

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 2, 2014

Contacts:

Office of the Governor:

Kara Brooks, kbrooks@gov.in.gov

IN Dept. of Correction:

Doug Garrison, dsgarrison@idoc.in.gov

Governor Pence Announces New Mission at Central Indiana Prison
Facility will house state's first program for first-time offenders

Plainfield, IN – Governor Mike Pence today announced plans to make the Plainfield Short-Term Offender Program (STOP) Facility the first facility in Indiana to house lower-risk offenders sentenced to prison for the first time and offer individualized programming through the First Time Offender Program (FTOP). It will be renamed the Heritage Trail Correctional Facility (HTCF). The Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) and the GEO Group, Inc. joined the Governor for the announcement.

“Indiana should be the worst place in America to commit a crime and the best place for a second chance,” said Governor Pence. “The First Time Offender Program is a great step in the right direction to make this goal a reality by giving first-time offenders an opportunity to make a real difference in their lives and reducing the chance they will return to prison a second time.”

The core curriculum at HTCF is derived from two of the IDOC’s most successful evidence-based programs: Purposeful Living Units Serve (PLUS), a faith and character program, and Thinking for a Change, a cognitive behavioral program. The facility will offer first time offenders a wide range of holistic programming to facilitate a positive change in behavior including: addiction recovery services, family and social support, civic engagement, cognitive/behavioral change, education and employment. Faith- and character-based programming also will be integrated into every aspect of day-to-day activities.

“For some of these individuals, this is their last chance to turn their life around or face more time in prison,” said IDOC Commissioner Bruce Lemmon. “By providing a structured environment focused on instilling family values and strong work ethic, we hope to break the cycle of crime.”

Offenders eligible for FTOP will meet the following requirements: low to moderate risk male offenders, new to the prison setting who are serving sentences up to three years and are free from medical and mental health restrictions that require placement in other specialized units. Keeping these first time offenders separated from higher risk offenders allows them to make better use of rehabilitative programming, which reduces their risk of reoffending.

The First Time Offender Program incorporates the GEO Continuum of Care that starts with the intake process and continues into the community upon release. The program provides immediate treatment and programming to address each offender’s risks and needs throughout their incarceration and effective, seamless re-integration into the community.

Another unique aspect of the facility is the establishment of a mentoring program that invites graduates from the Department’s PLUS program to provide peer-to-peer mentoring and volunteers from faith and

community organizations to provide group mentoring. These mentors will help develop a positive facility culture, acting as advisers to those who are new to prison, and will help maintain an environment conducive to rehabilitation.

As with all evidence-based programs, research will be conducted to determine the programs' impact on recidivism and offender conduct.

About the facility

On November 18, 2010, The GEO Group, Inc. was awarded a contract to operate the Plainfield Short Term Offender Program Facility (STOP), the first of its kind in Indiana to house offenders who are sentenced to serve three years or less. On March 21, 2011, STOP began receiving offenders. The facility is located on the grounds of the former Indiana Boys School and Plainfield Reentry Educational Facility in Plainfield, IN. Each offender within the facility is actively engaged in some of the many programming opportunities offered with a key focus on the continuum of care upon their release back into their respective community. The facility provides a dormitory housing setting that fosters personal responsibility and community participation among the population. At maximum capacity, the facility can currently provide services for up to 868 offenders.

