

Date of Hearing: July 15, 2025  
Counsel: Samarpreet Kaur

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY  
Nick Schultz, Chair

SB 75 (Smallwood-Cuevas) – As Amended June 17, 2025

**SUMMARY:** Requires the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), in partnership with the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR), to establish the Preapprenticeship Pathways to Employment Pilot Program (program) by January 1, 2028. Specifically, **this bill**:

- 1) Requires, no later than January 1, 2028, CDCR, in partnership with the DIR and recognized building and construction trades councils, to establish the program.
- 2) States that the purpose of this program is to provide incarcerated individuals with access to high-quality preapprenticeship training aligned with state-registered apprenticeships in the skilled construction and building trades.
- 3) Requires CDCR to ensure equitable access to the program across each facility under its jurisdiction, including facilities housing women and gender-responsive institutions.
- 4) Requires CDCR to implement the program in at least one men's and one women's facility.
- 5) States that the program shall include all of the following:
  - a) Instruction based on the Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (MC3), recognized by the State Building and Construction Trades Council of California. The instruction shall prepare participants for entry into a wide range of union-affiliated skilled trades, including, but not limited to, each of the following:
    - i) Carpentry.
    - ii) Ironwork.
    - iii) Sheet metal.
    - iv) Laborers.
    - v) Operating engineers.
  - b) Availability to incarcerated individuals who are within 24 months of release and express interest in careers in the trades.
  - c) Career readiness and case management services that are designed to facilitate direct transition into union apprenticeships following release. These services may be provided by existing workforce and community-based programs and shall include, but are not

limited to, each of the following:

- i) Employment and training services, including job readiness workshops, occupational skills training, preapprenticeship placement, and paid transitional work opportunities.
  - ii) Behavioral health and substance use services, including mental health counseling, cognitive behavioral therapy, substance use disorder treatment, and peer recovery support.
  - iii) Housing support services, including emergency shelter, transitional housing, housing navigation, and rapid rehousing assistance.
  - iv) Transportation assistance, including public transit passes, rideshare vouchers, and driver's license reinstatement support.
  - v) Family and childcare support, including parenting classes, childcare subsidies, and family reunification services.
  - vi) Legal services, including expungement and record sealing clinics, support with fines and fees, and reentry-related legal navigation.
  - vii) Digital and financial literacy services, including digital skills training, budgeting support, credit repair, and access to communication tools.
  - viii) Basic needs support, including access to work clothing, hygiene items, food assistance, and mobile phone access.
- d) Classroom and hands-on instruction in construction safety, trade mathematics, blueprint reading, industry orientation, and other foundational skills aligned with state-registered apprenticeship standards. Content shall be taught by certified instructors and coordinated with local joint apprenticeship training committees.
- 6) States that the facilities who implement the program shall not grant preferential treatment based on race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin, in accordance with Section 31 of Article I of the California Constitution. Access shall be based on facility needs, proximity to release, and participant interest in skilled trades careers.
- 7) States that participants who complete the program shall receive an MC3 certification from a certified training provider.
- 8) Requires CDCR to submit a report to the Legislature, beginning January 1, 2029, and each year thereafter, that includes the following information:
- a) The number of individuals who have enrolled in the Preapprenticeship Pathways to Employment Program;
  - b) The number of individuals who have completed the Preapprenticeship Pathways to Employment Program;

- c) The number of individuals placed in registered apprenticeships or related employment;
  - d) The number of individuals from each participating facility and program site who fit the criteria in paragraphs (1) to (3), inclusive; and,
  - e) Identified barriers to access and participation.
- 9) Requires that the report submitted pursuant to this section to be submitted in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government Code.
- 10) Provides that the program remain in effect only until January 1, 2032, and as of that date is repealed.

