



## Kentucky Department of Corrections

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### Kentucky Department of Corrections Launches New Aftercare Program for Inmates in Recovery

**BURGIN, Ky. (July 9, 2019)** – Kentucky Justice Secretary John Tilley joined with the state Department of Corrections (DOC) today to announce the first ever aftercare program within a Kentucky prison, providing a new system of support, mentoring and peer accountability for offenders in recovery from a substance use disorder.

The innovative program, known as SOAR (Supporting Others in Active Recovery), focuses on relapse prevention, education, and reentry skills based on the Therapeutic Community Model, a group-based, residential approach to treating substance abuse. The evidence-based strategy seeks to reduce recidivism and set the stage for long-term recovery before inmates return to communities.

With a commitment to sober living, participants live together in a single dormitory located at Northpoint Training Center, a medium-custody prison in central Kentucky. The goal is to provide a steady continuation of care as inmates complete their sentences along with other programs and curriculum.

“DOC has made tremendous strides over the past three years to strengthen treatment behind prison walls, and today’s announcement is only the latest example,” Secretary Tilley said. “Drug treatment is one of the most effective tools we have to reduce recidivism and protect public safety, and I’m incredibly proud of DOC’s leadership and innovation on this front. We must always seek to set the highest policy standards, both for Kentucky and the nation.”

The program is funded in part by a \$300,000 grant from the Kentucky Office of Drug Control Policy, which will pay for several positions within the prison. The grant was made possible with opioid-response appropriations in the state budget signed by Gov. Matt Bevin and passed by the state General Assembly

The SOAR program is currently available for up to 88 participants who have completed the DOC-approved substance abuse program or graduated from Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT). Participants must also have 60 days of clear conduct, meet the appropriate risk classifications, and maintain a job assignment in the program.

Each participant is assigned to a social service clinician who assists with the development of an individually-tailored treatment plan. Upon completing the My Ongoing Recovery Experience (MORE) Curriculum – developed

by the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation – participants will receive 90 days of good time credit. The program takes a minimum of six months to complete.

While living in the SOAR dormitory, inmates can engage in other evidence-based programs to earn good time credits. Participants have the opportunity to earn at least 120 days good time credit by completing such programs as MRT Parenting, MRT Anger Management, Soft Skills Boot Camp, and New Directions, which provide valuable skills that help support a successful transition back into the community.

“We are excited to see this project come to fruition. The Division of Substance Abuse at DOC continuously strives to provide innovative treatment options for individuals during their incarceration to help them be successful upon reentry,” said Division Director Sarah Johnson. “SOAR is another example of this.”

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