

House Corrections and Institutions Committee
Good Time Report
Chris Fenno, Executive Director
January 16, 2020

Act 56 required the Commissioner of Corrections, in consultation with the Chief Superior Judge, the Attorney General, the Executive Director of the Department of Sheriffs and State's Attorneys, the Defender General, and the Executive Director of the Center for Crime Victim's Services to prepare a proposal for the availability of earned good time. The question we had to address was whether the earned good time program required by 28 V.S.A. § 818 should, in addition to being available to offenders sentenced on or after the date the program becomes effective, also be available to offenders in the custody of the Commissioner of Corrections who were sentenced before the effective date of the program.

The Center for Crime Victims Services agrees with the recommendation of the group to allow offenders in the custody of the Commissioner of Corrections who were sentenced before the effective date of the program to earn good time.

We understand that implementation for currently incarcerated individuals is needed to create a system for all individuals, not only for those who are now coming into the system. As noted in the report, good time programs work in facilities when most of the population can participate in the program. Increased participation will have a greater impact on morale and behavior.

We support tasking the State's Attorney's office, the Victim Advocates based in the State's Attorney's offices, the Vermont Center for Crime Victims Services, the Department of Corrections, and the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence to work together to develop a process for contacting and informing victims of the change in the program and the effect this may have on the time served.

