

MCA FORUM

Volume 44. No. 1

February 2021



WINTER VIBES

mca-mn@hotmail.com

Feel free to e-mail MCA to get in contact, join a committee, become a sponsor or to get involved!

MCA website: www.mn-ca.org

In This Issue:

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GET IN TOUCH!





President's Message

Mark Bliven, 2021 MCA President

“You’re on mute” was clearly the most common phrase many of us heard in 2020. As I dive into my term as president of the Minnesota Corrections Association (MCA) for 2021 I see two other words as indicative of 2020 and vital as we carry through in 2021. “Innovation” and “Patience” are the two words that should guide us while another entirely different phrase that I’ll bring up later needs to be remembered if our critical work in corrections is to succeed.

2020 required innovation as we adopted to the new normal. The technology changes that allow many of us to work remotely while still connecting with our many public and private partners was rolled out at an amazing pace. Plenty of problems and limits still exist such as the obvious need to provide more broadband access to all areas of our state. So many of us don’t have the luxury of virtual connection since our work can only occur with direct physical proximity or in some cases direct physical contact. 2021 demands further innovation not just to cope with COVID restrictions but to adjust to real changes in our work that will last well beyond this pandemic.

Patience is also indispensable for 2021 as we work through these changes, make adjustments, correct, and improve. The availability of vaccinations in 2021 is a great step forward but limited availability means that we need the patience to not rush. We all want resumption of “normal” life but realistically at this time we can’t expect all of us to be fully vaccinated until later this summer.

Our MCA training and meeting interactions are now fully on a virtual platform that we will continue to some degree into the future. Our plans though for our October Fall Institute are to return to a fully in-person setting. That important in-person reconnection of our many involved partners in corrections is critical to maintaining a human touch to our work.

I look forward with excitement to working with you all to grow and prosper in our association. Justice though is the linchpin of our work. The interconnections of MCA partnerships will never succeed without that critical component. We need to listen and hear how our work affects justice and the lives of those involved in the correctional system. This doesn’t mean just for those who are clients of our services. Those of us who work within and provide those services as members of this association need to be heard and understood as we face challenges and turmoil in our own lives. Civil unrest and protests from 2020 did not simply target problems in law enforcement. We in corrections, treatment, support services, and all aspects of life need to listen and never forget when someone cries out, “I can’t breathe”.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Know the past, shape the future.

February is observed as Black History Month. To learn about the origins of this, you can visit this link on [Black History Month](#). In addition to this site, there are other websites that provide education and personal stories of black people throughout history.

Here are a few to check out:

[PBS](#)

[United States Census Bureau](#)

[History Channel Website](#)

[African History Month - Government Site](#)



Images were obtained at Word Press and Diversity Best Practices Websites.

MCA SPRING WORKSHOP

"Criminal Minds: Supervising Offenders with Various Mental Health Needs"

March 25, 2021 9 a.m.— 4 p.m.

Zoom Meeting

Registration Closes on 3/12

[Click here for Attendee Registration](#)

[Click here for Event Sponsor Registration*](#)
****Registration is limited***

Schedule for the Day:

- 8:30-9:00 AM: Registration and Resource Fair
- 9:00-9:15 AM: Introduction with Mark Bliven, MCA President/Event Sponsor Introductions
- 9:15-10:30 AM: Understanding ACEs: Building Self-Healing Communities – Presenter: FamilyWise Services
- 10:30-10:45 AM: Event Sponsor Introductions / Break
- 10:45-11:15 AM: Understanding ACEs: Building Self-Healing Communities – Presenter: FamilyWise Services
- 11:15 AM-12:15 PM: The SMART Center and Dakota Co. Approach to Mental Illness in the Community –
Presenter: Tim Leslie, Dakota Co. Sheriff
- 12:15-1:00 PM: Event Sponsor Introductions / Lunch
- 1:00-2:45 PM: Mental Illness vs. Criminal Behavior Construct and Basics of Rule 20 Process–
Presenter: Steven C. Norton Ph.D., Licensed Psychologist
- 2:45-3:00 PM: Event Sponsor Introductions / Break
- 3:00-4:00 PM: In Our Own Voice: Personal Perspective of Having a Mental Health Condition - Presented by NAMI



Event Sponsors

MACPO

MN Adult and Teen Challenge

Restorations Counseling and Community Services (RCCS)