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Establishes the California Workforce Development Board (CWDB) to assist the Governor in the development, oversight, and continuous improvement of California's workforce investment system and the alignment of the education and workforce investment systems to the needs of the 21st century economy and workforce. ( Unemp. § 14010 et seq.)
- 2) Establishes the Breaking Barriers to Employment Initiative to provide individuals with barriers to employment the services they need to enter, participate in, and complete broader workforce preparation, training, and education programs aligned with regional labor market needs. Those who complete these programs should have the skills and competencies necessary to successfully enter the labor market, retain employment, and earn wages that lead to self-sufficiency, and eventually, economic mobility and security. ( Unemp. Ins. Code, §14031.)
- 3) States Populations eligible to receive grants under Breaking Barriers Initiative include persons who are incarcerated and soon to be released or formerly incarcerated. (Unemp. Ins. Code, §14034, subd. (h).)

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Unknown.

**COMMENTS:**

- 1) **Author's Statement:** According to the author, "There is an urgent need to create meaningful preapprenticeship and reentry pathways for incarcerated individuals who are ready to rebuild their lives, because too many people, especially women and people of color, are released without the skills, credentials, and support they need to succeed. SB 75 ensures that incarcerated individuals can access high-quality MC3-certified training and wraparound services so they can transition directly into union-affiliated skilled trades careers, achieve economic stability, and avoid the cycles of poverty and recidivism that harm families and communities."

- 2) **Preapprenticeship Training and the Multicraft Core Curriculum (MC3):** The National Research Council's publication exploring the causes and consequences of the growth of incarceration in the United States explains the importance of employment after incarceration:

“Policy research on released prisoners emphasizes the importance of employment, housing, and health services. Employment programs provide a variety of services, from job readiness training to subsidized work. Although evaluation research provides uneven evidence that labor market programs can boost employment and reduce recidivism, such programs often are intrinsically valuable when they provide income support and structure the time of program clients. ...Evaluation research also indicates that recidivism can be significantly reduced when social opportunity programs, such as those providing employment, are combined with programs that address criminogenic behaviors.”  
(National Research Council, (2014) *The Growth of Incarceration in the United States: Exploring Causes and Consequences*, at p. 352.)

This bill requires CDCR to develop guidelines for the participation of inmates in preapprenticeship training programs for the building and trade industries. Preapprenticeship programs are stepping-stone training courses that allow participants to obtain employment in a trade industry. In most cases, individuals undergo preapprenticeship training before completing an apprenticeship in order to prepare them for the working environment in their selected industry.

An apprenticeship is a program that trains a worker to become skilled in a particular trade. Apprenticeships combine hands-on work with classroom learning to train the apprentice. Apprenticeships are considered full-time employment and apprentices earn a living wage. Preapprenticeship programs will allow incarcerated individuals to effectively complete the first stage of apprenticeship study during their incarceration, which will prepare them for an apprenticeship upon release. This would give incarcerated individuals a head start in becoming employed upon release from incarceration.

In 2007, the Building Trades National Standing Committee on Apprenticeship and Training identified courses in all building trades' apprenticeship programs that are offered in common without regard to a particular craft, and created the MC3 curriculum. The MC3 course syllabi and educational objectives were systematically developed from these common core courses, and curriculum materials were identified and integrated into a multi-craft core curriculum. The total core includes 120 hours of class room training.<sup>1</sup>

The MC3 course includes classes in Construction Industry Orientation, Tools and Materials, Construction Health and Safety, Blueprint Reading, Basic Math for Construction, Heritage of the American Worker, Diversity in the Construction Industry, Green Construction, and Financial Responsibility. The purpose of the MC3 curriculum is to empower participants to make informed decisions about which craft they would pursue. The MC3 training programs are sponsored by state and local building trades councils in cooperation with local community groups, government agencies and schools.<sup>2</sup> The MC3 Curriculum is only offered in cooperation with state and local Building Trades Councils, and is not otherwise available

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<sup>1</sup> MC3 course Syllabi ([https://www.efficiencycities.org/wp-content/uploads/062309/BCTD%20TriFold\\_v6.pdf](https://www.efficiencycities.org/wp-content/uploads/062309/BCTD%20TriFold_v6.pdf))

<sup>2</sup> ([https://cwdb.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/43/2016/08/building.trades.mc3\\_9.1.2015.pdf](https://cwdb.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/43/2016/08/building.trades.mc3_9.1.2015.pdf).)

to private entities.

