



Indiana Department of Correction

History of the Indiana State Prison

Indiana gained statehood in 1816 and the first Indiana State Prison was built in Jeffersonville, Indiana in 1822. In 1858 the state was looking for a second location to build another prison. A Michigan City businessman, Chancy Blair, happened to own 102 acres of land on the western edge of the city limits, and he offered to sell his property to the state for the sum of \$4,500. After purchasing the land, and gaining financial support from the State Legislature the first Warden, C.W. Seely was selected and began construction on the prison with 100 offenders from Jeffersonville. To date, there have been 35 men who have served as Warden/Superintendent. Ron Neal is currently the Superintendent of the Indiana State Prison.

The Facility

The Prison's first perimeter wall enclosed 8.3 acres and each wall was 600 feet long. Through the years, as additional room was needed, the facility was enlarged to 24 acres inside the wall. There are ten gun towers on the walls and they are manned everyday, 24 hours.

Both prisons in Michigan City and Jeffersonville were named the Indiana State Prison, one designated Prison North and the other Prison South. In 1922, Prison South was destroyed by a fire and the designation was no longer necessary, and this prison became the oldest facility in the system.

Prior to 1952, a Board of Trustees and the Warden managed each facility. In 1952, the Department of Correction was founded, which eliminated the necessity for the Boards.

Indiana State Prison is the oldest facility in the system and the staff takes pride in keeping the buildings and grounds clean and presentable. Each spring and summer the sidewalks

are lined with flowers, as are certain areas inside the wall. The prison is designated a “level four” maximum security facility, which houses offenders with very long sentences and/or individuals convicted of violent crimes.

Also located on the prison grounds is a “level two” facility, formerly known as Lakeside Correctional Facility. It has a capacity for 385 offenders, and the prison uses their offenders to maintain the grounds, building maintenance and food preparation for the Staff Dining Room.

Programs for Inmates

Education

Educational programs provided to the offender population include Reading Improvement, Adult Basic Education, General Education Diplomas, Outreach Education, and Thinking for a Change.. We also have vocational courses, which include Culinary Arts.

Job-Skills

PEN Products (Prison Enterprises Network) here at ISP manufactures all the permanent, vehicle license plates for the state of Indiana. All PEN Products offender workers are enrolled with the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) in one of many apprenticeship programs. They have the opportunity to learn a trade so that when released, they will have a good chance of obtaining gainful employment.

In addition, our metal operations are capable of shearing, sawing, bending, welding, surface finishing and liquid paint or powder coating of most steels. Our primary customers are entities of the State of Indiana including the DOC, DNR and BMV (indirectly). We have also manufactured items for customers other than the state.

We manufacture prison cell components, juvenile facility beds and doors, bunk beds, recreation enclosures, day room tables, desks, lunch counters, shelves, storage boxes and cabinets, lockers, chemical storage enclosures, flammable material cabinets, park benches, park grills and any custom fabricated items made of steel. We also have the

capability to refurbish metal products sent from other facilities if they are not in too terrible of shape.

Mental Health

We also offer the offender population excellent mental health programs, which includes psychiatric treatment and psychological evaluations and treatment. In the area of self-help programs our staff offer Substance Abuse Counseling and Education, Anger Management, Parenting Classes, Alcohol and Narcotic Anonymous.

Faith Based Offerings

Offenders' religious practices are as valued in the prison system. Presently we have two full-time chaplain who coordinates the activities of professional ministers, who volunteer to assist the Prison in providing service to the offenders and their faith groups.

P.L.U.S. PROGRAM (PURPOSEFUL LIVING UNITS SERVE)

Each participant has to complete a rigorous course of 10 core courses and several elective courses as well as a medium of 370 community service hours within the facility. Many of the P.L.U.S. residents have taken a course in "Suicide Prevention" following through by becoming Suicide Companions upon successful completion of the program. This program has been a great success not only preventing suicides but also saving the facility over \$100,000.00 in staff overtime by using resident suicide companions to conduct suicide watches.

This year the P.L.U.S. program made two (2) significant donations to organizations that serve the community in important ways. By making the donations, the participants demonstrated their eagerness to engage in *pro-social behavior* by expressing *social altruism*.

Even though the P.L.U.S. program has achieved some of its goals, the P.L.U.S. participants aspire to make this program synonymous with excellence. Some of the forthcoming programs that will move towards fulfilling this objective are the construction of a P.L.U.S. library on the P.L.U.S. Unit, the institution of a "Restorative Justice"

program focusing on victim and community healing, and the implementation of a hat and scarf knitting program for the children's oncology wards across the state and designated areas.