Saint Mary's University of Minnesota

Securus Monitoring Solutions

Sequel Youth and Family Services

MCA SPRING WORKSHOP

"Criminal Minds: Supervising Offenders with Various Mental Health Needs"

Meet Your Presenters:

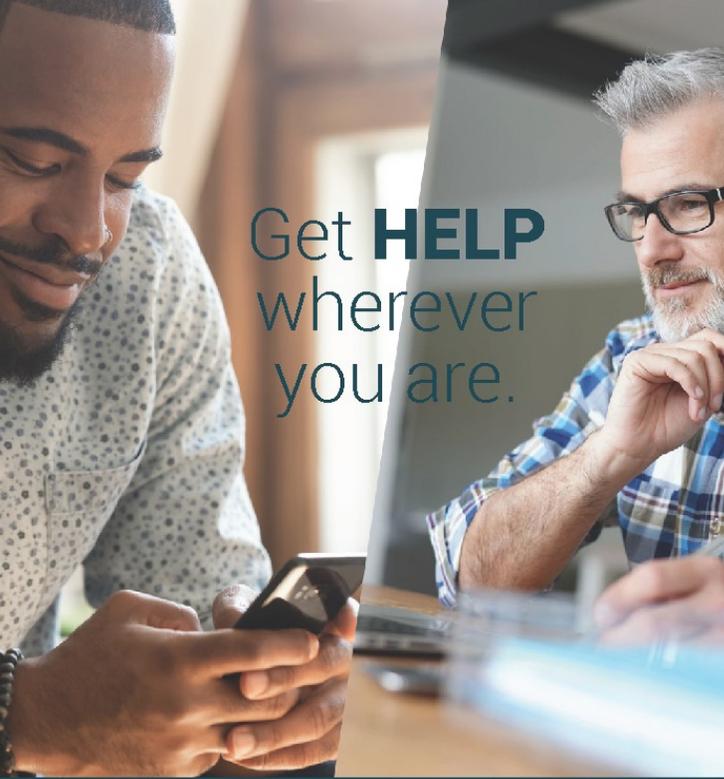
FamilyWise Services: Minnesota FamilyWise Services is a chartered partner with Prevent Child Abuse America and Circle of Parents National. FamilyWise Services is a not-for-profit organization that has impacted thousands of families since 1976 - serving 2,513 individuals in 1,012 households across the state of Minnesota in 2019. Their mission is to strengthen families by promoting the safety, stability, and well-being of children. They are committed to keeping children safe. Some of their services and programs include NEAR Communities (neurobiology, epigenetics, Adverse Childhood Experiences, and resilience), Circle of Parents, Supervised Parenting & Safe Exchange, Adult Parent Education, Young Parenting Services, and more.

Sheriff Tim Leslie, Dakota County Sheriff's Office: Sheriff Leslie attended college at Augsburg and Mankato State University, earning a Bachelor's Degree. He graduated from the St. Paul Police Department Academy in 1980, receiving the "distinguished recruit" award after being selected for this honor by his classmates. In 1995 he returned to school at the University of St. Thomas and earned his Master's Degree in Public Safety Education and Administration. He was promoted to Lieutenant in 1995 and then to Senior to Commander in 1999. He later served as Chief Finney's Chief of Staff and as the Senior Commander of the Central District. In 2003, he was appointed Assistant Commissioner for the MN Department of Public Safety. He helped lead the following divisions; Alcohol and Gambling Enforcement, State Patrol, Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, State Fire Marshal, and Homeland Security and Emergency Management. He was appointed Chief Deputy for the Dakota County Sheriff's Office in 2010, where he managed the day-to-day operations of the office and its \$18 million budget. In 2014 and again in 2018, he was elected Dakota County Sheriff where he continues to serve.

Steven C. Norton PH.D., Norton Psychological Services: Steven C. Norton Ph.D. is a Licensed Psychologist in Rochester MN. He obtained his PhD in Psychology, from Denver University in 1990. He then began working as a psychologist at the Federal Bureau of Prisons in Rochester MN and was employed at this position for 12 years. In 2001, Dr. Norton began a fulltime solo private practice in Rochester. He has conducted over 1500 criminal and civil forensic evaluations for various county and federal courts. He worked on a part-time basis for the Olmsted County Adult Detention Center for nearly 10 years, and for several years on an occasional contracting basis for the MN Department of Corrections. Dr. Norton provides psychological services for several local law enforcement and correctional agencies, conducting over 900 pre-employment psychological evaluations, plus Fitness for Duty assessments, Critical Incident Stress Debriefings, and extensive training.

