasses the duty to protect the rights of persons deprived of liberty as provided in this Act;
- e) *Jail* - refers to facilities that receive custody of individuals who are undergoing trial and those who have been sentenced to serve imprisonment not exceeding three years;
- f) *Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL)* - refer to any person deprived of personal liberty as a result of conviction for an offense. It shall also refer to a person arrested or detained by reason of a criminal charge, who is detained either in police custody or in jail awaiting trial or final conviction;
- g) *Prison* - refers to a government establishment where national inmates/prisoners serve their sentence. Prison shall include penal colonies and Prison and Penal Farms; and
- h) *Reformation* - refers to the rehabilitation component of the corrections system and shall ensure that upon release from detention facilities, former PDLs shall not recidivate but are instead mainstreamed into society and able to live productive lives.

Chapter II

Coverage and Guiding Human Rights Principles in the Reformation of Persons Deprived of Liberty

SEC. 4. *Coverage.* - The programs and services established under this Act shall apply to all persons deprived of liberty, including pre-trial detention prisoners, and

1 individuals serving sentences, without discrimination regardless of age, sexual
2 orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, religion, and other statuses under the custody of
3 the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) and Bureau of Corrections
4 (BuCor), and shall exclude those in other detention and custodial centers not under
5 BJMP and BuCor.

6
7 SEC. 5. *Program Context.* - While giving primacy to the principles of restorative
8 justice, programs shall be designed and carried out to acknowledge the injury or
9 damage committed against victims and their families, and the need for reparation or
10 indemnity, and the necessity to understand the different factors that lead to the
11 commission of crimes.

12
13 SEC. 6. *Access to Legal Aid.* - Access to competent and free legal aid shall be
14 made available to persons deprived of liberty at all stages of litigation up to appeal,
15 and the lawyers, representatives of organizations, or students from law schools
16 providing this service should be free and safe from harassment.

17
18 SEC. 7. *Rights of Persons Deprived of Liberty.* - Every person deprived of
19 liberty shall be accorded the following minimum rights:

- 20
21 a) The right not to be subjected to torture and other cruel, inhuman
22 or degrading treatment or punishment, including solitary confinement;
23 b) The right to competent counsel in all stages of litigation,
24 including appeal and other post-conviction remedies, and the provision of free
25 legal aid for indigent PDLs;
26 c) The right to basic and necessary healthcare;
27 d) The right to clean and adequate food and water;
28 e) The right to decent and compensated work, whenever available
29 and applicable; and
30 f) The right not to be discriminated against, and to be treated with respect
31 due to their inherent dignity and value as human beings.

32
33 **Chapter III**
34 **Institutional Reforms**

35
36 **A. Judicial Reforms**

37
38 SEC. 8. *Protection of the Right of PDLs to Speedy Trial.* - The Department of
39 Justice (DOJ), in coordination with the Judiciary and the Integrated Bar of the
40 Philippines (IBP), shall adopt appropriate measures to ensure that the right of PDLs
41 to speedy trial is protected.

42
43 SEC. 9. *Decongestion through a System of Automatic Release.* - All detention
44 and correctional facilities are hereby mandated to automatically release PDLs upon
45 the concurrence of the following conditions:

- 46
47 a) The PDL has been in custody or has served time for a period equal to or
48 more than the maximum period prescribed for the offense charged.

1 b) A report has been filed at least ninety (90) days prior to the date of
2 release with the proper court and legal authorities on all matters relating to the
3 charge and the penalty provided therefor, the maximum period imposed for the
4 crime charged and/or committed provided under the law violated, and the
5 present period of incarceration.

6 c) Transmittal of approval by the proper court and legal authorities.
7

8 SEC. 10. *Continuation of Trial or Proceedings on Appeal.* - Nothing in this Act
9 shall mean a cessation of trial and proceedings already pending. The release as
10 ordered in the preceding section shall be without prejudice to the continuation of the
11 trial or proceedings on appeal, if any.
12

13 **B. Facility Reforms** 14

15 SEC. 11. *Infrastructure Plans.* - The Bureau of Correction (BuCor) and the
16 Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) shall make an audit of existing
17 penal facilities and conduct studies with the end in view of creating an Infrastructure
18 Plan. The implementation of the plan shall not begin later than five (5) years from the
19 effectivity of this Act, to be completed within a period of ten (10) years from the
20 effectivity of this Act.
21

