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***CJI Releases Major New Report Describing Reforms to Restrictive Housing within a State Penitentiary***

*The report is the first of its kind, describing the process of reforming restrictive housing, sometimes known as solitary confinement, within a state correctional agency.*

BOSTON ----The Crime and Justice Institute (CJI) at CRJ has released a new report detailing reforms to segregation, otherwise known as restrictive housing, implemented within a state penitentiary. The [report](#), titled [Reshaping Restrictive Housing at the South Dakota State Penitentiary](#), is the first of its kind, detailing the 2-year partnership between the South Dakota Department of Corrections and CJI, funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, to safely transform restrictive housing and share their successes and lessons learned.

“Our nation’s correctional facilities are largely guarded from the public eye and even more guarded are the segregation units within these facilities,” said [Barbara Pierce Parker, managing associate at CJI](#), who leads the Project to Reshape Restrictive Housing. “As the pressure mounts to significantly change the way restrictive housing is used in this country, we have to start openly sharing what departments of corrections and technical assistance providers are doing to reduce its use. It is no longer enough to just say that the population has been reduced by a certain percentage. How were reductions achieved? Where are people housed now? What is being done to safely manage difficult populations?”

One year into the implementation of its newly designed restrictive housing program, the South Dakota State Penitentiary saw its [restrictive housing population drop by 18 percent](#), and its [violent incident rate reach its lowest point](#), even dropping below the violent incident rate of the general prison population. These and other gains were the result of a careful planning, program design, and implementation process. This process has resulted in a restrictive housing program where only individuals who exhibit violent and dangerous behavior are admitted, where these individuals are provided the opportunity to earn their way back to general population, and where staff are incentivized for taking on the challenge of helping to build prosocial skills among this challenging population.

“With CJI’s help, we recognized early on that reforming restrictive housing takes more than a simple policy rewrite,” said Cabinet Secretary Denny Kaemingk. “It requires a culture shift that can only come through education and engagement of management and staff at all levels. It is also important

to recognize that we are asking our supervisors and line staff to take on new and significant roles—we are asking them to take an active role in behavior change rather than locking people up and hoping they learn their lesson. We made great progress through this initiative and plan to keep moving forward to further reduce the restrictive housing population while maintaining institutional safety.”

The [full report](http://www.crj.org/cji/entry/reshaping-restrictive-housing-at-south-dakota-state-penitentiary) can be found at [www.crj.org/cji/entry/reshaping-restrictive-housing-at-south-dakota-state-penitentiary](http://www.crj.org/cji/entry/reshaping-restrictive-housing-at-south-dakota-state-penitentiary).

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*The Crime & Justice Institute (CJI) at Community Resources for Justice (CRJ) works with local, state and national criminal justice organizations to improve public safety and the delivery of justice throughout the country.*