



WJI FACT SHEET

SUPPORT HB 3904

The Women's Correctional Services Act

SPONSOR: Rep Juliana Stratton

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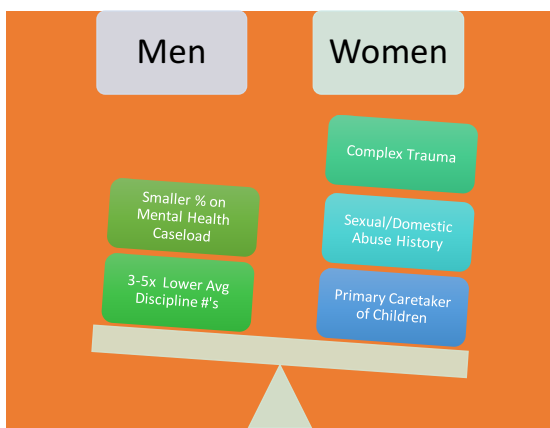
HB 3904 will require the IDOC to establish gender responsive, trauma-informed, evidence-based and family-centered practices, policies & programs throughout all women's correctional facilities. Research demonstrates that gender responsive approaches to justice-involved women improve safety, security and outcomes, while also reducing recidivism.

The Women's Correctional Services Act (WCA)

- ✓ Appointment of a Chief Administrator to oversee the new Women's Division that has received nationally-recognized, specialized training in gender responsive and trauma-informed practices;
- ✓ Implementation of evidence-based, gender-responsive and trauma-informed practices that govern all Women's Division operations and programs;
- ✓ Creation of an ongoing gender responsive training curriculum;
- ✓ Implementation of a validated, gender responsive risk, needs and classification assessment tool;
- ✓ Implementation of a gender responsive case management system;
- ✓ Establishment of gender responsive policies for discipline and sanctions;
- ✓ Collaboration with Parole to ensure that all staff working with women under community supervision are appropriately trained on gender responsive, trauma-informed and evidence-based practices.

Defines "Gender Responsive" as: *"activities, processes, programs and services that are guided by women-centered research and literature (socialization, psychological development, strengths, risk factors, pathways through systems, responses to treatment intervention, and other unique program and service needs. The interventions shall be considered relational, strength-based, trauma-informed, culturally competent, holistic and family-centered."*

Women follow unique pathways into crime, and present risks signaling different intervention needs than men. Yet many correctional systems apply gender neutral approaches that work counterproductively to the goals of safety, security, outcomes and reduced recidivism.



- Overview of IDOC women prisoners:**
- ✓ 98% have experienced physical abuse
 - ✓ 75% experienced sexual abuse
 - ✓ 75% (or more) diagnosed with PTSD.
 - ✓ 58% are on an IDOC mental health caseload (compared with 25% of men)
 - ✓ 71% or more are parents (Logan prisoners are mothers to 3,700 children)
 - ✓ Received 3-5 times higher average # of disciplinary tickets than men, primarily for "insolence"
 - ✓ Disciplined with 127,000 segregation days and 88,000 more prison days added (*good conduct revocations*) during only a 24-month-period at Logan prison.

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The Women's Correctional Services Act (WCA) was developed as the result of a reform partnership led by the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) and the WJI with support from the National Resource Center on Justice Involved Women (NRCJIW), CORE Associates, the USDOJ National Institute of Corrections (NIC) and a team of local stakeholders.

The Women's Justice Initiative & Network

The Women's Justice Initiative (WJI) works to bridge critical gaps between policy and practice regarding the manner that the risks/needs of girls and women are addressed throughout the criminal justice system; to grow a network providing greater access to evidence-based, gender responsive and trauma-informed programs and services in a systemic manner for justice-involved girls and women; and to build sustainable systems change strategies through cultivating partnerships and meaningful dialogue among corrections officials, law enforcement leaders, elected officials, policymakers, social service providers, academics, advocates, stakeholders and those directly impacted by the system. We currently have projects housed at the Test400K Foundation, Health & Disability Advocates and TASC.

The WJI Stakeholder Network includes a diverse group of national, state, local and global stakeholders that work in various ways to support efforts to build gender responsive systems: *Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC), National Resource Center for Justice Involved Women (NRCJIW), USDOJ National Institute of Corrections (NIC), CORE Associates, TASC, American Probation & Parole Association (APPA), Prison Reform International (PRI), Chicago Foundation for Women (CFW), Conant Family Foundation, NAMI Chicago, Wexford Health Sources, A Safe Haven (ASH), UIC Center on Public Safety & Justice, Orbis Partners, Illinois Justice Project, Thresholds, The John Howard Association (JHA), Cabrini Green Legal Aid (CGLA), WestCare Foundation, UCAN, Strengthening Chicago's Youth (SCY) and Chicago Urban League and the Pierce Family Foundation.*

For more information: www.womensjustice.net or info@womensjustice.net

