

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING
AB 2204 (Gabriel and Bryan)
As Amended March 16, 2026
Majority vote

SUMMARY

Requires the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) to establish a policy on organized sports programming at facilities operated by the department.

Major Provisions

- 1) Establishes a policy in California to recognize participation in organized sports programming in state prisons as a form of rehabilitation.
- 2) Requires CDCR to adopt a department-wide policy on organized sports programming to be applied to all CDCR facilities by July 1, 2027.
- 3) Requires CDCR to consult with a wide-range of stakeholders when creating the policy, including researchers and experts in sports and rehabilitation, criminal justice reform organizations, professional and semi-professional sports teams and leagues, CDCR staff, and organizations representing incarcerated persons and their families.
- 4) Requires CDCR to consider the following topics when adopting the policy:
 - a) The safety of CDCR staff, incarcerated persons, and other participants;
 - b) The appropriate use of CDCR resources and facilities by incarcerated persons;
 - c) Eligibility requirements for participation; and,
 - d) Broader impacts to public safety.
- 5) Permits CDCR to solicit proposals, accept unsolicited proposals, negotiate, and enter into agreements with public and private entities including, professional sports teams, the University of California, the California State University, the California Community Colleges, and private universities for the purpose of expanding access to organized sports programming at CDCR facilities.
- 6) Establishes the Second Chance Sports Fund within the State Treasury, and requires:
 - a) Funds deposited into the fund to be available, upon appropriation and approval of the Government Operations Agency, to support the expansion of organized sports programming at facilities operated by CDCR;
 - b) The Government Operations Agency must seek advisement from the Legislature and CDCR on how to prioritize the use of the funds, and shall approve the uses of the moneys;
 - c) The fund to receive money from any source, including private donations;

- d) The funds to supplement, not replace, existing funding for recreational sports programming at CDCR.
 - e) No more than 5% of the funds be used for administrative purposes.
- 7) Requires the State Treasurer to provide a report to the Legislature on the amounts deposited into the fund before January 1, 2028, and annually thereafter.
- 8) Includes legislative findings and declarations.

COMMENTS

According to the Author

"Structured sports programming is a powerful tool to promote rehabilitation and help individuals successfully reintegrate into their communities. Sports help build discipline, teamwork, and accountability. 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. Through the transformative power of sports, The Second Chance Sports Act will make our prisons safer, support correctional staff, and help reduce crime when people return home, all while leveraging critical public-private partnerships to avoid burdening taxpayers."

Arguments in Support

According to According to the *California Correctional Peace Officers Association (CCPOA)*, "Correctional peace officers see firsthand the importance of effective rehabilitation programs in improving institutional safety and supporting successful reentry. AB 2204 takes a thoughtful step in that direction by expanding access to organized sports programming, which has been shown to improve physical and mental health, build discipline, and support positive behavioral outcomes.

"By directing CDCR to establish a structured policy and encouraging partnerships with colleges, universities, and professional organizations, this bill helps bring consistency and broader access to programs that are currently limited and uneven across facilities. The creation of a fund to support public-private partnerships will further strengthen these efforts without placing undue pressure on state resources."

Arguments in Opposition

None submitted.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee:

- 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.

VOTES

ASM PUBLIC SAFETY: 9-0-0

YES: Schultz, Alanis, Mark González, Haney, Harabedian, Lackey, Nguyen, Ramos, Sharp-Collins

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 15-0-0

YES: Wicks, Hoover, Aguiar-Curry, Calderon, Caloza, Dixon, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Ta, Tangipa

UPDATED

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