NAMI: In Our Own Voice (IOOV): Understand the journey of people with mental illness in recovery. IOOV is a unique public education program in which two trained speakers share compelling personal stories about living with a mental illness and achieving recovery, demonstrating that there is hope for recovery for people with mental illnesses. The presentation includes personal stories and video clips, as well as offering an opportunity to ask questions. The IOOV program has touched many lives and is effective in reducing the stigma surrounding mental illnesses. This 60 to 90-minute class is for any groups interested in learning more about mental illnesses and recovery.

MARCH 25, 2021, 9:00 AM- 4:00 PM



Get **HELP**
wherever
you are.

Now offering Telehealth Services

IMMEDIATE AVAILABILITY

Mn Adult & Teen Challenge locations are now offering treatment and support services to any Minnesota resident via a secure virtual environment.

- Telehealth Chemical Assessments
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- Individualized treatment plans
- 3 or 4 group sessions each week
- AM and PM groups available

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www.mntc.org



LC- “Group online has been a blessing just for the fact that we can do it.”

AB-“Telemedicine outpatient treatment has been very impactful in my life! I am very close to being finished with the program... and, because of telemedicine my life looks completely different and so much better than it did before I started. I know it is different than doing it in person, but I don’t necessarily think it is a drawback... it is just a new and different way to do it. And, it works!”

TS- “This program is very personal for a virtual platform/I was impressed with the level of connectivity.”

BG- “If telemedicine treatment was not offered through MNTC I would not have been able to take part in this amazing supportive group. I live in Chaska and currently have no driver license due to DWI. I had heard such amazing things about the MNTC program that I wanted to be able to take part in the program. Luckily I was able to do so because I could participate and interact with this group through zoom. I have found such an amazing group of supportive women in this group and one of the most compassionate counselors. I am not sure where I would be in my recovery without them.”

AM- “I think that zoom has been very helpful in making it possible to attend group even if we are having transportation issues or time constraints. “

Client Testimonials

Client Testimonials

...Training Training Training...

MCA Monthly Workshops

**Save These Dates and
Watch for Announcements
and Registration to Open**

- 2/19 — Minnesota Adult & Teen Challenge
- 3/19 — Maximum Potential: Working with Justice System-Involved Youth
- (*Registration now open—[click here](#)*)
- 4/16 — Sex Trafficking
- 5/21 — RS EDEN
- 6/18 — Level 3 Offenders

