

**Sixty-ninth Legislative Assembly of North Dakota
In Regular Session Commencing Tuesday, January 7, 2025**

HOUSE BILL NO. 1549
(Representatives Klemin, Hanson, Stemen)
(Senators Larson, Davison)

AN ACT to create and enact a new section to chapter 12-44.1 and two new sections to chapter 54-23.3 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the correctional facility grant program, housing task force, and criminal justice data collection; to amend and reenact section 12-47-31 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to offenders released from the department of corrections and rehabilitation; to provide for a statement of legislative intent; to provide for a legislative management study; and to provide for a legislative management report.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:

SECTION 1. A new section to chapter 12-44.1 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted as follows:

Correctional facility grant committee - Correctional facility grant program - Report.

1. The department of corrections and rehabilitation shall establish a correctional facility grant committee consisting of two members appointed by the director of the department of corrections and rehabilitation, two members appointed by the North Dakota association of counties, the commissioner of recovery and re-entry, and the director of the behavioral health division of the department of health and human services. The director of the department of corrections and rehabilitation shall choose one member to serve as chairman. The committee shall:
 - a. Establish criteria for the evaluation of existing re-entry programs, including educational and counseling programs used by existing re-entry programs;
 - b. Establish criteria for the evaluation of grant applications;
 - c. Establish policies for screening and implementing grants under this section;
 - d. Establish criteria and policies for evaluating programs funded under this section;
 - e. Establish criteria and policies necessary for the successful administration and management of the grant program;
 - f. Administer grants to county, regional, or tribal correctional facilities; and
 - g. Provide annual reports to the department of corrections and rehabilitation regarding the status of the correctional facility grant program.
2. The correctional facility grant committee shall administer a grant program to expand access to evidence-based programming in county, regional, and tribal correctional facilities.
3. Grants awarded under this section must prioritize county, regional, or tribal correctional facilities with no existing re-entry, educational, counseling, or other evidence-based programs. Grants may be awarded to support access to culturally responsive treatment alternative programs.

SECTION 2. AMENDMENT. Section 12-47-31 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

12-47-31. Discharge of offenders –~~Clothing~~–~~Transportation~~.

1. The department of corrections and rehabilitation, in coordination with the department of transportation, shall facilitate a process for offenders applying for photo identification, including a driver's license, nondriver identification card, temporary driver's license, or temporary nondriver identification card.
2. The department of corrections and rehabilitation shall provide an offender released from the department appropriate clothing and transportation to a reasonable point as specified in the release plan, based upon need.
3. The department of corrections and rehabilitation, in cooperation with the department of health and human services, shall connect all eligible offenders to Medicaid assistance or other health and human services programs before the offender is released from the department.

SECTION 3. A new section to chapter 54-23.3 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted as follows:

Housing task force - Report to legislative management.

1. The department of corrections and rehabilitation shall establish a task force on housing to address barriers to accessing housing for probationers, parolees, and other individuals released from the custody of the department. The housing task force must include representation from the division of adult services, including parole and probation services, the housing finance agency, the department of health and human services, and community housing providers.
2. The task force shall provide an annual report to the legislative management relating to:
 - a. The implementation of a housing assistance program to provide monetary assistance to eligible probationers, parolees, and other individuals released from the custody of the department of corrections and rehabilitation. The program may include expanding eligibility requirements for housing assistance programs to include individuals released from incarceration.
 - b. The implementation of a housing assistance program for eligible sexual offenders, including the desirability and feasibility of using master leases to improve accessibility.
 - c. Procedures for improving awareness regarding available housing options and improving coordination among housing providers, the department of health and human services, and the department of corrections and rehabilitation.
 - d. The capacity of sober housing and low barrier housing for individuals released from the custody of the department of corrections and rehabilitation.

SECTION 4. A new section to chapter 54-23.3 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted as follows:

Criminal justice data - Report to legislative management.

1. The department of corrections and rehabilitation, in cooperation with the behavioral health division of the department of health and human services, representatives from each judicial district, and representatives from the adult services division, including parole and probation services and local or regional jails, shall examine criminal justice data, including data collection, retention, and dissemination.
2. The department shall provide a report to the legislative management relating to procedures for:

- a. Tracking uniform data points;
- b. Standardizing and automating criminal justice data collection, retention, and dissemination; and
- c. Improving data connectivity between system partners, including a proposal to develop a data sharing portal to alert the department of health and human services of changes to the Medicaid status of offenders in custody with the department of corrections and rehabilitation.

SECTION 5. LEGISLATIVE INTENT - FEDERAL GRANTS. It is the intent of the sixty-ninth legislative assembly that the department of corrections and rehabilitation apply for federal grants from the United States department of justice to fund a temporary justice reinvestment coordinator position and to support the general funds required for the implementation of re-entry programs.

SECTION 6. LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT STUDY - EXPANDING ACCESS TO CRIMINAL RECORD SEALING. During the 2025-26 interim, the legislative management shall consider studying expanding access to criminal record sealing. The study must include the automation of record sealing for individuals eligible to file a petition to seal a criminal record under section 12-60.1-02, the expansion of eligibility for record sealing, and the potential costs and benefits of creating processes for criminal record expungement alongside, or in lieu of, avenues for criminal record sealing. The legislative management shall report its findings and recommendations, together with any legislation necessary to implement the recommendations, to the seventieth legislative assembly.

Speaker of the House

President of the Senate

Chief Clerk of the House

Secretary of the Senate

This certifies that the within bill originated in the House of Representatives of the Sixty-ninth Legislative Assembly of North Dakota and is known on the records of that body as House Bill No. 1549.

House Vote: Yeas 62 Nays 29 Absent 3

Senate Vote: Yeas 43 Nays 3 Absent 1

Chief Clerk of the House

Received by the Governor at _____ M. on _____, 2025.

Approved at _____ M. on _____, 2025.

Governor

Filed in this office this _____ day of _____, 2025,

at _____ o'clock _____ M.

Secretary of State