22 The Infrastructure Plan of the BuCor shall, as much as practicable, include the
23 construction of at least one (1) penal facility per region. The said plan shall then be
24 submitted to the DOJ for the inclusion thereof in the latter's budget.
25

26 The Infrastructure Plan of the BJMP shall be submitted to the Department of
27 Interior and Local Government (DILG) for the inclusion thereof in the latter's budget.
28

29 SEC. 12. *Facilities and Living Conditions.* - Prisons and jails shall be built and
30 improved to comply with standards of prison planning, including the dimension of cell
31 and other guidelines for accommodations, as set forth in the United Nations Minimum
32 Standards for Treatment of Prisoners. Such facilities shall include but not limited to:
33

- 34 a) Dormitories or cells;
- 35 b) Hospital or infirmary;
- 36 c) Multipurpose or recreation hall;
- 37 d) Common areas for reception and visitors, kitchen and mess hall, place
38 of worship, wash or laundry area; and
- 39 e) Clean and adequate water source.
40

41 Sec. 13. *Offender Tracking Information System (OTIS).* - There shall be created
42 an Offender Tracking Information System (OTIS), a program that stores and organizes
43 data of all persons admitted into jails and prisons.
44

45 The OTIS shall automate the existing manual records management separately
46 maintained by the BuCor and BJMP.
47

48 The program shall be the central database of the following information:
49

- 50 a) PDL's personal profile;

- b) PDL's case information;
- c) PDL's jail location history and the status of their respective cases;
- d) Status of the offender's case; and
- e) Inmates' records including the Good Conduct Time Allowance (GCTA).

SEC. 14. *OTIS Records*. - All data stored in the OTIS shall be considered protected, and shall be governed by established rules for access, storage, safekeeping, auditing, digital privacy and security, and efficient transmittal.

C. Organizational Reforms

SEC. 15. *Appointment to the Bureau of Corrections (BuCor)*. - Appointment to the BuCor shall be based on merit determined through the exercise of sound and credible recruitment and hiring policies and guidelines concerning all positions. The Civil Service Commission (CSC) shall formulate the requirements and qualifications of individuals to be appointed to positions equivalent to Assistant Secretary up to Chief of the Bureau.

SEC. 16. *Organizational Structure, Salary and Rank, Term of Office of Officials*. - To strengthen the BuCor and to meet the appropriate ratio of staff attending to prisoners, additional personnel consisting of correctional and rehabilitation officers including administrative staff shall be recruited and appointed. *Provided*, That there shall be reserved appointments for three (3) graduates of the Correctional Academy provided in Section 22 of this Act, for every non-commissioned staff appointed. *Provided further*, that Assistant Secretaries to Chief of Corrections shall serve for a term of three years without reappointment or extension, unless separated from service sooner than end of the term.

SEC. 17. *Additional Personnel and Upgrading of Positions*. - In order to enhance their general welfare, commitment to service, and professionalism, additional personnel shall be employed to match the ideal ratio of custodial officer to prisoner. The necessary restructuring of personnel complement shall be undertaken with the assistance of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) and the CSC.

The BJMP and BuCor shall take into consideration the international standards with regard to prisoner-to-jail/correctional officer ratio in determining the desirable staff requirements.

SEC. 18. *Retirement and Other Benefits*. - Upon compulsory retirement, any custodial officer from the rank of Corrections Chief and below shall be entitled to retirement benefits computed on the basis of one grade higher than the position last held. *Provided*, That the retirement pay shall be subject to adjustments based on the prevailing scale of base pay of civilian personnel.

SEC. 19. *Grant of Hazard Pay*. - The officials, uniformed personnel and applicable civil personnel assigned to penal institutions of the BJMP and BuCor shall receive hazard pay.

1 Nothing in this Act shall be construed as to diminish, in any manner, any benefit
2 granted by existing laws, rules and regulations, local ordinances and other issuances
3 especially favorable to said covered officials and personnel.
4

5 The BuCor and BJMP, in close coordination with DBM, shall formulate the
6 appropriate hazard pay scale which will form part of the implementing rules and
7 regulations of this Act.
8

9 SEC. 20. *Professional Development of Officers and Staff.* - The BuCor is
10 authorized to enter into cooperation agreements with foreign universities or colleges
11 offering specialized courses on the criminal justice system, specifically on correctional
12 and prison standards and reforms. It shall devise a scheme whereby all officers and
13 staff are able to participate in fellowship programs at short and regular intervals,
14 subject to service obligations to the government, and in consultation with the CSC.
15