Mark your calendar for these other workshop dates:
7/16, 8/20, 9/17, 10/15, 11/19, 12/17

~~~~~

## ***MCA & MACPO Presents: The Annual Juvenile Justice Conference April 15, 2021***

***Registration Now Open***

[Click here](#) for Attendee Registration

[Click here](#) for Event Sponsor Registration\*

\*Event Sponsor openings are very limited!

### **Event Sponsors**

***Boys Town***

***McCrossan Boys Ranch***

***Midwest Monitoring & Surveillance***

***Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension***

***MN Adult & Teen Challenge***

***NextGen Monitoring***

***Port***

***Saint Mary's University of Minnesota***

***Village Ranch, Inc.***

***West Central Regional Juvenile Center***

# SO...WHAT IS THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE'S PURPOSE?

Submitted by: *Mary Oberstar; Past President*

The Nominating Committee's mission is to seek candidates for MCA's Executive Board offices. Sounds easy, right? It is; yet it isn't! The easy part is there are many worthy candidates within the ranks of MCA membership. The tough part is asking people to step up to possibly be elected into a position which then requires additional work on top of their already heavy workloads.

The committee is comprised of a chairperson, recommended by the President and approved by the Board of Directors, and at least 8 additional committee members, several of whom are nominated by MCA's membership. This helps give members a say in who our candidates will be, even prior to the election.

Officers elected to the Executive Board include the President-Elect, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary.

The committee submits at least six (6) candidates for each office to the Executive Board to be vetted, and from which three (3) are nominated for each spot to be filled. Once the candidate list is narrowed down; committee members work with each candidate to prepare a bio, provide a photo, and have the President-Elect candidate answer a question submitted by MCA. This all needs to be completed and ballots ready to put out for membership vote by early August.

In mid-2020, members voted to change the Vice President and Secretary positions to 2-year terms. The Treasurer was already a 2-year term and the President-Elect remained at 1 year since that position technically serves 3 years on the Board – President-Elect, President, and Past President.

This means you, the members, will vote for a President-Elect, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary in 2021, to begin serving in 2022 for 2 years.

There you have it – a snapshot of everything you've wanted to know about the Nominating Committee and its purpose!



# MCA Membership Opportunities

While our opportunities to network and provide training were put to a halt in 2020, **MCA Training Events have returned.**

MCA is also here, working for you through continued reviews and research on best practices, following & reporting on legislative action, and through other means.

## Membership opportunities...

- **Individual member \$35**
- **Retiree \$50 lifetime** ~ For a limited time, MCA is waiving the requirement for individuals who are Corrections Retirees to become an individual member before applying for a Retiree lifetime membership. (That saves retirees \$35).  
Contact the MCA Office to join! [mca-mn@hotmail.com](mailto:mca-mn@hotmail.com)
- **Student membership \$10. Must meet student membership criteria.**
- **MACCAC/MACPO/MSSA/MARRCH members** ~ You can get an MCA Individual membership for \$25\* (That's a \$10 savings off your first year).  
Contact the MCA Office to join! [mca-mn@hotmail.com](mailto:mca-mn@hotmail.com)

\*Applies to new MCA memberships.



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# One Minnesota Plan



Governor Walz directed each state agency to develop a strategic plan to achieve the mission of the governor's One Minnesota Plan to *"Improve the lives of all Minnesotans by working collaboratively to implement policies that achieve results."*

The Department of Corrections (DOC) has now updated their mission, vision, and adopted a 2020-2022 Strategic Plan to align itself with the One Minnesota Plan. The key component of this central strategy is the adoption of a Person-Centered Approach to all agency operations. This Person-Centered Approach applies not just to those committed to the authority of the commissioner of corrections but to all employees and partners in this mission of *"Transforming lives for a safer Minnesota"*.

The DOC strategic priorities to accomplish this mission are Agency Reorganization, Transformative Programming, and Safety and Wellbeing. These three strategic priorities when implemented in the coming days, weeks, months, and years will give focus to the mission of transforming lives.

Important to this plan is the concept of servant leadership from the governor's *One Minnesota Plan* and at every level within the DOC to grow and develop staff, build trusting teams, and achieve the results of the DOC's mission.

Just over 50 years ago Robert Greenleaf in the essay *The Servant as Leader* used the term "servant leadership" to describe the concept where a servant leader shares power, puts the needs of employees and clients [a rational extension from employees] first, and helps each individual develop and perform to the highest degree possible. In no way was Greenleaf talking about a new concept of leadership but he did succeed in creating a focus on that term. Pure and universal adoption of the concept of servant leadership is unfortunately unlikely but it is something that will add value to agency interactions and development especially if it becomes a comfortable method of inaction.

While the DOC has this strategic plan to guide its actions going forward it is something all of us in MCA can use whether in the public or private sector. Some of our partners have already adopted some of these concepts and are far ahead to some degrees. Universal attention to these concepts is what will make our profession successful as outlined in our MCA mission *"To promote the professional development of individuals working in all aspects of the corrections field and to promote ethical and just correctional practices."*

For detailed information and explanation of the DOC's Strategic Plan go to <https://mn.gov/doc/about/agency-background-history/strategic-plan/>



# 180 Degrees

Turning lives around.

## CLIFTON PLACE

A Twin Cities program for formerly incarcerated men

Clifton Place supports and provides resources for clients to secure stable employment and housing and maintain sobriety. **We offer support through:**

- short-term housing
- structured programming
- case management
- transitional housing opportunities

**OVER 9,000**

men have transitioned back into the community after incarceration after Clifton's Place.

**OVER 70%**

of men who go through the Clifton Place successfully graduate from the program.



# MCA Liaison

## Activities

By Mark Groves,  
MCA Liaison/Membership Chair

### **MCA Presentation at the**

### **2021 Minnesota Social Services Association Liaison (MSSA) Annual Conference**

MCA is a member of the Minnesota Social Services Association (MSSA) and Minnesota Association of Resources for Recovery and Chemical Health (MARRCH) Annual Conference Planning Committees for the purpose of providing leadership and direction regarding criminal justice, corrections expertise, information and topics.

Mark Bliven, Laura Anderson, Robyn Wood and myself will be presenting a virtual workshop at the MSSA Annual Conference at their pre-Friday conference on 12 March 2021 titled: *From Cell to Street: What Offenders Need When They Return to the Community*. We are excited to move forward regarding our formal partnership with the Minnesota Social Workers community as we educate them regarding the criminal justice populations.

I will also be conducting a virtual workshop titled: *Ethical Issues and Boundaries in Practitioner-Client Relationships* on 17 March 2021 at the MSSA Annual Conference. I conducted this workshop at their last year's conference which attracted more than 200 participants.

MSSA's Annual Training Conference and Expo is the largest, most comprehensive, cost effective health and human service conference in the Midwest. Their 2020 conference brought together 3,200 health and human service professionals from all parts of Minnesota and the surrounding states. Their educational sessions cover a broad spectrum of topics and featuring high quality, local and nationally recognized speakers.

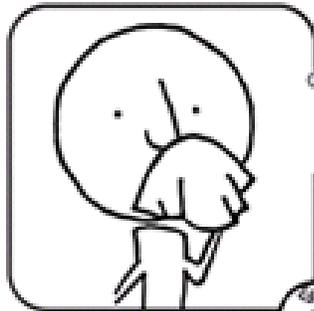
MSSA's 128th Annual Training Conference and Expo, March 17-19, 2021, will be an all-virtual conference.

Feel free to contact me with thoughts, ideas, suggestions. We welcome your input and participation.

Thank you.

Stop the spread of germs that make you and others sick!

# Cover your Cough



Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze

or cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.

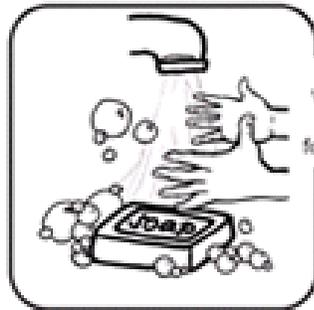


Put your used tissue in the waste basket.



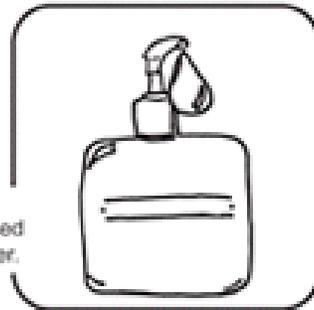
# Clean your Hands

after coughing or sneezing.



Wash hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds

or clean with alcohol-based hand cleaner.



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www.health.state.mn.us



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## Legislative Affairs



Calvin Saari, MCA Legislative Liaison

I prepare this article for the February edition of the FORUM, as the State Legislature begins their fifth week of the current Session, have been called into Session on January 6th. There was a typical turnover of Legislators this year from the November elections with about twenty-five new faces due to last year's retirements, transfers and/or defeat in the last election cycle. Therefore it is normal for the Legislature and its Committee structure to take the first several weeks informing the Committee members their role as Legislators and learning about the many State Departments and Agencies, who have been presenting at the Committee meetings through the month of January and it appears even into the first part of February.

