

Photo Release: Attorney General Kamala D. Harris Visits Pitchess Detention Center, Recognizes 53 Back on Track LA Participants

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LOS ANGELES - Attorney General Kamala D. Harris today visited Pitchess Detention Facility to recognize 53 participants of Back on Track LA, an innovative recidivism reduction partnership with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD), Los Angeles County Probation Department, Los Angeles County Child Support Services Department, local community colleges, a local charter school and private foundations.

The comprehensive anti-recidivism initiative works to hold offenders accountable, while preparing them to re-enter society as contributing and law-abiding members of their communities. The Attorney General was joined at Pitchess by Los Angeles County Sheriff Jim McDonnell and representatives from state and local government, as well as education and community organizations.

“Reducing recidivism is key to a smart-on-crime approach to criminal justice,” Attorney General Harris said. “These individuals have had the courage to change by taking responsibility for their actions and admitting to themselves and others that their old patterns of behavior no longer work. By giving them practical tools and holding them accountable to their communities, families and themselves, Back on Track LA is providing participants the skills to become contributing and law-abiding members of society, which enhances public safety and embraces the participants’ redemptive qualities.”

Back on Track LA is composed of approximately 80 participants— all male “triple nons”: non-violent, non-serious, and non-sexual offenders— and is housed in LA County. The initiative was designed to provide the participants with the critical services needed for a seamless transition from in-custody to out-of-custody life, targeting the time offenders are most likely to recidivate.

The in-custody program consists of four training tracks that include cognitive behavior training, education (academic and career-technical), life skills and re-entry training. The in-custody program also provides additional child support services, family services, identification, health services, and tattoo removal.

The out-of-custody program comprises three main components: employment, housing and continuing education opportunities. As part of the program, an Employment Advisory Board has been created to assist inmates with job placement post-release.

In November 2013, Attorney General Harris created within the California Department of Justice the Division of Recidivism Reduction and Re-Entry, an office designed to curb recidivism in the state by partnering with counties, District Attorneys, and other community stakeholders on best practices and policy initiatives. The new division has developed a statewide definition of recidivism, identified grants to fund the creation and expansion of innovative anti-recidivism programs, and used technology to facilitate more effective data analysis and recidivism metrics.

In 2005, then-San Francisco District Attorney Harris created a reentry initiative called Back on Track, which aimed to reduce recidivism among certain low-level, non-violent drug offenders. Over a two-year period, the program reduced recidivism among its graduates to less than 10 percent. Back on Track was designated as a model for law enforcement by the U.S. Department of Justice.

Photos from today's event can be found below:

