

ENROLLED HOUSE
BILL NO. 2937

By: Fields of the House

and

Stipe of the Senate

An Act relating to prisons and reformatories; amending 57 O.S. 1991, Sections 561, as amended by Section 7, Chapter 319, O.S.L. 1992 and 563.2, as last amended by Section 1 of Enrolled House Bill No. 2950 of the 2nd Session of the 45th Oklahoma Legislature (57 O.S. Supp. 1995, Section 561), which relate to private prison contractors; modifying permissible duration of contracts with private prison contractors; providing limitations; authorizing employment of convicted felons with exception; prohibiting personnel convicted of a felony carrying and using firearms; specifying that other personnel are authorized to carry and use firearms while in the performance of official duties; providing procedure for discharge, return or transfer from incarceration of federal inmates or inmates from another state; modifying population of inmates which may be used for public work projects; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 57 O.S. 1991, Section 561, as amended by Section 7, Chapter 319, O.S.L. 1992 (57 O.S. Supp. 1995, Section 561), is amended to read as follows:

Section 561. A. The Department of Corrections is hereby authorized to provide for incarceration, supervision, and residential treatment at facilities other than those operated by the Department of Corrections. Services offered for persons under the custody or supervision of the Department are to include, but not be limited to, housing, alcoholism or drug treatment, mental health services, nursing home care, or halfway house placement. Such services must meet standards prescribed and established by the Board of Corrections for implementing such a program, including but not limited to standards concerning internal and perimeter security, discipline of inmates, educational and vocational training programs, employment of inmates, and proper food, clothing, housing, and medical care. Such services must be contracted for in accordance with Section 85.7 of Title 74 of the Oklahoma Statutes. Such services, if provided by private prison contractors, shall be contracted for as provided in subsections C through J of this section.

B. The Department of Corrections is hereby authorized to provide for the operation of correctional institutions of the Department by private prison contractors. Such operation shall meet standards prescribed by the Board of Corrections, including but not

limited to, standards concerning internal and perimeter security, discipline of inmates, educational and vocational training programs, and proper food, clothing, housing, and medical care. Such services shall be contracted for in accordance with the provisions of subsections C through J of this section.

C. A comprehensive file for all private prison contractors interested in and capable of operating an institution within the Department or providing for the housing, care, and control of inmates in a facility owned and operated by the contractor shall be maintained by the Department. These files shall include a completed application form, a resume of the contractor's staff and capability, a completed performance evaluation form for past projects on which the contractor has provided private prison services, a list of past contracts with this state, and a list of contracts to provide similar services to other states or to the United States.

The file shall include the mailing address of each private prison contractor.

Any person or firm wishing to be a private prison contractor may request at any time to be included in the comprehensive file, and shall be provided necessary forms within twenty (20) days of the request and the Department shall add such contractor to the list within twenty (20) days of receipt of a properly completed application.

The Department may solicit evaluation of work done by private prison contractors from members of the private sector, which evaluation shall be part of the comprehensive file.

D. If the Department intends to secure the services of a private prison contractor, all persons and firms included in the file shall be notified through the mail of such intent. Such notification shall contain the following information:

1. Description and scope of the project or projects;
2. Estimated time schedule for project;
3. Last date for submitting notice of interest in performing services to Director; and
4. Other pertinent data.

Private prison contractors desiring consideration shall meet the requirements of this section and to be considered shall submit a letter expressing interest in the project to the Department within thirty (30) days of the postmark date of the letter of notification mailed by the Department. Contractors shall file an updated application form at the request of the Department.

E. The Department shall define the scope of a proposed project, determine the various project components, phases and timetables, and prepare detailed project descriptions to guide prospective contractors. Before the Department awards a contract to a private prison contractor, the plans shall be approved by the Board.

F. The Department shall review the files of the private prison contractors desiring consideration for the project, and shall select no less than three and no more than five contractors for more detailed consideration. In the event interviews for more than one contract are being considered at the same time, the number of contractors selected for more detailed consideration should be at least twice the number of contracts contemplated. This initial screening should consider the requirements of the project, as well as the following factors to be determined from the comprehensive file, and replies to inquiries to former clients:

1. Specialized experience in the type of work contemplated;
2. Capacity of the contractor to accomplish the work in the required time; and
3. Past performance, from the performance evaluation form.

G. A full report of the evaluation procedures and recommendations of the Department shall be prepared by the Department and submitted to the Board for the independent review of the entire process.

H. The Department shall select the contractor whose qualifications and project proposal most substantially meet the criteria of the project description. The Department shall negotiate the contract with the selected contractor, which contract shall include a fair and reasonable fee. The negotiated scope and fee shall be reported to the Board for the approval of the award of the contract. The contract shall be sent to the Department of Central Services for approval or disapproval. If the Department of Central Services disapproves the contract or the Department and the selected contractor cannot reach an agreement, the Department may either renegotiate with the selected contractor or begin negotiations with the next-choice contractor. Should the Department be unable to negotiate a satisfactory contract with any of the three selected contractors, the Department shall select additional contractors in order of their competency and qualifications and shall continue negotiations in accordance with the provisions of this section until an agreement is reached.

I. Should there be an inadequate expression of interest in the project, the Director and the Board shall confer to add additional private prison contractors for consideration which are known to be appropriate for the project.

J. The Department of Central Services shall render assistance to the Department of Corrections in implementing the contracting procedures provided for in this section. The Department of Central Services may have a representative at any meeting involving negotiations of a contract between the Department and a private prison contractor.

K. The Director of Central Services is authorized to lease real property and improvements thereon to a private prison contractor in conjunction with a contract for private management of a state correctional institution located or to be built on the property. Said lease may be entered into for one (1) year periods, renewable at the sole option of the State of Oklahoma, but not to exceed a cumulative period of fifty (50) years.

L. Contracts awarded to private prison contractors pursuant to the provisions of this section shall be entered into for a period ~~of one (1) year~~ specified in each contract, subject to ~~renewal at the option of the State of Oklahoma for a cumulative period not to exceed fifty (50) years~~ availability of funds annually appropriated by the Legislature for that purpose. No contract awarded pursuant to this section shall provide for the encumbrance of funds beyond the amount available for a fiscal year.

M. No contract authorized by the provisions of this section shall be awarded until the private prison contractor demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Board of Corrections:

1. That the contractor possesses the necessary qualifications and experience to provide the services specified in the contract;
2. That the contractor can provide the necessary qualified personnel to implement the terms of the contract;
3. That the financial condition of the contractor is such that the terms of the contract can be fulfilled;
4. That the contractor has the ability to comply with applicable court orders and corrections standards; and
5. That, in the case of a contractor who will be providing the services in a nondepartmental facility operated by said contractor, the contractor shall be able to meet accreditation standards and

receive accreditation, as required by the terms of the contract pursuant to subsection R of this section.

N. No contract authorized by the provisions of this section shall be awarded until the private prison contractor demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Board that the contractor can obtain insurance or provide self-insurance to:

1. Indemnify the state against possible lawsuits arising from the operation of prison facilities by the contractor; and

2. Compensate the state for any property damage or expenses incurred due to the operation of prison facilities.

O. A private prison contractor shall not be bound by state laws or other legislative enactments governing the appointment, qualifications, duties, salaries, or benefits of wardens, superintendents, or other correctional employees, except that any personnel authorized to carry and use firearms shall comply with the certification standards required by the provisions of Section 3311 of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes and be authorized to use firearms only to prevent a felony, to prevent escape from custody, or to prevent an act which would cause death or serious bodily injury to the personnel or to another person.

P. Any offense which would be a crime if committed within a state correctional institution also shall be a crime if committed in an institution or facility operated by a private prison contractor.

Q. The Director or his designee shall monitor the performance of the contractor.

R. Any contract between the Department and a private prison contractor, whereby the contractor provides for the housing, care, and control of inmates in a nondepartmental facility operated by the contractor, shall contain, in addition to other provisions, terms and conditions:

1. Requiring the contractor to provide said services in a facility which meets accreditation standards established by the American Corrections Association;

2. Requiring the contractor to receive accreditation for said facility from the American Corrections Association, within three (3) years of commencement of operations of the facility;

3. Requiring the contractor to obtain written authorization from the governing board of any municipality in which the facility is to be located, or if the facility is not to be located within a municipality, written authorization from the board of county commissioners of the county in which the facility is to be located; and

4. Granting the Department the option at the beginning of each fiscal year to purchase or lease, at a predetermined price, any such facility.

SECTION 2. AMENDATORY 57 O.S. 1991, Section 563.2, as last amended by Section 1 of Enrolled House Bill. No. 2950 of the 2nd Session of the 45th Oklahoma Legislature, is amended to read as follows:

Section 563.2 A. A private prison contractor may contract with the federal government or another state to provide for housing, care and control of minimum or medium security level inmates, as provided by subsection H of this section, who are in the custody of the United States or another state, who do not have histories of escape, and who are sentenced to terms of incarceration for conviction of a felony, other than a felony that would be a capital offense if committed in this state or a sex-related offense, or who are sentenced to federal or state facilities for conviction of a misdemeanor, other than a sex-related offense, within a facility owned or operated by the private prison contractor. Provided,

incarceration for misdemeanors shall be allowed only pursuant to subsection D of this section. Such private prison contractor may perform other functions related to said responsibilities.

B. Any offense which would be a crime if committed within a state correctional institution of this state shall be a crime if committed in a facility owned or operated by a private prison contractor.

C. A private prison contractor shall not employ any personnel convicted of a felony if the person has been incarcerated in the private prison facility for which an application for employment is being considered; provided, a private prison contractor may employ personnel convicted of drug-related felonies who have been rehabilitated for programs for drug or other substance abuse rehabilitation for inmates of the facility.

