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## HB 608: Dignity Act

The Dignity for Women Who are Incarcerated (Dignity Act) protects pregnant women in prison and jail from practices that put them and their unborn children in physical danger. It limits shackling and other harmful restrictions and ensures infants have proper medical and parental care before and after birth. The bill is supported by a wide variety of stakeholders, including the NC Sheriff's Association, the NC Obstetrical and Gynecological Society, ACLU of NC, Disability Rights North Carolina, Conservatives for Criminal Justice Reform and NC Prisoner Legal Services.

HB 608 would require prisons and jails to limit the use of shackling after the second trimester, during labor, and in the six weeks after delivery. It would also formalize allowing women who have just given birth to bond with their newborn for the duration of time they stay in the hospital. The proposed bill would also mandate that women be placed in correctional facilities within 250 miles of any of their children under the age of one and allow for visits with newborns twice a week. Further, it would set basic requirements for providing menstrual and nutrition products, establish guidelines for body inspections that limit interaction with male officers, and prevent pregnant or postpartum women from being held in restrictive housing. Training for correctional officers would be required so they can support pregnant women's physical and mental needs.

The bill passed the House on May 10, 2021 with unanimous support and is now parked in the Senate Committee on Rules and Operations.

## New TV series: Free Enterprise

We hope you'll be able to catch the new TV series, *Free Enterprise*, which is part of ABC's Litton's Weekend Adventure. It's a heartwarming, redemptive series that's a celebration of hard work and second chances. It began Saturday April 4 and airs in the morning depending on local channel programming. *Free Enterprise* features one of America's foremost entrepreneurs, financial-technology pioneer and Inmates to Entrepreneurs founder Brian Hamilton, and hosted by ABC News' and ESPN's Ryan Smith. Season 1 of this groundbreaking new television series was filmed entirely in NC. Season 2 will go to other states.

The series shares the journeys of formerly incarcerated individuals who dream of starting their own businesses after struggling to find consistent employment because of their criminal records. With the help of Hamilton along with his team of fellow business experts and mentors, these entrepreneurs will work to launch businesses with low or no

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### Special points of interest

- Masks still required in correctional facilities, according to Gov Cooper
- Great increases in number of mothers in prison
- New NC-CURE Facebook page



## Let us be your VOICE

Write to NC-CURE at our address:

P.O. Box 5013

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[northcarolinacure@gmail.com](mailto:northcarolinacure@gmail.com)

## NC-CURE Executive Director's Report

Thanks for all your letters and support. We really appreciate the kind and encouraging words many of you have written about our newsletter and our advocacy efforts. NC-CURE's Board of Directors and staff volunteer hundreds of hours each month to advocate for you. Over the last few months we've been working on the 2021 Strategic Plan for NC-CURE, and have decided to focus on these priorities: 1) Publish OTW quarterly and respond to letters, emails and phone calls, 2) Organize information from our correspondence to identify systemic issues that are part of our mission's work, 3) Investigate and address issues with medical care delivery in the prison system, 4) Develop an infrastructure for fundraising. We appreciate our membership's agreement with and comments on these focus areas. We'd particularly like to hear about your specific concerns about medical care in the prison system.

NC-CURE is fortunate that Meredith College has offered us an ongoing internship position. Two very industrious and talented young women have been assigned to us. They've been working on our membership lists and meeting coordination. They've

also created our new website and new Facebook page, while learning about non-profit agencies and criminal justice issues.

NC-CURE has started a Telephone Support Program available to family and friends of the incarcerated. Our volunteers will telephone those who request calls to support them by listening, educating on the prison system and best ways to advocate, sharing resources, and referring serious concerns to the NC-CURE Executive Director. Anyone wishing to receive telephone support can request it by writing to NC-CURE or emailing [north-carolinacure@gmail.com](mailto:north-carolinacure@gmail.com), providing name, telephone number, and name/OPUS number of person incarcerated.

We are now collaborating with the UNC School of Law to help explain legal processes to us. Their article on the grievance system should be helpful to you. Please note that a grievance should address a single issue. Pay particular attention to the timeline for reporting the incidents and receiving responses. A frequent reason for rejection of grievances is that they address

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*"I helped my friends in prison get their GEDs. I guess that was the start of my career in social work."*

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### In the Spotlight: Incarcerated youth finds hope and future career