This bill aims to reduce recidivism and increase rehabilitation and public safety by requiring CDCR to develop guidelines for the participation of inmates in preapprenticeship training programs and ensure that programs in the building and construction trades follow the MC3 curriculum. This bill would also require CDCR to coordinate with local state-approved preapprenticeship programs and local building trade councils so inmates who complete a preapprenticeship program to receive an MC3 certification from a certified training provider.

- 3) **Argument in Support:** According to the *Ella Baker Center for Human Rights*, “EBC supports SB 75 it affirms the humanity and potential of people who have been pushed to the margins. It promotes a vision of reentry that is grounded in equity, care, and opportunity. This bill is not just about workforce development; it’s about affirming the humanity of people who have been cast aside, and building infrastructure that supports healing, stability, and long-term success.

...

“The ... Pre Apprenticeship Pilot Program inside one men’s and one women’s prison. It would offer high-quality training based on the Multi-Craft Core Curriculum to people within 24 months of release who are interested in careers in the trades. The program would also include support like mental health care, substance use treatment, job readiness, and help reconnecting with family and community.

“These initiatives are not just about developing workforce skills. They are about creating the conditions for transformation, healing, and success. They recognize that people returning home need more than good intentions. They need real resources, structured support, and access to opportunity.

“Too often, individuals leaving prison face overwhelming obstacles such as limited transportation, digital exclusion, housing insecurity, and systemic discrimination in the labor market. These challenges are especially severe for Black and Brown community members who are disproportionately incarcerated and excluded from economic opportunity. SB 75 addresses these issues directly and offers a model that can grow and be used across the state. With evaluation measures focused on employment outcomes, reduced recidivism, and long-term cost savings, this bill lays the foundation for a more just and effective reentry system.

“By passing SB 75 (Smallwood Cuevas), California can take a meaningful step toward a more just and inclusive reentry system. We urge the Legislature to advance this critical measure and appreciate your continued leadership in supporting the rights, dignity, and opportunity of justice-impacted individuals.”

4) **Prior Legislation:**

- a) SB 825 (Beall) of 2017-2018 Legislative Session, would have required CDCR to develop guidelines for inmate participation in preapprenticeship training programs, as specified. The bill would have also required the department to coordinate with local state-approved

apprenticeship programs and local building trade councils so that inmates who complete an inmate preapprenticeship program have a pathway to employment upon release. SB 825 was referred to, but never heard, in this committee.

- b) SB 866 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review) Chapter 53, Statutes of 2018, required the CWDB to administer a prison-to-employment program and award grants for purposes that include the development of regional partnerships and regional plans to provide and coordinate the necessary workforce, education, supportive, and related services that formerly incarcerated and other justice-involved individuals need to secure and retain employment and reduce the chances of recidivism.
- c) AB 2129 (Jones-Sawyer) of the 2013-2014 Legislative Session, would have required CDCR to establish a voluntary prerelease reentry program for inmates in prison, to commence no later than 6 months prior to the inmate's release from prison. The program would include, among other things, education programs, transition programs including employment services and skills, and cognitive behavior therapy, including substance abuse treatment and anger management. The bill was held on the Assembly Appropriations suspense file.
- d) AB 2060 (V. Manuel Perez), Chapter 383, Statutes of 2014, established until January 1, 2021, the Supervised Population Workforce Training Grant Program to be administered, as provided, by the California Workforce Investment Board and funded, upon appropriation by the Legislature.

## **REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

### **Support**

A New Way of Life Re-entry Project  
ACLU California Action  
California Legislative Women's Caucus  
California Public Defenders Association  
Ella Baker Center for Human Rights  
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### **Opposition**

None submitted.

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