This is going to be another extremely busy legislative session considering the number of bill introductions we've already seen. As of this morning, there have been 529 bills introduced in the House and another 545 bills in the Senate, even though I heard that the parties leadership had asked Legislators to be selective in their introduction of bills as they felt they really had a heavy load to carry in this Session with the need to pass a 2022-23 Budget bill, as well as continuing needs to address the impact of the COVID virus, and additional responses needed to address the violence issues of the past nine months. However I learned late last week that there are about 1,500 bills in the Revisor's Office waiting to be prepared for introduction and referral to Committee. The Revisor's Office is apparently undergoing some re-structuring and progress has been slow. On the Senate side it's even worse as you still cannot access the tracking of bills referred to the various Committees. This just assures us that it's going to be another very busy Session when you have 250-300 new bill introductions each week to review.

Currently, Chairman Mariani in the House Public Safety and Criminal Justice Finance and Reform Committee has 70 bills waiting to be put on the Committee docket for hearing. We will begin to see bills being heard within the next week.

That brings up the issue of deadlines. The self-imposed deadlines for Committees this year are:

- ⇒ First Deadline: March 12th for approval of bills introduced within the Committee;
- ⇒ 2nd Deadline: March 19th for passage of bills referred from other Committees;
- ⇒ 3rd Deadline: April 9th for passage of major appropriations and finance bills.

But there are exceptions as these rules do not pertain to bills in Capital Investment, Ways and Means, Finance, Taxes or Rules and Administration!

Here's my best bet on where the Legislature will go this year. We still have the only divided government in the Nation again this year, a Democratic Governor (who's been under constant attack by the GOP over Executive powers) a Republican Senate and a Democratic House. It took six Special Sessions in 2020 just to pass a Supplemental budget bill (which still didn't solve all the issues), so we can assume it's going to be more of the same this year and more so, as they have the budget deficit from the virus to contend with as well. Don't be surprised to see the need for another Special Session next June, as it's a new two year operating budget which will again threaten to close state government without passage of a budget bill by July 1st. There is also some bipartisan discussion about the need for an additional Capital Investment bill as well.



## Legislative Affairs

Calvin Saari, MCA Legislative Liaison

Last week Governor Walz released his 22-23 budget proposal of \$ 52.4 billion and since that time we have nothing but negative comments . With a February forecast coming up in the next several days, you can then expect to see three or four different budget proposals to combat the Governor's proposal and trying to put together a bipartisan approach is really questionable.

Party leadership has priorities to continue to address the COVID, personal and business tax breaks, more aid to small businesses, and attempts to deal with Minneapolis violence, often forgetting that what works in the Metro area just won't work in greater Minnesota, adding to further splits. This scenario gives you a fairly good picture of what we'll be dealing with in months to come.

With COVID rules still in effect, MCA and our Corrections partners, MACPO and MACCAC will be hosting a ZOOM Corrections Capitol Day event the morning of Wednesday, February 24th. We plan to have a dialogue with several Legislators from 8:30 to 11:30am that morning. I have personally invited 13 Legislators to participate, and four have already gladly accepted the opportunity to share some time with our members. Details on the ZOOM will be available on the MCA webpage in the near future. If you have a specific question you'd like our Legislators to address, please forward them to me.

For information on the status of legislation regarding Corrections and or public safety, please refer to the MCA webpage where Legislative updates are filed at least every two weeks!

Thanks for your support!

***Join us at the 2021 Corrections Capital Day Event***  
***[Click Here to register](#)—Registration Closes 2/22 at 4 p.m.***



# Groundhog Day



## Six More Weeks of Winter!!

Groundhog Day is a popular North American tradition observed in the United States and Canada on February 2nd. It derives from the Pennsylvania Dutch superstition that if a groundhog emerging from its burrow on this day sees its shadow due to clear weather, it will retreat to its den and winter will persist for six more weeks; but if it does not see its shadow because of cloudiness, spring will arrive early.

While the tradition remains popular in modern times, studies have found no consistent correlation between a groundhog seeing its shadow and the subsequent arrival time of spring-like weather.

The weather lore was brought from German-speaking areas where the badger is the forecasting animal. This appears to be an enhanced version of the lore that clear weather on the Christian festival of Candlemas forebodes a prolonged winter.

The Groundhog Day ceremony held at Punxsutawney in western Pennsylvania, centering on a semi-mythical groundhog named Punxsutawney Phil, has become the most frequently attended ceremony. Grundsow Lodges in Pennsylvania Dutch Country in the southeastern part of the state observe the occasion as well. Other cities in the United States and Canada also have adopted the event.

Courtesy of Wikipedia



## Tales from the past: ICS or “front-end” release.

*“The major achievement of the Minnesota ICS/ISR program appears to be the success of the ICS program in reducing prison costs at no additional risk to public safety.”*