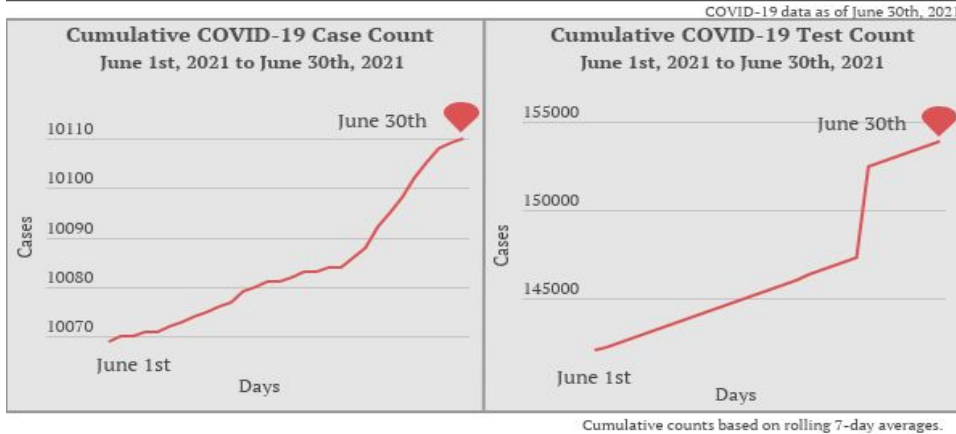
Carlos Parker grew up in a troubled home, and found himself in a detention center in North Carolina at the age of 15. He saw himself on TV as his crime was publicized in the local news, a crime the young kid did to protect his family. During his first year in detention he completed his GED, and was tried as an adult at age 16. Sentenced for 28 years, he and his mother and siblings were shocked. After spending several years at High Rise and young adult camps, Carlos began to work youth release programs as the tables began to turn for the better. He was allowed to take Bible studies and that's when "got serious" about following Jesus. He got a real break when he was assigned to work with Yelverton Enrichment Services in Snow Hill. The Yelvertons gave him a huge chance to be trained as a mentor. There he began his own education program and achieved certificates for many skills. He began helping his friends in prison get their GEDs and encouraged them to complete rehabilitation programs—the start of his future career in social work.

Carlos was not much of a student in his early years, but he was a talented athlete and an exceptional basketball player. He achieved notoriety for his basketball prowess in prison, being known as "Little Penny". He related that the people in prison organized themselves in cliques such as the gangsters and the hustlers, but he fell into the athlete group. Basketball helped him out a lot, and he stayed clear from the violence he witnessed.

Released after 11 years, Carlos went back home, got married, and raised his sons. Now he's coaching basketball for his son's teams. He serves as a mentor to the young kids like he was, who need a listening ear and a break. He still keeps up with the Yelvertons who were the first to give him a break. Today Carlos is a certified Community Health Worker and a Peer Support Specialist, and is employed by One to One with Youth. He works with kids and adults providing needed resources, individual counseling for those with mental health disorders, and leading programs for rehabilitation of formerly incarcerated men and women. He is well known in his community as a person who will say "Yes" when a volunteer is needed to help people in need, such as those suffering drug addictions or formerly incarcerated men needing help to reenter the community.

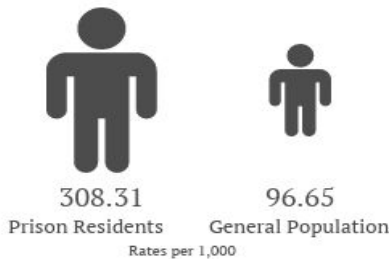


# COVID-19 Prison Fact Sheet: North Carolina



How do COVID-19 statistics among prison residents compare to the general population?

< Case Rate v >



## State Rankings

- 23rd highest**  
Case rate out of 50 states.
- 26rd highest**  
Mortality rate out of 45 states.
- 13th highest**  
Testing rate out of 37 states.
- 18th highest**  
Percent reduction in prison population out of 41 states

Prepared by the COVID Prison Project  
<https://covidprisonproject.com>

[@covidprison](https://twitter.com/covidprison)



## Reentry Recovery Support

**Integrated Care of Greater Hickory**  
741 5<sup>th</sup> St SW  
Hickory, NC 28602  
828-322-5915  
[www.integratedcarehickory.com](http://www.integratedcarehickory.com)

Provides an integrated approach to recovery from depression, anxiety, trauma and addiction with a comprehensive care. Offers medical, behavioral, pharmacy, transitional housing and transportation to clients in Iredell, Catawba, Lincoln and Gaston Counties. Equipped to serve uninsured and insured clients.

**Miriam Rehab & Detox Center**  
PO Box 162  
Morehead City NC 28557  
[www.themiriam.org](http://www.themiriam.org)  
252-725-3030

“We are a drug and alcohol rehabilitation facility located in Carteret County, North Carolina. We work with women that are wanting to change their lives. We believe every woman has the ability to achieve her independence from any addiction.”

## Update from N&O

Charles Ray Finch was convicted of murder in Wilson County in 1977 but four decades later after a Duke University Wrongful Convictions Clinic investigation, he was cleared by a federal appeals court that found problems with a police lineup and sent him home from prison in 2019. Gov Roy Cooper pardoned him on June 16, 2021, declaring him innocent of the murder. Finch is now eligible to file a legal claim and seek compensation for his wrongful conviction.

## Free Enterprise (continued)

(Continued from page 1)

capital, providing viewers a real-time view into the process of product development, pricing, marketing and customer service—and their own inspirational stories of self-reliance, hope and transformation.

