

Indiana's News Center Fort Wayne, Indiana

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"Correcting Corrections: Prison System in Trouble"

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FORT WAYNE, Ind. (Indiana's NewsCenter) --- Indiana certainly must be tough on crime. After all, we're outpacing other states when it comes to putting people behind bars.

Indiana's prisons are full. The Indiana Legislature is faced with either spending a lot more of your tax money to build expensive new prisons, or to make more room in those prisons that we already have.

Right now, more than half of those locked up in prison are there for non-violent crimes. So the idea is that maybe *those* people could serve their time in county-operated community corrections programs instead of being sent to the big house.

The other big part is thinking differently about the non-violent crimes and the people who are convicted of them, and maybe making the Indiana's punishment a little more in line with what most other states do. Yes, *less severe sentencing*, even.

The Legislature is not in the mood to spend money to build new prisons, and this spring or early summer will have finished its work on a sentencing reform bill. But it's a long road, and there are many unresolved questions.

Like who'll pay for all of this? Will the counties and municipalities get 'stuck' with bills for handling more offenders through community corrections? Will we see more half-way houses pop up in more local neighborhoods?

To get answers, the Journal Gazette and Indiana's NewsCenter are again working together, digging deeper to track what the legislature is up to and it's impact here at home. We've teamed up for in-depth reports on air, in print and on the web beginning Sunday, February 20th on Indiana's NewsCenter at 6 and continuing through Friday, February 25th.

Throughout the week in the Journal Gazette and on Indiana's NewsCenter at 5 and 11, we'll have answers.

We're reporting on who's in prison, and why?

You'll learn of sentencing disparities from state to state for simple, non-violent crimes.

You'll hear from the man who used to run Indiana's prison system and his advice for lawmakers and the state to fix the problems.

You'll see what a local judge and Fort Wayne leader have to say about more offenders serving out their time in local facilities here in our area.

You'll draw your own conclusion about the use of ankle monitors for offenders when you see Indiana's NewsCenter anchor Melissa Long be fitted with one. It's compelling. See her report Monday at 5 on WPTA 21Alive.

[About the Indiana's NewsCenter - Journal Gazette news partnership:](#)

The news partnership between Indiana's NewsCenter and the Journal Gazette began years ago. Journal Gazette Executive Editor Craig Klugman says "the news partnership is a superb way for different news outlets to get more--more information, more promotion, more resources--to their readers and viewers."

Indiana's NewsCenter news director Peter Neumann says that because of the partnership, viewers of INC benefit from a depth of reporting and understanding on this important issue that they would simply not get elsewhere.