

Prison furlough programs critical thinking example

[Law](#), [Criminal Justice](#)



The prison furlough programs facilitate temporary release of prisoners from the prison without being accompanied. The programs were intended to benefit prisoners who meet certain prescribed conditions and equally allow prison facilities some additional space. This paper seeks to examine the pros and cons of the programs. Further, this paper would tackle the issue as to whether the program should be back in the prison systems.

The advocates of the program have rightly argued that it allows strengthening of family ties. This is essential especially in line with the integration strategy of the corrections department. Ideally, custodial programs must not be too punitive as to occasion family breakages. Prisoners are able to meet their families and stay in touch through the furlough programs. Secondly, the programs benefit special categories of prisoners. One such category is sick prisoners. Prisoners requiring special medical attention and services may leave prison under the furlough programs. After receiving medical services they return to complete their prison terms. Another category that benefit from the program are prisoners who have special technical knowledge in their fields of specialization. Such prisoners may join their colleagues at the work place and contribute their invaluable input after which they return. The furlough program essentially assumes the non-custodial system which is the most preferable for purposes of rehabilitation. Through the program, prisoners can be tested for their candidacy for non-custodial sentences. In that vein, prisoners who make good use of the furlough programs may have their sentences commuted from custodial to non-custodial. In the end, the very purpose of the criminal justice system is to meet the ends of justice. Merely incarcerating prisoners

without affording them an opportunity to interact with the outside world is not good both in theory and practice. Ultimately, the system needs to be sufficiently human and the prison furlough programs facilitate an actualization towards that front.

However, the prison furlough programs do not come without cons. One, it is susceptible to abuse and corrupt practices. Prisoners who desire to escape the vagaries of prison can easily abuse the system to get themselves out. Once out, prisoners disappear not to return. This defeats the whole concept of prison furlough programs. The intention was never to allow convicts defeat justice. In addition, the program if not properly implemented could endanger society generally and more specifically the victims involved. This is because some of the released prisoners are often tempted to repeat the same crime during the temporary break. Such recidivism is associated with poor custodial treatment which instead of correcting prisoners merely hardens prisoners into worse criminal activities. It is imperative, in that strain, to ensure that custodial programs are run well so that any prisoners released either temporarily in the furlough programs or permanently upon completion of their term does not revert to his criminal life.

This paper proposes that the prison furlough program should be back in the prison systems. This is because the direction the criminal justice systems in the world have taken is towards non-custodial sentences. The prison is being seen as the last resort which should suffice for the worst cases. The prison furlough program if implemented with flexibility, professionalism and diligence provides the middle ground between full custodial sentences and

non-custodial sentences. It would, therefore, positively impact on the criminal justice system.

References

Boivin, R. (2013). On the Use of Crime Rates. *Texas Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 263-278.