“People emerging from America’s correctional institutions deserve an opportunity to achieve their potential. We’re proud to present this heartwarming redemptive series that’s a celebration of hard work and second chances.”

“There is no larger and more unifying proposition in our country than the idea that everyone gets a second chance. Free Enterprise demonstrates that judicially-involved people can take part in a most important part of the American dream—having ownership. On the show you will see real people starting simple businesses to become part of the American tapestry”, commented Hamilton.

# GET A FRESH START: SECOND CHANCE ACT

If you have a criminal record that meets certain criteria, you may be able to have it expunged.

## The Second Chance Act (SB562) means:

All charges resulting in a dismissal or finding of not guilty are eligible to be expunged. Beginning December 1, 2021, many of those expungements will be automatic.



A person or prosecutor can petition for expunction of most misdemeanor and Class H or I felony convictions that occurred when a person was 16 or 17 and as long as the offense occurred prior to December 1, 2019.



Generally, a person may petition for expunction of:

1. One nonviolent misdemeanor after 5 years of good behavior;
2. Multiple nonviolent misdemeanor convictions after 7 years of good behavior;
3. One nonviolent felony conviction after 10 years of good behavior, with some exceptions.



Contact the NC Second Chance Alliance at <https://ncsecondchance.org/thesecondchanceact/>

## Access to IRS information

Many of you have written us about your CARES Act “Stimulus” payments. We understand your desire to know when and if your IRS stimulus or RRC payment will be sent. Calling the IRS for this purpose is not possible because the prison policies only permit collect and debit calls limited to 15 minutes, which is not enough time to interact with the IRS by phone. Access to this information may be obtained online at [www.irs.gov/coronavirus/get-my-payment](http://www.irs.gov/coronavirus/get-my-payment). You will need to provide your full name, address of record, social security number and date of birth. If you need to change your address, file IRS Form 8822, and mail it in. If you receive a letter from the IRS regarding verification of identity, you should contact the person designated at the facility to assist with the stimulus matters, typically the case manager. Prison facilities have been encouraged to send the required identity information for individual prisoners to the IRS at least twice monthly.

## Kairos Ministry now available in some North Carolina prisons

Kairos of North Carolina was approved for prisons in the state on May 15, 2021. Only evening meetings called “Prayer and Share” are now allowed. As of June 7, Pasquotank and Mountainview are the only facilities where the ministry has actually begun. Other facilities that will offer the program based on availability of volunteers and warden approval are Alexander, Anson, Avery-Mitchell, Bertie, Central, Craggy, Foothills, Marion, Maury, Nash, NCCIW, Pamlico, Pender, Scotland, and Swannonoa. Week-end retreats are currently not approved.

The Greek word Kairos means “God’s Special Time”. Kairos is a Christian, lay-led, ecumenical, volunteer international prison ministry in which men and women volunteers bring Christ’s love and forgiveness to incarcerated individuals and to their families.

## The Hearts of the Fathers

*The Hearts of the Fathers* is a true story about a man incarcerated when his son was a teenager. The story is an incredible one of restoration and hope that brought three generations together. The book will encourage your heart and demonstrate how a loving God relentlessly pursues his children.

BJ Emerson is the author of the book, along with his father. They have made this 100-page book available, free of charge, to any person in prison nationwide. If you have not already seen it, you can ask your facility Chaplain to get the book through The Prison Book Project or CLI Prison Alliance. A limited number of books can be mailed directly to individuals by writing *The Hearts of the Fathers*, ATTN: BJ Emerson, PO Box 30322, Greenville, NC 27833.

# Navigating the Prison Grievance Process

All those incarcerated within the North Carolina prison system are entitled to protection of certain rights and conditions, and if violated an inmate may address it through the grievance process.

## What is a grievance?

A grievance is an administrative remedy procedure for filing and resolving complaints about conditions of confinement to include actions, conduct, incidents or policies. There are things which may not be addressed by a grievance, particularly court or parole commission decisions, disciplinary actions, or actions which have not yet happened.

Any incarcerated person may submit a grievance. A third party, staff member, or even family member may submit a grievance on behalf of another person in cases of sexual assault or harassment, but the inmate will likely be contacted for their consent. All grievances must be submitted no later than 90 days after the offending incident.

## How to submit a grievance:

Grievances are submitted on a Form DC-410, which can be obtained by requesting the form from any staff member. When filling out the Form DC-410, take care not use any offending or threatening language, otherwise the grievance will be rejected. Only one incident per grievance will be accepted, so in the event of multiple reportable incidents, the first grievance must be resolved before reporting a second or any later claims.

After completing the Form DC-410, it should be submitted to either the Facility Head, a designated screening officer, or any other staff member. The incarcerated person will be notified of rejection or acceptance within 3 days. If rejected, the grievance will be returned with reason for rejection and may allow for re-submission if corrected. When accepted, the process of the grievance has entered Step 1, with the investigation being completed by a designated staff member. Following acceptance, within 15 days the inmate will receive a formal response of the results of the investigation of the claim.