16 SEC. 21. *Continuous System of Reassignment.* - Subject to the exigencies of
17 the service, jail/prison officers shall have a term-based assignment to avoid
18 fraternization and familiarity with the PDLs. The tour of duty of jail/prison officers at
19 each penal facility shall not exceed six (6) years. Service of each tour within the same
20 penal facility shall be subject to the condition that the jail/prison officers shall serve at
21 one office or section within the same facility for the first three (3) years thereof, and
22 the last three (3) years at another office or section.
23

24 Constant reassignment through a system of rotation of posts of jail/prison
25 officers shall be institutionalized. Such reassigned officers shall be entitled to
26 relocation allowance under existing laws.
27

28 **Chapter IV**

29 **Philippine Correctional Academy and Training Institute**

30

31 SEC. 22. *Philippine Correctional Academy and Training Institute (PCATI).* –
32 There shall be created the Philippine Correctional Academy and Training Institute
33 (PCATI) which shall serve as the premier school for prospective custodial and
34 rehabilitation officers, to be designed to teach expertise on custodial, reformation and
35 rehabilitation work, with programs focusing on the context of detention, its causes and
36 objectives.
37

38 SEC. 23. *Continuing Training Programs.* - The PCATI shall provide continuing
39 capacity building for all officers and staff focusing on courses pertaining to prison
40 management and operations, paralegal work, human rights, culture and gender
41 sensitivity, and other relevant subject matters, including pertinent rules and regulations
42 of the BuCor and the facilities.
43
44

1 SEC. 24. *Board of Directors.* - The PCATI shall be under the management and
2 supervision of the Board of Directors (Board) composed of the following officials:

3
4 a) The Secretary of Justice as *ex-officio* Chairperson to be assisted by the
5 Chief of the Bureau of Corrections as Permanent Representative;

6 b) *Ex-officio* Members:

7 i. Chairperson, Commission on Higher Education;

8 ii. Secretary, Department of Education;

9 iii. Chairperson, Commission on Human Rights;

10 iv. Secretary, Department of Health;

11 v. Dean, National Defense College of the Armed Forces of the
12 Philippines.

13 c) The Board shall be assisted by a Secretariat headed by an Executive
14 Director with the rank of Assistant Secretary.

15
16 SEC. 25. *Functions of the Board.* - The Board shall develop and lay down
17 policies to provide education and training in prison administration and PDL
18 reformation. This shall also cover regular and continuing capacity building for staff and
19 technical vocational skills for PDLs, in cooperation with relevant government agencies
20 and the private sector.

21
22 SEC. 26. *Recruitment of Custodial Officers.* - Custodial officers shall be
23 recruited for study and training in the PCATI. After completion of a minimum of two-
24 year course in the PCATI, they shall be considered as commissioned officers. The
25 PCATI shall likewise develop an on-the-job training program for prison employees who
26 are recruited or hired without having completed the required courses.

27
28 SEC. 27. *Continuing Research.* - The PCATI shall conduct a continuing
29 research and advocacy work on the following:

30
31 a) Best practices relating to prison management and operations and
32 prisoner reform;

33 b) Best practices relating to the use of prisoner risk and needs assessment
34 tools;

35 c) Best available risk and needs assessment tools and the level to which
36 they rely on dynamic risk factors that could be addressed and changed over
37 time, and on measures of risk of recidivism, individual needs, and responsiveness
38 to recidivism reduction programs;

39 d) The most effective and efficient uses of such tools in conjunction with
40 recidivism reduction programs, productive activities, incentives, and rewards;

41 e) The most effective recidivism reduction programs in addressing the
42 different risks and specific criminogenic needs of prisoners, and the volume and
43 intensity of programming that most effectively reduces the risk of recidivism for
44 prisoners with different risks of recidivating; and

1 f) The most effective pre-release custody options for prisoners with
2 different risks of recidivating.

3 The PCATI shall regularly submit its findings and recommendations to the DOJ
4 and Congress for possible amendments to the existing rules and laws.

5 6 **Chapter V**

7 **System of Effective Administration of Justice and Reformation**

8
9 SEC. 28. *Reception and Diagnostics Center (RDC)*. - There shall be created a
10 Reception and Diagnostics Center within each penal facility, which is tasked with the
11 mandate of establishing a continuing assessment of PDLs for the duration of
12 imprisonment.

