

FAMILY ADVISORY BOARD

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Senate Bill 195 (S-1) as passed by the Senate
Sponsor: Sen. Stephanie Chang
House Committee: Judiciary
Senate Committee: Judiciary and Public Safety
Complete to 12-1-20

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

SUMMARY:

Senate Bill 195 would amend the Corrections Code of 1953 to require the Department of Corrections (DOC) to create a Family Advisory Board as part of a mandated family reunification policy. The board would, among other things, assist in the development of policies, procedures, and programs that support family reunification during and after incarceration.

Family Advisory Board

The board would consist of at least 11 and up to 16 members, including the following:

- One DOC employee designated by the director of the DOC.
- The legislative corrections ombudsman.
- Four to six individuals who are family members of individuals *currently* incarcerated in Michigan.
- One to three individuals who are family members of individuals *formerly* incarcerated in Michigan.
- At least one individual who has a parent formerly or currently incarcerated in Michigan.
- At least one and up to two individuals who were formerly incarcerated in Michigan.
- One individual who is a social worker who has training and expertise dealing with mental health issues and experience working with formerly or currently incarcerated individuals.
- One individual who is an advocate for or mentor to individuals incarcerated in Michigan.

Members of the board would serve without compensation but could be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties.

Duties

In addition to regular meetings, the board would have to annually hold at least two public informational meetings in different regions of the state for family members and the public to provide comments. The board would also have to do all of the following:

- Assist the DOC by providing feedback regarding policies and procedures that impact family reunification during and after incarceration.
- Assist and advise the DOC in developing programs that support family reunification during and after incarceration.

- Enhance communication between the DOC and families regarding issues that affect a broad range of current and formerly incarcerated individuals and their families. This would include gathering information from individuals in the region and across the state with family members who are currently or formerly incarcerated, including a review of comment cards submitted at individual correctional facilities.
- Identify barriers concerning family reunification during and after incarceration.
- File an annual report with the chairs of the Senate and House committees concerned with the DOC and criminal justice issues regarding its activities under the bill. The report would have to be filed before October 1 of each year.

The board could create regional committees or facility-focused family councils to carry out its duties.

Necessary staffing for the board to fulfill its duties would be provided by the DOC. The DOC would also have to provide information about the board on its website and in the waiting rooms of correctional facilities, including the board's contact information for obtaining information and assistance with family-related issues.

Proposed MCL 791.214a

FISCAL IMPACT:

Senate Bill 195 would have an indeterminate fiscal impact on the state Department of Corrections. The department would be required to create a Family Advisory Board. Members of the board would serve without compensation, but would be eligible for reimbursement for their actual and necessary expenses incurred while performing their duties as board members. Additional costs to the state would depend on the amount of actual expenses incurred. The department would be required to provide staffing, office space, and information technology for the board to carry out its work. According to the department, costs would likely be covered by existing resources.

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.