If unsatisfied with the formal results of Step 1, an appeal may be filed for Step 2 review which will be investigated by the Facility Head. An appeal must be made within 24 hours of notification of the Step 1 results, and is accomplished by submitting the Form DC-410 and results of Step 1 directly to the Facility Head. The results of Step 2 review will be delivered to the inmate within 20 days of the request for review.

If unsatisfied with the results of Step 2 review, an appeal may be filed for Step 3 review which will be investigated by the Inmate Grievance Examiner. An appeal must be made within 24 hours of receiving the Step 2 results by submitting the appeal to a facility screening officer who will then mail the appeal to the Executive Director of Grievance Board Resolution. Following reception by the board, final results will be delivered to the inmate within 50 days. There is no appeal after Step 3 review.

## During the process:

Be mindful of timelines! Those filing grievances will not receive any information or updates of the investigation, only the final results. A prison may request an extension of time up to 70 days, but must give notice. If hearing nothing back, assume a rejection, and submit an appeal by filing a new grievance that reads:

“My grievance was not addressed within the designated amount of time and I am treating this lack of response as a denial. Therefore, I am appealing the denial of my grievance.”

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## Prisoner Advocacy Organizations

### Conservatives for Criminal Justice Reform

410 Boylan Avenue  
Raleigh, NC 27603  
[www.ccrnc.org](http://www.ccrnc.org)  
919-256-3757

### Forward Justice

400 W Main St  
Durham, NC 27701  
[www.forwardjustice.org](http://www.forwardjustice.org)  
919-323-3889

### North Carolina Justice Center

224 S Dawson St  
Raleigh, NC 27601  
[www.ncjustice.org](http://www.ncjustice.org)  
919-856-2570

### NC Second Chance Alliance

[www.ncsecondchance.org](http://www.ncsecondchance.org)  
919-861-1461

### Emancipate NC

PO Box 309  
Durham, NC 27702  
[www.emancipatenc.org](http://www.emancipatenc.org)  
919-682-1149

### ACLU of North Carolina

PO Box 28004  
Raleigh, NC 27611  
[www.acluofnorthcarolina.org](http://www.acluofnorthcarolina.org)  
919-834-3466

### Disability Rights North Carolina

3724 National Drive, Suite 100  
Raleigh, NC 27612  
[www.disabilityrightsncc.org](http://www.disabilityrightsncc.org)  
919-856-2195

### Equal Justice Initiative

122 Commerce Street  
Montgomery, AL 36104  
[www.eji.org](http://www.eji.org)  
334-269-1803

## RESOURCES



**Interfaith Prison Ministry for Women**  
**112 South Salisbury Street**  
**Raleigh, NC 27601**  
**www.ipmforwomen.org**  
**919-829-0311**

“We believe that systemic problems require holistic solutions. We strive to interrupt cycles of poverty, addiction, and violence by resourcing women mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and physically both before and after release.”

*For Medical Support:*

**North Carolina Formerly Incarcerated Transition Program (NCFIT)**  
**UNC School of Medicine-Family Medicine, Chapel Hill, NC**

Assists clients upon release in establishing care at a medical home and obtaining mental health and substance use disorder treatment if needed; provides vouchers for medical care and medications. Works with local reentry councils to assist in all aspects of reentry. Services coordinated with NCDPS. **Ask your case manager.** Available in five counties: Durham, Orange, Wake, Mecklenburg, Guilford. *FIT-Connect assists clients with finding medical homes in counties where the FIT Program does not exist.*

### DISCLAIMER

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## Covid Vaccines Behind Bars

Reports are that at least 400,000 prisoners and 100,000 prison employees have now tested positive for COVID-19 in the United States. Although the number of recorded deaths in these populations is low (2600 and 2000 respectively), there is generally agreement that infection and death rates are likely higher than reported because people incarcerated often do not tell medical staff and prison employees that they have COVID symptoms. Reasons for underreporting include confusion amongst medical staff as to how to best treat incarcerated individuals infected with COVID; jailhouse ‘quarantine’ is often complicated and self-quarantine is preferred; and specific treatment to cure COVID is not available. Thus, in the COVID-19 pandemic, emphasis has instead most often been placed on getting people out of prison.

The availability of three safe and highly effective vaccines has almost returned life to pre-pandemic ‘normal’ in most of the USA. However, surveys have found that up to half of all people incarcerated do not want to receive the vaccine. A long history of subpar medical treatment and mistrust between incarcerated people and prison health providers is thought to explain a large portion of this hesitancy to be vaccinated. In addition, debunked myths are circulating among prison populations that getting the vaccine will give you COVID or worse diseases, that vaccines will change your DNA, and that ‘vaccine experiments’ are being conducted on people in prison. People incarcerated oftentimes cannot do their own research to learn about the safety and effectiveness of the vaccines available and are often swayed by prison

staff who, unfortunately, have been found in to be more reluctant/resistant to vaccination than people incarcerated.