13
14 The RDC shall be responsible for the conduct of classification of each and every
15 inmate admitted to penal institutions. The classification shall be based on the following
16 principles in lieu of the sentence-based classification:

17
18 a) Risk Principle which suggests that the amount of supervision and control
19 accorded to inmates must be based on their criminogenic needs and tendency
20 to commit crimes within the penal facility;

21 b) Need Principle which suggests that the factors that led inmates to
22 criminal behavior must be properly and fully diagnosed, and that physical,
23 mental and psychosocial health of inmates must be fully taken into
24 consideration in their housing and segregation; and

25 c) Responsivity Principle which suggests that inmates respond differently
26 to programs, and that programs must be specifically tailored to their individual
27 potential for rehabilitation, reformation and reintegration into society, and their
28 capacity to respond thereto.

29
30 The RDC shall be the point of entry of all inmates in penal facilities. Except
31 during periods of national emergency or on account of natural disaster/calamity, in no
32 case shall an inmate stay within the RDC for a period longer than sixty (60) days.

33
34 SEC. 29. *Housing Assignment*. - The RDC shall be the principal office tasked
35 with the mandate of determining the housing assignment of inmates based on the
36 abovementioned principles.

37
38 There shall be three (3) housing security levels which will have varying levels
39 of control, inmate movement, programs and privileges. Inmates with special physical,
40 mental and psychosocial health needs shall be segregated accordingly so as not to
41 exacerbate their health condition. Inmates with communicable diseases shall also be
42 housed separately in order to prevent an outbreak within the penal facility/

43
44 The following are the levels of housing security:

1
2 a) Level I Housing which is designed for inmates with low levels of risk and
3 needs based on the principles mentioned in Section 28 hereof. Inmates who
4 are nearing the completion of their sentences can also be transferred within this
5 level. The programs which will be offered in this level shall be geared towards
6 reintegration of inmates upon release;

7 b) Level II Housing which is designed for inmates with moderate levels of
8 risk and needs based on the principles mentioned in Section 28 hereof. Inmate
9 programs offered in this level shall be geared towards social equipping like
10 livelihood, education, and prison industries; and

11 c) Level III Housing which is designed for inmates with higher levels of risk
12 and needs based on the principles mentioned in Section 28 hereof. Inmate
13 programs offered in this level shall be geared towards cognitive change like
14 psychotherapy, counselling, and substance detoxification.

15
16 SEC. 30. *Penal Facility Assignment.* - As much as practicable, PDLs shall be
17 detained or serve their sentence in the region where they reside at the time of
18 incarceration.

19
20 SEC. 31. *Disciplinary Committee.* - There shall be created a Disciplinary
21 Committee within each penal facility. The Committee shall be composed of the
22 following:

- 23 a) One (1) Chairman who is also the head of the penal facility;
24 b) Three (3) Disciplinary Officers who are also appointed officers of the
25 Bureau of Corrections;
26 c) One (1) representative from the Commission on Human Rights; and
27 d) One (1) member each from the private sector and the Integrated Bar of
28 the Philippines.

29
30 The Committee shall be responsible for investigating the violation of rules
31 committed by PDLs and recommending appropriate and proportionate sanctions
32 therefor.

33
34 SEC. 32. *Allowable In-prison Disciplinary Penalties.* - Upon the finding of guilt,
35 the following penalties may be imposed by the Disciplinary Committee:

- 36
37 a) Recommendation for the prosecution for additional offenses;
38 b) Rendering of prison-support services such as, but not limited to cooking,
39 cleaning, doing clerical work, running the laundry, or performing maintenance
40 chores, subject to their physical and mental fitness as determined by the
41 medical officer;
42 c) Time credit deductions in the computation of Good Conduct Time
43 Allowance (GCTA);
44 d) Restriction of visiting privileges;

- 1 e) Housing reassignment;
- 2 f) Prison reassignment; and
- 3 g) Other similar penalties as may be determined by the disciplinary
- 4 committee.

5
6 No penalty shall be imposed that is more than necessary for the rehabilitation
7 and reformation of the inmate. In no case shall the disciplinary committee impose any
8 punishment that is contrary to law.

9
10 SEC. 33. *Intervention Programs Office*. - There shall be created within each
11 penal facility an Intervention Office, which shall be responsible for creating and
12 implementing intervention programs.

