

Date of Hearing: May 13, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

AB 2204 (Gabriel) – As Amended March 16, 2026

Policy Committee: Public Safety

Vote: 9 - 0

Urgency: No

State Mandated Local Program: No

Reimbursable: No

**SUMMARY:**

This bill enacts the Second Chance Sports Act, establishing a state policy recognizing organized sports programming as a form of rehabilitation, and requires the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) to adopt a department-wide policy on organized sports programming by July 1, 2027, in consultation with specified stakeholders. The bill authorizes CDCR to enter into agreements with public and private entities, including UC, CSU, the Community Colleges, private universities, and professional sports organizations, to expand programming. The bill establishes the Second Chance Sports Fund within the State Treasury, available upon appropriation and approval by the Government Operations Agency, and requires annual reporting on fund deposits beginning January 1, 2028.

**FISCAL EFFECT:**

- 1) Costs of an unknown but potentially significant amount (General Fund) to CDCR for staffing — including additional custody staff for supervision and movement, and program and administrative staff for coordination, oversight, and statewide implementation — to operate organized sports programming under the new policy. CDCR reports that costs depend on the policy developed, expectations for implementation, and fund availability, and that it is unclear whether CDCR would be expected to use General Fund money if fund money created by this bill is inconsistent or inadequate.
- 2) Likely one-time facility costs (General Fund and) to CDCR for infrastructure updates following an evaluation of space available for organized sports activities across CDCR facilities.
- 3) Minor ongoing costs to the Government Operations Agency to approve uses of fund money, and to the State Controller's Office or CDCR to administer the fund and produce the annual report. The State Treasurer's Office reports that fund balance reporting falls under the State Controller's Office or the administering department rather than the Treasurer.
- 4) Potential offsetting funding from private donations deposited into the Second Chance Sports Fund. The fund is structured to supplement, not replace, existing programming funding, with no more than 5% available for administrative purposes.

**COMMENTS:**

- 1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

Structured sports programming is a powerful tool to promote rehabilitation and help individuals successfully reintegrate into their communities... AB 2204 — The Second Chance Sports Act — seeks to harness this power by requiring the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to adopt a policy to expand opportunities for organized sports for incarcerated persons and establishes a dedicated fund to support this effort.

- 2) **Background.** CDCR currently provides physical education and recreation programs at each institution under existing regulations, which also authorize incarcerated persons to participate in athletic activities with outside organizations subject to institutional approval. The Public Safety analysis observes that the primary effect of the bill is to require CDCR to formalize and standardize a department-wide policy, and that the bill's practical impact will depend on how CDCR exercises its discretion to expand programming. The bill is intended in part to support programs like the San Quentin Giants. Research on sports programming in correctional settings — including the Twinning Project in England and Wales and a University of Southampton study — suggests associations with reduced disciplinary infractions, improved mental health, and in some studies lower reconviction rates, though much of the research has been conducted in international settings and program effects vary with design and post-release support.

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