COVID infection in prisons and jails has been shown to have a significant negative impact on surrounding communities. In fact, the top 20 COVID outbreaks during the pandemic were all linked to prisons and jails. Incarcerated individuals with COVID increase the risk of infection to other prisoners, prison employees, and family members and other visitors, and when hospitalized, health care workers and other patients. Although incarcerated individuals have the freedom to choose NOT to get vaccinated it is abundantly clear that exercising that option is not living responsibly and is harmful to other individuals.

All NC incarcerated individuals and prison staff are being offered a COVID vaccine. As of June 4, about 50% of the each group have received at least 1 dose of the vaccine. The specific vaccine offered will be administered to both prisoners and staff and the choice of which of the three administered will be largely determined by market forces. A detailed discussion/comparison of vaccine type, safety and efficacy of the products available is outside the scope of this piece and is arguably unnecessary as experts agree that the available vaccines are interchangeable. Make the right decision.

*From Inside Story: Marshall Project Video Series: Lawrence Bartley and Donald Washington Jr, accessed June 7, 2021*

## Mask Requirement Lifted but not in Correctional Facilities

On June 11, Governor Roy Cooper extended requirements of Executive Order No. 215 until July 30, 2021. Statewide face covering requirements are eliminated for most businesses and operations, and capacity limitations and social distancing requirements are lifted.

The Governor’s order cited the latest CDC guidance, the fact that more than half of all North Carolinians have received one vaccination dose, and the enforcement concerns raised by the difficulty in distinguishing vaccinated from unvaccinated people.

*(Continued on page 9)*

## Have you ever felt powerless?

There once was an Apostle of Jesus Christ who was very devoted to spreading Jesus's message. His name was Paul and he wrote many letters that are now books in the Bible.

But he did not always speak for Christ. In fact, at first he hated Jesus and was one of his fiercest enemies. Paul would hunt for Christians and have them killed every chance he could. Then one day the risen Lord Jesus appeared before him, knocked him off his horse, and asked him, "Paul, why do you persecute me?" Jesus blinded Paul for three days and during that time Paul thought about what he had been doing and began to believe in Jesus. He totally turned his life around and started to help the new Christians. At first the Christians did not trust Paul because of his reputation for cruelty, but eventually he gained their trust.

Paul wrote letters, traveled and preached the word of Jesus all over the Middle East and in the Roman Empire. Many people did not want to hear what he had to say and often he had to hide from angry mobs who wanted to stone him. Once he escaped with his life by hiding in a basket that his friends lowered from a rooftop. He was often arrested for his beliefs but Paul had great faith in God's powerful protection. He convinced many prisoners, and even guards who normally would not have listened to a prisoner, to put their trust in Jesus. During the years in his cell he wrote some of his most inspiring letters.

He encouraged all people everywhere to look to God for guidance and courage. His message was that God loves all people. It does not matter whether we are Jews or Gentiles, rich or poor. Also, it does not matter if we've not been attending church or even if we've not heard of Jesus yet. God wants to help all people to have faith in Jesus. This is still true today. Remember what Paul said, "I can do all things thru Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13).

*By Karen Gronli, NC-CURE Advocate*

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*It's always the right time to do the right thing.*

*Anonymous*

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## Sentencing in North Carolina—A brief history from NCPLS

One issue that we hear about often at NC Prisoner Legal Services are questions about North Carolina's sentencing structure. Before 1981, judges were largely able to use their discretion to set sentences and the Parole Commission had the ability to release a prisoner at essentially any point in their term.

The Fair Sentencing Act (FSA) applies to felonies committed on or after July 1, 1981 until the end of September 1994. Under Fair Sentencing, NC prisons became overpopulated and overcrowded in part because FSA eliminated discretionary parole for most felonies. In response to the overcrowding, our legislature then allowed the Parole Commission to release prisoners early. Legislators also created gain time (credit for work or program participation) and good time (credit for good behavior). Courts then started giving longer sentences because many prisoners were being released early. Overcrowding remained a big problem for the system.

The response to these issues was Structured Sentencing, which took effect October 1, 1994 and remains in place today. It covers both felonies and misdemeanors, and has only had minor modifications over the last 27 years. The main goal of Structured Sentencing was to provide stakeholders the ability to predict what our state's prison population would be from year to year so that resources could be allocated appropriately. It is incredibly unfair when you have received a sentence under a prior sentencing structure that would now carry a lesser pen-

alty under Structured Sentencing. For example, you could be sentenced to Life for crimes in which you would likely receive a 20 to 30 year sentence under the current sentencing guidelines. It is also unfair if you received a sentence with parole eligibility at a time when parole was more likely to be granted than it is now when you are eligible for review.