13
14 SEC. 34. *Intervention Programs*. - The intervention programs shall be designed
15 and targeted for PDLs within the same recidivism risk levels. They may be any of the
16 following:

- 17
18 a) *Education and training* - programs designed to give basic and advance
19 education to PDLs, or provide them with technical skills. BuCor shall coordinate
20 with the Department of Education, Commission on Higher Education, and
21 Technical Education and Skills Development Authority for the design and
22 implementation of these programs.
- 23 b) *Work and productivity* - programs designed to utilize the existing skills
24 and capabilities of PDLs towards administration of the penal facility or
25 community service.
- 26 c) *Counselling and self-improvement* - programs designed to provide
27 continuous counselling services to PDLs to encourage reformation and self-
28 improvement.

29
30 SEC. 35. *Intervention Program Credits*. - Participation in intervention programs
31 shall earn PDLs with Intervention Program Credits equivalent to the hours spent during
32 such participation. For every six-month period in which the PDL is not subjected to any
33 disciplinary action or recommended for prosecution for crimes committed during the
34 service of sentence, the Intervention Programs Office shall recommend to the Parole
35 and Probation Administration (DOJ-PPA) a reduction in sentence equivalent to the
36 Intervention Program Credits earned during such period.

37
38 However, PDLs who are convicted of crimes involving moral turpitude may not
39 be recommended for sentence reduction until after they have served half of the
40 minimum period of their prison sentence. Upon completion of the said period, the
41 Intervention Programs Office may recommend a reduction in sentence equivalent to
42 half of the Intervention Programs Credits earned, *provided*, that the PDL was not
43 subjected to more than one disciplinary action per year, or recommended for

1 prosecution for crimes committed during the service of sentence, during the said
2 period.

3
4 The Intervention Program Credit system shall be without prejudice to the
5 existing system granting allowance for good behavior.

6
7 SEC. 36. *Risk Reassessments and Level Adjustment.* - PDLs who successfully
8 participated in intervention programs or productive activities shall receive periodic risk
9 reassessments not less than annually, and PDLs determined to be at high recidivism
10 risk level and who have less than five (5) years until their projected release date shall
11 receive more frequent risk reassessments. The Intervention Program Office shall
12 adjust the intervention programs for PDLs with high recidivism risk levels.

13
14 SEC. 37. *Provision of Adequate and Holistic Healthcare for PDLs.* – Health
15 programs for physical and mental health shall be established by the BuCor and the
16 BJMP.

17
18 There shall be created in every penal institution a Medical Support Office
19 (MSO). This Office shall be in charge of ensuring that medical service, the
20 psychosocial support and other counselling services shall be made available to the
21 PDLs.

22
23 The MSO shall, in partnership with the Department of Health (DOH) and the
24 National Center for Mental Health (NCMH), provide free mental health counselling,
25 education and evaluation to any prisoner. These services shall be made available to
26 them upon the entry of the prisoner in the penal institution and until after the lapse of
27 one (1) year from the time he or she departs from the penal institution when he or she
28 has secured release through an acquittal, service and expiration of sentence, grant of
29 parole, commutations, reprieves and other forms of executive clemency, or through
30 the order of competent authority.

31
32 The MSO shall provide them with family-centered programs that focus on family
33 strengthening activities and nurturing of family relationships, during incarceration and
34 following release. Services that will help prisoners cultivate insights to prevent
35 recidivism shall also be made available to them. Within six (6) months prior to the date
36 of his or her release, the MSO shall craft a program that will prepare the prisoner for
37 his or her release and eventual reintegration into his or her family, into his or her
38 community, and into society.

39
40 The spouse and children of the prisoners shall likewise be entitled to the
41 psychosocial support and counselling services benefits granted under this Section.
42 They shall also be provided with free psychosocial support and other counselling
43 services that will assist them in coping with the changes brought about by the
44 incarceration. The MSO shall, within six (6) months prior to the date of the prisoner's

1 release, help them prepare for the return of the prisoner to their family. These services
2 may be continuously availed of until after the lapse of one (1) year from the time of the
3 prisoner's release.

4
5 SEC. 38. *In-facility Employment.* - There shall be created in every penal
6 institution a Prison Revenue Office (PRO) which shall be in charge of institutionalizing
7 revenue generating programs. The PRO shall encourage interested prisoners to
8 participate in the Prisoner Employment Program (PEP). Through the PEP, qualified
9 prisoners will be provided with opportunities to engage in meaningful and sustainable
10 paid employment, work experience and vocational training inside the penal institution.
11 The PRO shall also encourage interested employers to become involved in the PEP,
12 upon compliance with requirements to be determined by the PRO.

13
14 The PRO shall, in coordination with TESDA, formulate and establish income
15 generating programs that will allow qualified prisoners (a) to receive reasonable
16 compensation for the work thus performed, and (b) to gain an employment certification
17 that will reflect their employment record.

