

Minnesota Department of Corrections

Challenge Incarceration Program

CIP Background

The Challenge Incarceration Program (CIP) was mandated by the legislature in 1992. It is a voluntary program for inmates who meet certain statutory and department requirements.

CIP consists of three phases, each generally lasting for six months. The first is a highly-structured and intensive phase. Phase 1 for men is located at the Willow River site of the Minnesota Correctional Facility (MCF)-Willow River/Moose Lake and, for women, at the MCF-Togo. Programming in this phase includes chemical dependency treatment; education; cognitive skills; restorative justice; physical training; military bearing, drill, and ceremony; work crew; and transition preparation.

In the second and third CIP phases, offenders are under intensive, close supervision in the community. Following successful completion of all three phases, offenders are placed on supervised release for the remainder of their sentence.

Failure to complete CIP phases 2 and/or 3 may result in a return to prison, extending an offender's period of incarceration.

Importance of Criteria

Criteria established for CIP participation is intended to target those offenders who are amenable to change in order to successfully reintegrate into society. In addition, only a narrow group of inmates qualifies for CIP in order to protect the public from high-risk, violent offenders who do not warrant early release due to their criminal histories.

Statutory Admission Criteria

M.S. Sec. 244.17 defines CIP eligibility by the following criteria:

- Offenders committed to the commissioner of corrections' custody following revocation of a stayed sentence
- Offenders committed to the commissioner's custody, who have 48 months or less remaining in their term of imprisonment, and who did not receive a dispositional departure under sentencing guidelines

Statute prohibits CIP placement for offenders who:

- Are committed to the commissioner's custody following a conviction for murder, manslaughter, criminal sexual conduct, assault, kidnapping, robbery, arson, or any other offense involving death or intentional personal injury; and/or
- Were convicted within the preceding 10 years of an offense described above and who were committed to the custody of the commissioner



CIP offenders participate in military bearing, drill, and ceremony.

Capacity

In 2007, CIP/Willow River completed an expansion that increased capacity to 162 participants. The expansion included a new barracks, health services area, and activities building. The existing food services building was renovated, and the old barracks site was converted to chemical dependency program space.

CIP/Togo for women has a capacity of 24.

Evaluation

In 2006, the DOC completed an in-depth evaluation of CIP. Researchers looked at all CIP offenders since the program began in 1992, one of the longest periods for such an evaluation. CIP participants were compared to a control group with similar criminal factors. The evaluation found that:

- ❑ CIP decreased the chances of reoffending with a new felony conviction by 32 percent



- ❑ CIP decreased the chances of reincarceration for a new crime by 35 percent
- ❑ CIP offenders were less likely than the control group to be reimprisoned for a person offense
- ❑ The early release provision for CIP graduates has saved nearly 1,500 prison beds
- ❑ CIP's impact on bed space and recidivism has reduced costs by \$18.1 million (FY93-FY02)



Female squad members marching in George Washington State Forest.



Male squad members performing manual labor.