While our courts have rejected challenges to old sentences based on the new sentence grid with Structured Sentencing, our Long Term Incarceration (LTI) Team is working on creative ways to challenge unfair sentences making equity arguments. Unfortunately, the LTI Team has lost some funding for the upcoming year, but we remain dedicated to review of sentences in which at least 5 years have been served of sentences that are greater than 20 years.

We are privileged to be able to serve our clients and their families, and I thank you for this opportunity. Please write to me at NCPLS, PO Box 27611, Raleigh, NC 27611 or reach out to me via email if you have ideas on how we can better serve your families and your incarcerated loved ones at [bthomas@ncpls.org](mailto:bthomas@ncpls.org).

*By Beth Thomas, Director, NCPLS*

## Prayer changes things

**Monday:** Pray for Top Leadership

**Tuesday:** Pray for your Warden, his Staff and Guards

**Wednesday:** Pray for medical and behavioral health providers and case managers

**Thursday:** Pray for Mail Room Staff

**Friday:** Pray for Kitchen, Food, Laundry, Janitors & staff

**Saturday:** Pray for all inmates you know by name

**Sunday:** Pray for the chaplain and yourself

Each Day PRAY for specific needs, such as:

**Open the heart** of (*name of leaders/workers*) to hear and respond to the Gospel message. Acts 16:14; Luke 24:45

**Help** (*name*) to accept wise counsel. Proverbs 11:14; 15:22

**Teach** (*name*) to trust in You. Ps. 21:7

**Protect** (*name*) from the influence of the evil one. 2 Thess. 3:3

**Give** (*name*) discretion, foresight, and understanding in making decisions. 1 Chron. 22:12

**Deliver** (*name*) from opinions contrary to Your Word. Ps. 119:105

**Guard** (*name*) from harm and bless & protect their family. Ps. 21:11; Ezra 6:10

**Enable** (*name*) to carry out their duties with humility toward You and toward others. 1 Peter 5:5

**Give** (*name*) the courage to do the right thing even when urged to do the wrong thing. Proverbs 2: 11-15

**Grant** (*name*) a heart of compassion toward those they lead and serve (inmates and staff). Colossians 3:12

## Thoughts from a long-time Board member

NC-CURE has given me hope and encouragement over the last seven years concerning the many medical problems my son has experienced in prison. They have been a good friend who understands what families of NC inmates go through every day. They are advocates for the rights of the inmates. They have made a difference, giving hope and letting the inmates know that someone cares about them.

I encourage everyone to write to NC-CURE, share your stories, your pain, your good times and bad. They will listen and they will pray for you. I also encourage your families and friends to join, become members, get involved. The newsletters are packed full of helpful and uplifting information.

We are stronger when we all work together. I was thinking about Nehemiah and the almost impossible task of rebuilding the walls around Jerusalem during his day. He couldn't rebuild by himself or even with a large team of workers. However, when **everyone** pitched in and helped, they rebuilt strong walls around the city despite the opposition.

## Director's Report (continued)

*(Continued from page 2)*  
several concerns.

We have some news to share from NCDPS.

- As of June 9, 2,559 people have been placed back in the community according to the February NC-ACLU settlement; of those 467 are on ELC. By mid-August the rest of the 3,500 will be placed.
- Prison Administration is actively working on their 2020-2024 Strategic Plan. One group, the "Right Offender in the Right Bed" is taking an all-inclusive approach to determine how best to house inmates to keep them safe and in facilities where they can get services while maintaining security. This multi-disciplinary committee is investigating practices in other

WITH GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE!

I believe God wants us, every inmate, all families and friends, every prison staff employee, and every advocate to PRAY. We **can** make a difference in the prison system.

There is POWER in praying the WORD!  
There is POWER in praying in one accord.

I have modified "HOW TO PRAY FOR OUR LEADERS" written by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. This was written for our leaders in government, but it can be applied to those in leadership in our prisons. (See side panel on this page.)

The Bible provides wisdom and encouragement to all who read it. You may find it helpful to take a look at 1 Timothy 2:1-3, 1 Peter 2:17, Romans 13:1 and Proverbs 21:1

Petition means to ask.

Prayer is talking to God anywhere, anytime. Intercession is praying for someone else. Thanksgiving always pleases God.

*By Linda Hanson, NC-CURE Board member*

states and will be recommending a plan for the system in the near future.

- Great news! GTL tablets will be available at Bertie and Maury in June. Other facilities will follow soon. Plans are underway to open up some offsite assignments for fully-vaccinated inmates and to resume educational classes for those fully-vaccinated in June. Phasing in volunteer programs will be considered at a later date.

"When you wake up, think about winning the day. Don't worry about a week or a month from now—just think about one day at a time." Drew Brees, former NFL quarterback.

*By Dr. Sandra Hardee, Executive Director*



## Criminal Sentence Reduction Reform

North Carolina is following a national trend in considering resentencing laws. Advocates have called for these changes in an attempt to decrease mass incarceration and address over-imprisonment of people of color. Per Nazgol Ghandnosh, Senior Research Analyst at The Sentencing Project, “There’s been a growing abundance of research showing that long sentences are ineffective and inhumane, and they tie up resources that could be far better invested to promote public safety.”