18
19 The PRO shall establish a savings program with government accredited
20 banking institutions which may be availed of by qualified PDLs.

21
22 SEC. 39. *Post-Prison Employment.* - There shall be created in every penal
23 institution a Job Assistance Office (JAO). Without prejudice to other existing
24 government employment programs, the JAO shall, together with the Department of
25 Labor and Employment (DOLE), establish and maintain a Post-Prison Employment
26 Program (PPEP) that will raise awareness regarding available job opportunities which
27 a prisoner may avail upon release. The JAO shall encourage private sector
28 participation by proposing incentives and privileges to private business establishments
29 that will open job opportunities to former prisoners. The JAO shall ensure that the job
30 opportunities, both in the public and private sectors, shall not create undue and
31 unlawful discrimination against former prisoners seeking employment.

32
33 SEC. 40. *PPEP Tax Credit.* - Employers who shall participate in the Post- Prison
34 Employment Program (PPEP) upon the effectivity of this Act, shall be entitled to an
35 additional deduction from their gross income, equivalent to fifteen percent (15%) of the
36 total amount paid as salaries and wages to former prisoners, subject to Section 4 of
37 the National Internal Revenue Code (NIRC), as amended, for a period of five (5) years
38 from the time of employment or until such employment is terminated, whichever is
39 shorter.

40
41 Any company or individual who has hired a former prisoner within five (5) years
42 from his or her release, is entitled to avail of tax credit granted under this Act. The said
43 tax credit should be collected immediately on the next tax period.

SEC. 41. *Housing Assistance Office.* - There shall be created in every penal institution a Housing Assistance Office (HAO). The HAO shall be in charge of providing assistance in the finding of affordable and stable housing or temporary housing facility, to a former prisoner who is seeking re-entry into the society after having secured an acquittal on appeal, or having served the full term of his or her sentence, or having been granted commutations and reprieves, without prejudice to other existing government housing programs.

Without prejudice to other existing government housing programs, the HAO together with the National Housing Authority (NHA) and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), shall provide assistance in the finding of affordable and stable housing or temporary housing facility to a prisoner within six (6) months prior to the date of his or her release, and after the lapse of one (1) year from the time he or she departs from the penal institution.

The HAO shall:

- a) Assess the prisoner's housing needs or requirements;
- b) Provide accurate information about housing resources available in his or her area;
- c) Assist with the application process; and
- d) Make follow-ups to evaluate the conditions of the prisoner in his or her new home.

SEC. 42. *Identification Process.* - The BuCor shall identify prisoners who are eligible for release within six (6) months. Information gathered shall then be related to the HAO and the JAO to facilitate their enrollment in the respective programs of the said offices. Once identified as eligible for the available programs, prisoners shall be given the option to enroll and consent to be part thereof.

Chapter VI

Prohibited Acts

SEC. 43. *Prohibited Acts and Penalty.* - The following acts are hereby prohibited:

- a) Affording privileged treatment to PDLs, such as provision for amenities different from those given to other prisoners similarly situated without valid order from DOJ or from appropriate courts;
- b) Placing PDLs in secret detention places, solitary, incommunicado, or other similar situations;
- c) Use of PDLs for personal or criminal purposes; and
- d) Negligence or willful refusal to check and reveal the status of a PDL upon a valid demand by the PDL or any of his representatives.

1 The penalty of *prision correccional* shall be imposed for violation of this Section
2 together with the accessory penalty of *temporary absolute disqualification form public*
3 *office or employment*.

4
5 **Chapter VII**
6 **Final Provisions**
7

8 SEC. 44. *Implementing Rules and Regulations*. - Within one hundred and
9 twenty (120) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DOJ and BuCor together with
10 TESDA, DOH, NEDA, DOLE, NHA and DSWD, shall promulgate the Implementing
11 Rules and Regulations (IRR).

12
13 SEC. 45. *Appropriations*. - Such amounts as may be necessary to carry out the
14 provisions of this Act shall be included in the Annual General Appropriations Act.

15
16 SEC. 46. *Separability Clause*. - If, for any reason, any section or provision of
17 this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other sections or provisions which
18 are not affected shall continue to be in full force and effect.

19
20 SEC. 47. *Repealing Clause*. - All laws, decrees, executive orders,
21 proclamations, rules and regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent herewith
22 are repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

23
24 SEC. 48. *Effectivity*. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
25 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

26
27 Approved,