

For Immediate Release

Indianapolis Women's Work Release Moves to the Grounds of the New Indiana Women's Prison

Indianapolis, Indiana (December 1, 2009) – The Indiana Department of Correction's (IDOC) Facility Forward initiative continued ahead yesterday as the Indianapolis Women's Community Re-entry Center vacated its building on Minnesota Street and moved to the grounds of the new Indiana Women's Prison (IWP) on the west side of Indianapolis. The transfer of 77 female offenders occurred without incident, and all of the work release staff is now integrated with IWP staff.

The move is the third step in the Facility Forward initiative, which is designed to enhance prison capacity, maximize current state property and assets, decrease spending through cost savings, and increase overall efficiencies. Once completely implemented, Facility Forward will result in the IDOC gaining almost 2,100 beds and will save the State of Indiana nearly \$200 million.

This is the eighth correctional facility closing or merger since 2005, all while the IDOC's population has increased by over 4,200. Relocating the small work release center to the grounds of the much larger and efficient women's prison maximizes bed space and capacity, while allowing more programming to be offered to offenders.

Scheduled to begin in the coming weeks, the next step in the Facility Forward plan will be the transition of the Plainfield Re-entry Educational Facility (PREF) located in Plainfield, Indiana to the grounds of the former Indiana Women's Prison on the east side of Indianapolis. Opened in 2006, PREF is the first of its kind in the country, focusing on education and vocational skill building during the last six to twenty-four months of an offender's incarceration. Following that move, the IDOC will open the Short Term Offender Program (STOP) on the grounds of PREF. The STOP facility will be designed and commissioned to address the needs and case management of offenders committed to the IDOC for less than one year.

“Five years ago, the IDOC had 2,000 more employees and eight additional facilities. Today, we are operating more efficiently and maximizing our assets in order to meet the great challenges that come with an ever-increasing offender population,” said IDOC Commissioner Edwin G. Buss. “Facility Forward is a groundbreaking initiative that moves and merges facilities to better prepare the IDOC for the future.”

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