In North Carolina House Bill 625 was introduced on April 20, 2021, and if passed through the House and the Senate, it would become effective December 1, 2021. This bill would allow individuals to apply to have their sentence reduced if they have served at least 5 years of their term.

However, there are some exclusions to the eligibility that include: life sentences; if the individual is deemed a danger to others or the community and violent habitual felony charges that have been sentenced under Article 2B of Chapter 14 of the General Statutes (Two Class A through E felony convictions after July 6, 1967).

The proposed criteria that would be taken into account in deciding whether or not a sentence will be reduced includes: age of individual when the crime was committed, character and history of individual, behavior within prison, completion of any available educational or vocational programs, completion of behavioral health treatment or stabilization, recommendation from District Attorney, general behavior (maturity, rehabilitation, etc.), victim statements (or family of victim statements if the victim is deceased), any reports from physical or mental examinations done by a licensed medical professional, defendant's circumstances during offense (trauma, abuse, or involvement in child welfare system), the extent of the defendant's role in the offense, and any other information the court deems relevant.

**Current status of the HB625 as of July 1, 2021:** The bill has passed the first reading in the NC House of Representatives and was referred to the Committee Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House on April 22nd, 2021.

*Researched by Scout Burch, NC-CURE intern*

## Kudos to NCDPS Staff!

A family member of an inmate is thankful for the care her son received by some nurses over the last few months. We recognize these nurses for their excellent service: Ms. Yarbrough and Ms. Mia Mejias at Piedmont CI and Ms. Kaufman and Mr. Brian Yarbrough at Alexander CI.

We also recognize Officer Page and Officer Ebers at Pender. An inmate at that facility wrote us that these officers essentially saved his life by helping him get to the hospital after a fall.

Another letter from an inmate praised the efforts of all the staff at Pasquotank CI for following the COVID mitigation rules. He said they were “doing their best” to keep everyone safe during the pandemic.

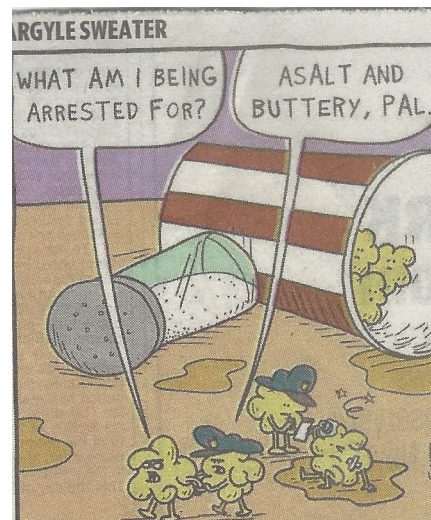
## Mask Requirements (continued)

*(Continued from page 6)*

Face covering requirements remain in place for

- primary, middle, and secondary schools,
- childcare facilities,
- children's day and overnight camps,
- health care facilities,
- public and private transportation regulated by the State, airports, bus and train stations and stops, and ride-shared, cabs, vans and shuttles, and
- **state and local correctional and detention facilities** and homeless service providers.

Masks are not required in correctional facilities when persons are outdoors, or sleeping alone.



## Reentry Resources

### **Nash, Edgecombe & Wilson (NEW) Reentry Council**

4428 Louisburg Rd, Suite 101  
Raleigh, NC 27616  
[www.Ncreentry.org](http://www.Ncreentry.org)  
919-790-5757

### **Hope Restoration**

PO Box 1656  
Kinston, NC 28503  
[www.hoperestoration.org](http://www.hoperestoration.org)  
252-560-7507

### **Exodus Foundation**

13016 Eastfield Rd, Ste 200-222  
Huntersville, NC 28078  
[www.exodusfoundation.org](http://www.exodusfoundation.org)  
704-947-9090

### **Crossroads Reentry Ministries**

PO Box 861  
Huntersville, NC 28070  
[www.crossroadsreentry.org](http://www.crossroadsreentry.org)  
704-499-1332

### **Leading into New Communities (LINC) Residential Re-entry Program**

PO Box 401  
Wilmington, NC 28405  
[www.lincnc.org](http://www.lincnc.org)  
910-332-1132

### **Benevolence Farm**

PO Box 1313  
Graham, NC 27253  
[www.benevolencefarm.org](http://www.benevolencefarm.org)  
336-525-9339

### **Abounding Grace Ministry**

PO Box 361  
Rutherfordton, NC 28139  
[www.aboundinggrace.org](http://www.aboundinggrace.org)  
828-429-0289

## Grievance Process (continued)

*(Continued from page 5)*

### **After the process:**

After the grievance process has been exhausted, any incarcerated person that participated in the process is protected from retaliation. If retaliation is believed to have happened, a new grievance should be submitted.