RAND Corporation, 1995

By Roger Baburam, MPA

Current Case Managers and Agents are operationally familiar with the ISR or Intensive Supervised Release program, the enhanced level of community supervision for high-risk, violent inmates being released from MN state correctional facilities. However, perhaps only the more veteran of Case Managers and Agents recall the other form of intensive supervision, ICS or Intensive Community Supervision, a pre-release program for low-risk, non-violent inmates. ICS and ISR were two sides of the same coin: they both had the same agents, same structure, same process and only involved inmates committed to the DOC. The only difference between ICS and ISR was the targeted offenders for each program: low-risk/non-violent inmates for ICS for an early release and high-risk/violent inmates for ISR on their mandatory release date. Hence, ICS was referred to as “front-end” and ISR was referred to as “back-end” intensive supervision by practitioners. ICS operated from 1990 to the early 2000s; ISR has continuously been in operation.

### Origins

In the mid-1980s and 90s, many states were experiencing overcrowding in their state prisons. The Federal Courts found several Southern states in violation of the Eight Amendment prohibition against cruel and inhumane punishment due to this overcrowding. Rather than only build expensive prison structures, several of these states experimented with prison diversion programs for low-risk offenders to be placed on intensive supervision (Petersilia, 1998). Minnesota also started experiencing significant increases in population, including an increase in low-risk, none-violent inmates. MN correctional officials visited several sites in Southern states to study their intensive supervision programs and adopt a similar program in this state.

The Minnesota Legislature enacted legislation, in 1990, establishing the ICS/ISR program (Minn. State Statute 244.12 & 244.13) for inmates committed to the Commissioner of Corrections. DOC implemented the program in October of 1990. ICS became an early release program, along with Work Release (CIP was created in 1992), and ISR became the most structured post-release supervision program for the Department. It was the first prison diversion program operating within a state sentencing guideline structure in the nation; most intensive diversion programs are probation focused.

### Structure

ICS/ISR first operated in St. Cloud, Albert Lea and Shakopee districts and, subsequently, the CCA Counties of Anoka, Washington, Hennepin and Ramsey Counties were added. ICS had both statutory and DOC administrative criteria. The statutory criteria for eligibility for ICS excluded inmates convicted of the more serious offenses, such as murder, manslaughter, criminal sexual conduct, etc.; sentence had to be 27 months or less; and the program also permitted probation revocation cases that had their sentences executed. DOC added agency criteria, such as no active detainees, no history of victim injury within the past 10 years, no Public Risk Monitoring (PRM - administrative criteria for violent inmates) cases, agent approved-residence, etc. ICS pre-release also required sentencing judges’ approval. ICS Agents combined their caseload with ISR cases. ICS/ISR Agents, per statute, were not to exceed a caseload of 15 clients per Agent, thereby facilitating maximum supervision. Some of the original ICS/ISR Agents included Bob Sutter, Dick Allen, Jeff Oney, Tom Kritzeck and Bill Fair. Original ICS/ISR Supervisors included the late Russ Stricker from Hennepin County, Andy Doom from St. Cloud District and Bill Weber from the Albert Lea District. Initially, private contracted agencies in Hennepin and Ramsey County administered ICS/ISR: Citizens Council for Hennepin and RS Eden for Ramsey County. These two counties later assumed supervision of the program and many of the Agents from the contracted companies became permanent employees of these counties, such as the late Kevin McCann in Hennepin County.

The approval process for ICS involved screening by facility Case Managers for eligible offenders, residence investigation by community Agents, approval by facility PRT and, finally, approval by the Office of Adult Release (OAR), an immediate predecessor to the current HRU. ICS community supervision incorporated a four-phase component with descending levels of surveillance, EHM/house arrest, UAs, face-to-face contacts with Agents, etc. (ISR supervision was identical). Once the SRD (now called CRD) date was reached, the offender was then placed on standard supervision. Violation of ICS conditions could result in revocation of ICS and return to the original incarceration sentence after an evidentiary hearing was conducted by OAR.

