

By: Senator(s) Chassaniol, Jordan

To: Corrections; Economic
and Workforce DevelopmentSENATE BILL NO. 2357
(As Sent to Governor)

1 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A WORK-RELEASE PROGRAM AT DELTA
2 CORRECTIONAL FACILITY; TO PROVIDE THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR
3 INMATES WHO MAY PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM; TO REQUIRE CERTAIN
4 STATISTICAL DATA BE REPORTED TO THE LEGISLATURE REGARDING THE
5 PROGRAM; TO PROVIDE THAT INMATES WHO ARE WORK PARTICIPANTS SHALL
6 UTILIZE THEIR WAGES FOR CERTAIN PURPOSES; AND FOR RELATED
7 PURPOSES.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

9 **SECTION 1.** (1) A work-release program is established at
10 Delta Correctional Facility. The corporation, as defined under
11 Section 47-5-539, shall serve as the program administrator and
12 shall focus on meaningful, skill-oriented, private-sector work
13 opportunities in the surrounding communities. There shall be a
14 limit of one hundred (100) people in the program at a time.

15 (2) Any person who has been sentenced to confinement in jail
16 or who has been sentenced for a felony conviction but is confined
17 in a jail may request assignment to the work release program at
18 Delta Correctional Facility established under this section.
19 Admission to the program shall be in the discretion of the
20 sheriff. The sheriff may further authorize the offender to



21 participate in educational or other rehabilitative programs
22 designed to supplement his work release employment or to prepare
23 the person for successful reentry. No offender shall be eligible
24 for this program if he or she has more than one (1) year remaining
25 on his or her sentence. No person sentenced for any sex crime or
26 multiple violent felonies in the past ten (10) years shall be
27 eligible for participation in the program established under this
28 section. The Commissioner of the Department of Corrections shall
29 direct the facility's superintendent to identify eligible
30 participants within thirty (30) days of the effective date of this
31 act.

32 (3) The corporation shall collect and maintain data which
33 shall be shared annually with the Legislature in sortable
34 electronic format. The first report shall be made before January
35 15, 2026. The data shall include:

36 (a) Total number of participants at the beginning of
37 each month by race, gender, and offenses charged;

38 (b) Total number of participants at the end of each
39 month by race, gender, and offenses charged;

40 (c) Total number of participants who began the program
41 in each month by race, gender, and offenses charged;

42 (d) Total number of participants who successfully
43 completed the program in each month by race, gender, and offenses
44 charged;



45 (e) Total number of participants who left the program
46 in each month and reason for leaving by race, gender, and offenses
47 charged;

48 (f) Total number of participants who were arrested for
49 a new criminal offense while in the program in each month by race,
50 gender, and offenses charged;

51 (g) Total number of participants who were convicted of
52 a new crime while in the program in each month by race, gender,
53 and offenses charged;

54 (h) Total number of participants who completed the
55 program and were convicted of a new crime within three (3) years
56 of completing the program;

57 (i) Total amount earned by participants and how the
58 earnings were distributed in each month;

59 (j) Results of any initial risk- and needs-assessments
60 conducted on each participant by race, gender, and offenses
61 charged; and

62 (k) Any other data or information as requested by the
63 corporation.

64 (4) Any person who has been sentenced to confinement in jail
65 or who has been sentenced for a felony conviction but is confined
66 in a jail may request assignment to the pilot program established
67 under this section. Admission to the program shall be in the
68 discretion of the superintendent of the facility. The
69 superintendent may further authorize the offender to participate



70 in educational or other rehabilitative programs designed to
71 supplement his work-release employment or to prepare the person
72 for successful re-entry.

73 (5) The superintendent shall adopt and publish rules and
74 regulations prior to accepting inmates. These rules and
75 regulations shall, at a minimum, include all requirements for
76 work-release programs established pursuant to Sections 47-5-451
77 through 47-5-471. Participating employers shall pay no less than
78 the prevailing wage for the position and shall under no
79 circumstance pay less than the federal minimum wage.

80 (6) Any inmate assigned to such a program by the
81 superintendent who, without proper authority or just cause, leaves
82 the area to which he or she has been assigned to work or attend
83 educational or other rehabilitative programs, or leaves the
84 vehicle or route of travel involved in his or her going to or
85 returning from such place, will be guilty of escape as provided in
86 Section 97-9-49. An inmate who is found guilty under this section
87 shall be ineligible for further participation in a work-release
88 program during his or her current term of confinement.

89 (7) (a) The inmate shall maintain an account through a
90 local financial institution and shall provide a copy of a check
91 stub to the sheriff.

92 (b) The inmate shall be required to pay his or her
93 wages earned as a participant under the programs for the following
94 purposes:



95 (i) To pay twenty-five percent (25%) toward any
96 support of dependents or to the Mississippi Department of Human
97 Services on behalf of dependents as may be ordered by a judge of
98 competent jurisdiction as well as fines, restitution, or costs as
99 ordered by the court to include any fines and fees associated with
100 obtaining a valid driver's license upon release. Once all the
101 aforementioned balances have been cleared, or if no liability
102 exists, these funds shall be added to the participants savings
103 diversion program.

104 (ii) To save fifty percent (50%) of the offender's
105 wages in the account required under paragraph (a) of this
106 subsection. Monies under this subparagraph shall be made
107 available to the inmate upon parole or release.

108 (iii) To pay up to fifteen percent (15%) of the
109 inmate's wages to the facility for administrative expenses to
110 include transportation costs.

111 (iv) The inmate shall have access to the remaining
112 ten percent (10%) of the monies in his or her account to purchase
113 incidental expenses.

114 (c) Any monies remaining under paragraph (b) of this
115 subsection after all mandatory deductions are paid, shall be
116 deposited in the inmate's account established under this
117 subsection. Any monies remaining under this subsection, upon the
118 release of the inmate, shall be released to the inmate upon his or
119 her release.



120 (8) This section shall stand repealed on July 1, 2029.

121 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
122 and after July 1, 2025.