Finally, grievances will not be placed in any person's combined records, but those making false reports may be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Special Claims;**

Is the nature of the claim an emergency with a risk of substantial harm within a narrow period of time? If so, mark the document "EMERGENCY" and the grievance will be processed with the facility head.

Does the nature of the claim involve sexual assault or harassment? These claims will be processed immediately, and members should expect an initial response within 48 hours, and final agency decision in 5 calendar days.

Is the nature of the claim confidential? The grievance may be submitted directly to the Director of Prisons (Step 3) via legal mail, but if the Director determines the claim is not confidential, it will be returned to the inmate with instructions to resubmit it via the traditional process.

If the nature of the grievance is a disability, ADA, or accommodation claim, a person should indicate on the DC-410 that they received a Form DC-746, Inmate Request for Accommodation, and whether or not it was approved or rejected.

## Mothers in Prisons and Jails: The Facts

**The number of women incarcerated has increased dramatically in both jails and prisons.**

The number of women in NC's jails has increased more than 18-fold from 124 in 1970 to 2,292 in 2015. The number of women in NC's prisons has increased more than fourfold from 446 in 1978 to 1,980 in 2021.

**Historically, the majority of women who are pregnant in NC prisons are serving short sentences.** From 2015-02018, 75% of women who were admitted to prison pregnant were serving a sentence under 24 months, and more than a third were serving less than a year.

**Over half (58%) of all women in US prisons are mothers, as are 80% of women in jails,** including many who are incarcerated awaiting trial simply because they can't afford bail. Most of these women are incarcerated for non-violent offenses. Most are also the primary caretakers of their children, meaning that punish them with incarceration tears their children away from a vital source of support.

Many women are entering incarceration with a history of abuse, trauma, and mental health conditions. With limited opportunities, mounting financial strain, and untreated physical, mental and substance abuse issues, they often leave the care of the state worse than they started. Brutal side effects of being locked up include aggravation of mental health problems, a greater risk of suicide and a higher likelihood of ending up homeless. Incarceration punishes more than just individuals; entire families suffer the effects long after a sentence ends.



**Your letters are important to us!**

Please let us know about problems you're facing and what resources you need. Although we can't respond to each one, we read EVERY letter. We do not have legal or medical expertise, but we will recommend resources, and intervene when we can.

\*Try to be concise, limiting your letters to 2 pages.

\*Don't send documents that you need to be returned please.

\*Feel free to connect your friends and loved ones with us by sharing our email address, northcarolinacure@gmail.com

*Join today and let NC-CURE be your VOICE for CHANGE*

NC-CURE is membership driven and operated by volunteer staff. Annual membership dues help to offset the high cost of printing and postage for our publication *On The Wire* (OTW). The newsletter provides news and resources members need to better understand the criminal justice system. If you would like to receive OTW by mail or email, please tear off and complete the form below, and mail it to **NC-CURE, P.O. Box 5013, Kinston, NC 28503**. Make checks or money orders payable to NC-CURE.

**2021 Membership Application**

Name (Inmate and OPUS #/Family Member/Supporter/Organization)		Date
Mailing Address		
City	State	Zip
Telephone		
If Family Member, relationship to Inmate/OPUS #	Email Address	
<input type="checkbox"/> Inmate (\$3.00) Indigent inmates may send stamps for membership providing they are not violating prison policy. Otherwise membership dues are waived.	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual (\$25.00) <input type="checkbox"/> Family & Inmate (\$30.00)	PLEASE CHECK ONE: I prefer receiving OTW by <input type="checkbox"/> Direct Mail <input type="checkbox"/> Email
<input type="checkbox"/> I would like to serve as a volunteer for NC-CURE in the capacity of:		Contact NC-CURE at northcarolinacure@gmail.com



**Citizens United  
for Restorative Effectiveness  
NC-CURE  
P.O. Box 5013  
Kinston, NC 28503**

Email: [northcarolinacure@gmail.com](mailto:northcarolinacure@gmail.com)

[www.nccure.org](http://www.nccure.org) (under construction)

Visit us on Facebook!

[www.facebook.com/NCarolinaCURE](http://www.facebook.com/NCarolinaCURE)

*"The degree of civilization in a society can be judged by entering its prisons."* Fyodor Dostoyevsky

## WHO WE ARE

NC-CURE is a grassroots 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that advocates for the humane treatment of people in prisons in North Carolina. Its members are people incarcerated, their families and friends, and others interested in speaking up for those behind bars who have no voice.

## WHAT WE DO

Educate members and the general public by providing the resources they need to better understand the North Carolina prison system.

Call attention to prison practices that deny people in prison dignity and respect as human beings, and adequate medical care and nutrition.

Proactively advocate for change in NC prison policies to protect the human rights of prisoners.

Advocate for safe and humane conditions of confinement.

Provide hope and encouragement to people in prison and their loved ones.

Collaborate with criminal justice reform agencies to promote fair treatment of people incarcerated.