### Problems.

From the start, there was considerably less ICS referral than ISR referral. As a Case Manager in the 1990s at MCF-ML and MCF-LL, I released relatively few inmates to ICS. Veteran Case Managers Rhonda Ramler and Kenny Kalla at MCF-SCL and early ICS/ISR Agent Dan Raden from Albert Lea District recall the same (Personal interview, January 2021). By 1994, only 230 clients were ICS cases and 796 were ISR cases (Deschenes, Turner and Petersilia, 1995, p. xiv). Among the main reasons for the lesser numbers were: several judges were opposed to eligible inmates leaving prison before their release date and DOC's additional administrative criteria eliminated inmates who met the statutory criteria. I recall several inmates telling me they prefer to participate in Work Release, another early release, rather than endure the intensiveness of ICS, even though it meant staying longer in prison. Case Manager Ramler reflected: "In addition, it was extremely difficult to find offenders who met the eligibility criteria for the program and what we learned from that program was that Minnesota was doing a pretty good job of only incarcerating those that needed to be incarcerated." (Personal interview, January 2021).

### Suspension of ICS.

ICS was placed on an administrative moratorium during Commissioner Ramstad-Hvass Administration (1999 – 2002) due to an apparent career client continuing his criminal enterprise while under ICS supervision in the community. During that time, there was a preoccupation with career offenders in the media, resulting in a Legislative Auditor's Report in 2001 on "Chronic Offenders" (Minnesota Legislature Auditor, 2001). The actual ICS/ISR statute, however, was never repealed. The sister ISR program continued its operation to today.



Photo shows MCF-SCL staff who have all been involved with the ICS program before its elimination. Front row, L-R: Case Managers Lisa Jorgenson and Rhonda Ramler. Back row, L-R, Case Manager Tom Eibes, Program Director Dan Raden (supervised ICS clients as an Agent in the Albert Lea District) and Case Manager Kenny Kalla.

## Effectiveness of ICS

While the primary purpose of ISR was to enhance the surveillance of high-risk offenders/violent clients who reached their mandatory release dates, the primary purpose for ICS was to reduce overcrowding in state prisons, with the accompanying monetary savings, by diverting low-risk offenders to the community. In this respect ICS was a success, notwithstanding the fact that there was considerably less ICS referrals than ISR referrals. In a January 1995 Report to the Legislation, DOC indicated that between January 1993 – December 1994, 222 low-risk offenders were placed on ICS, saving the Department 27,070 much needed bed days and a potential dollar benefit of over \$2 million dollars (at \$66 per day). RAND Corporation did a rigorous evaluation study on MN ICS/ISR program and concluded that there was no significant difference in arrest in a 12 month follow-up period between clients on ICS (also ISR) than clients on standard supervision. There was a much higher percentage of ICS clients with technical violations, however. This was expected due to the intensiveness of ICS supervision compared to standard supervision (Deschenes, Turner and Petersilia, 1995, p. 111). The RAND study documented: “Staff tended to view ICS in terms of rehabilitating offenders and emphasize the goals of social adjustment” (p. xxii.).

## Conclusion

Unlike many diversion programs that deal with intensive probation, MN's ICS program was specifically geared towards eligible offenders committed to state prison. As a practicing Case Manager in the 1990s, I generally had a positive perspective of the program, observing the re-integration of inmates to the community after a brief period of incarceration. Retired DOC Field Services Corrections Manager Sherry Hill reflected: “I think the ICS program was a good program, it provided an opportunity for low-risk clients with an executed sentence to remain in the community and continue to receive needed services. Clients were able to maintain important relationships in their life. Support systems and family, things we know are important to success” (Personal interview, January 2021).

It should be noted that the ICS Program was never statutorily repealed; it was just placed on an administrative moratorium. Given the paradigm shift in Corrections from a more punitive stance (when ICS was suspended) to today's re-examination of the utility of mass incarceration, perhaps consideration should be given to a re-activation of this early release program. Moreover, the advent of evidenced-based tools to determine risk to re-offend could enhance the quality of administrative eligibility rather than the intuitive based reasoning that was used, such as the now defunct PRM guidelines. An additional reason – perhaps, a compelling one - for consideration of re-activation of ICS is the current concerns about the spreading of COVID in correctional facilities and the need to reduce prison population.

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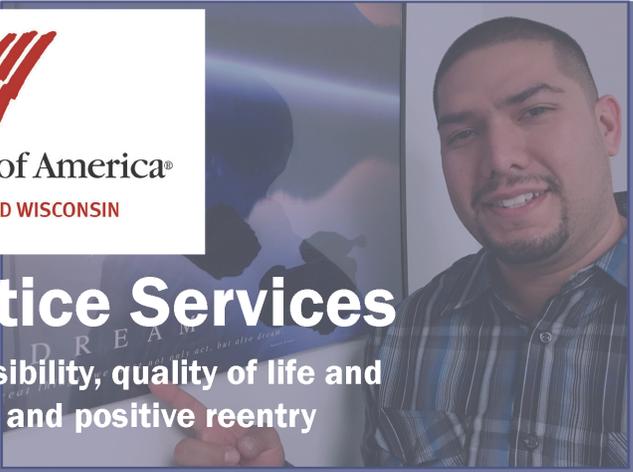


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Photo Flashback

2018 MCA Board





# 2021 MCA Annual Training Institute Grand View Lodge

The Minnesota Corrections Association (MCA) Annual Training Institute Committee is pleased to announce we are planning on our return to Grand View Lodge for the 2021 Annual Training Institute.

Please join us in celebrating 87 years of MCA: October 27-October 29, 2021.

**PRESENTER PROPOSALS BEING ACCEPTED UNTIL MAY 28th.**  
**[Click here for Presenter Proposal form](#)**

Stay tuned for updates on the MCA website at [www.mn-ca.org](http://www.mn-ca.org) !



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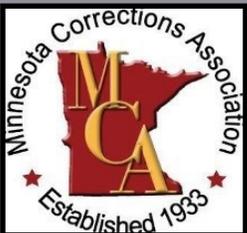
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