



**Justice Involved Women Working Group Draft Language
House Corrections and Institutions
Sarah Robinson, Deputy Director
April 4th, 2023**

WOMEN'S CORRECTIONAL FACILITY REPLACEMENT; WORKING GROUP; REPORT

(a) Creation. There is created by the General Assembly the Justice-Involved Women Working Group (Working Group) to advise the Department of Corrections' (DOC) on the replacement of the Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility with trauma-informed and gender-responsive facilities and programming to promote the successful rehabilitation and re-entry of justice involved women.

(b) Membership. The Working Group shall be comprised of the following members:

(1) representatives of community-based organizations which provide services to justice involved women at the Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility including:

(A) the Executive Director of the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence or designee;

(B) the Executive Director of Vermont Works for Women or designee;

(C) the Executive Director of Mercy Connections Inc. or designee;

(D) the Executive Director of Lund Inc. or designee;

(2) the Executive Director of the Vermont Commission on Women or designee;

(3) the Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties Union Vermont Chapter or designee;

(4) a representative of Prisoners' Rights Office appointed by the Vermont Defender General;

(5) the Executive Director of Vermont Interfaith Action or designee;

(6) at least two individuals with lived experience with incarceration in the criminal justice system appointed by the Vermont Commission on Women;

(c) Powers and duties. The Working Group shall have the following responsibilities:

(1) Ensure that plans for the replacement of the Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility are consistent with trauma-informed and gender-responsive design principles;

(2) Ensure that the proposed size and scale of replacement facilities is data-driven and aligned with Vermont's justice reform goals;

(3) Ensure that plans for the replacement of the Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility include

a re-entry facility;

(4) Advise the Department of Corrections on programming provided to justice-involved women in correctional facilities and in re-entry settings; and

(5) Conduct a listening session with currently incarcerated women on the proposed replacement of the Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility.

(d) Assistance. The Working Group shall have the administrative and technical assistance of the Department of Corrections and Building and General Services.

(e) Report. By February 15th, 2024 and annually thereafter the Department of Corrections and two representatives of the Working Group shall report to the House Committee on Corrections and Institutions, the House Committee on Judiciary, the Senate Committee on Institutions, and the Senate Committee on Judiciary on the progress and recommendations of the Working Group.

(f) Meetings; rules;

(1) The Vermont Department of Corrections shall schedule meetings of the Working Group at least 6 times per year.

(2) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

(3) Attendance at Working Group Meetings shall not be strictly limited to Working Group members. The Department of Corrections, Building and General Services and organizations represented on the Working Group may designate additional representatives to attend meetings as needed.

(4) The Working Group shall cease to exist on July 1, 2028.