Any personnel of a facility owned or operated by a private prison contractor, except any person convicted of a felony offense, shall be authorized to carry and use firearms while in the performance of their official duties only in the manner provided in this subsection and only after completing training approved or provided by the Department of Corrections. Such personnel shall only be authorized to use firearms for the following purposes:

1. To prevent escape from the facility or from custody while being transported to or from the facility. As used in this paragraph, "to prevent escape from the facility" shall mean to prevent an incarcerated individual from crossing the secure perimeter of the facility; or

2. To prevent an act which would cause death or serious bodily injury to any person.

The Department of Corrections is authorized to provide training to personnel of the private prison contractor, pursuant to contract. The Department of Corrections shall charge a reasonable fee for the training, not to exceed the cost of such training. The provisions of this subsection shall not be construed to confer peace officer status upon any employee of the private prison contractor or to authorize the use of firearms, except as provided in this subsection. If an inmate escapes from the facility, personnel from the facility immediately shall inform the Department of Public Safety, the county sheriff and, if the facility is located within the boundaries of a municipality, the police department of the municipality.

D. A private prison contractor housing federal inmates or inmates of another state shall not accept:

1. Any inmate who would be incarcerated in the facility for conviction of a misdemeanor, unless such incarceration in the facility is consistent with American Correctional Association requirements relating to the incarceration of inmates convicted of more serious offenses; or

2. Any maximum security level inmate.

E. If an inmate is to be released or discharged from incarceration, is released or discharged by any court order, is to be placed on probation, is paroled, or if the federal government or sending state requests transfer or the return of the inmate, the private prison contractor immediately shall transfer or return the inmate to ~~that~~ the sending state which has legal authority over the sentence or, in the case of federal prisons inmates, to the closest federal prison or to the federal authority of the state in which federal custody over the inmate originated.

F. A private prison contractor housing federal inmates from jurisdictions other than Oklahoma, or inmates sentenced pursuant to the legal authority of another state, shall not ~~discharge any such~~

~~inmate from custody nor~~ allow any such inmate to leave the premises of the facility, except to comply with an order to appear in a court of competent jurisdiction, to receive medical care not available at the facility, to work as provided in subsection G of this section, or to ~~comply with~~ return or be transferred to another state as provided by the provisions of subsection E of this section.

G. A private prison contractor may allow ~~federal inmates who are placed in "out" custody or "community" custody status to be employed~~ minimum security inmate labor to be used in public works projects provided all of the following conditions are satisfied:

1. The public works project must be in and for the county where the private prison is located or a county adjacent to the county where the private prison is located, or in and for a municipality in the county where the private prison is located or an adjacent county;

2. The private prison contractor has developed security procedures which will ensure the safety of the public and the Department of Corrections has approved such procedures;

3. The public works project has been authorized by Department of Corrections and the county or municipal authorities where the public works project is located;

4. The private prison contractor has procured and has in force and effect a policy of liability insurance which will provide coverage in an amount determined by the Department of Corrections for any loss resulting from the acts or omissions of inmates participating in said project or employees of the private prison contractor and for any injuries occurring to said inmates or employees; and

5. The use of ~~such~~ federal inmates for public works projects will be in strict compliance with the provisions of Section 4002 of Title 18 of the United States Code and any other applicable provisions of federal law.

H. A private prison contractor housing federal inmates or inmates of another state shall be responsible for the reimbursement of all reasonable costs and expenses incurred by this state or a political subdivision of this state for legal actions brought in this state by or on behalf of any federal inmate or inmate of another state while incarcerated in the facility, including court costs, sheriff's mileage fees, witness fees, district attorney expenses, expenses of the office of Attorney General, indigent or public defender fees and costs, judicial expenses, court reporter expenses and any other costs, fees, or expenses associated with the proceedings or actions.

I. As used in this section, unless federal custody status is specified, security level restrictions shall refer to the security levels applicable to inmates in institutions within the Department of Corrections, as determined by policy of the Department of Corrections, unless the Department of Corrections approves more restrictive levels of security as prescribed by the private prison contractor. Private prison contractors housing federal inmates or inmates of another state shall be bound by such security level classifications.

J. A private prison contractor shall not house inmates from this state with federal inmates or inmates from another state, unless segregated or otherwise housed in such a manner as to satisfy the Director of the Department of Corrections.

K. The State of Oklahoma shall not assume jurisdiction or custody of any federal inmate or inmate from another state housed in a facility owned or operated by a private prison contractor. Such inmates from another state shall at all times be subject to the

jurisdiction of that state and federal inmates shall at all times be subject to federal jurisdiction. This state shall not be liable for loss resulting from the acts of said inmates nor shall this state be liable for any injuries to said inmates.

SECTION 3. This act shall become effective July 1, 1996.

SECTION 4. It being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is hereby declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

Passed the House of Representatives the 7th day of May, 1996.

Speaker of the House of
Representatives

Passed the Senate the 8th day of May, 1996.

President of the Senate