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SB-75 Employment: Preapprenticeship Pathways to Employment Pilot Program. (2025-2026)

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CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE— 2025–2026 REGULAR SESSION

SENATE BILL

NO. 75

Introduced by Senator Smallwood-Cuevas

January 15, 2025

An act to add and repeal Chapter 9.8 (commencing with Section 6275) of Title 7 of Part 3 of the Penal Code, relating to prisons.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 75, Smallwood-Cuevas. Employment: Preapprenticeship Pathways to Employment Pilot Program.

Existing law provides for various employment programs to assist formerly incarcerated individuals in finding and retaining employment, including the Pre-Release Construction Trades Certificate Program administered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and the Prison to Employment Program administered by the California Workforce Development Board.

Existing law establishes the California Workforce Development Board as the body responsible for assisting 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.

This bill would, by January 1, 2028, require the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, in partnership with the Department of Industrial Relations, to establish the Preapprenticeship Pathways to Employment Pilot Program. The bill would, until January 1, 2032, provide incarcerated individuals access to preapprenticeship training in the skilled construction and building trades. The bill would require the program to provide, among other things, instruction based on the Multi-Craft Core Curriculum and content coordinated with joint apprenticeship training committees. The bill would require the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to implement the program at one men's facility and one women's facility. The bill would require the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, beginning January 1, 2029, to annually report certain data regarding participation in the program to the Legislature.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Chapter 9.8 (commencing with Section 6275) is added to Title 7 of Part 3 of the Penal Code, to read:

CHAPTER 9.8. Preapprenticeship Pathways to Employment Pilot Program

6275. (a) No later than January 1, 2028, the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, in partnership with the Department of Industrial Relations and recognized building and construction trades councils, shall establish the Preapprenticeship Pathways to Employment Pilot Program.

(b) The purpose of the 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.

(c) The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation shall ensure equitable access to the program across each facility under its jurisdiction, including facilities housing women and gender-responsive institutions. The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation shall implement the program in at least one men's and one women's facility.

(d) The program shall include all of the following:

(1) 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:

- (A) Carpentry.
- (B) Ironwork.
- (C) Sheet metal.
- (D) Laborers.
- (E) Operating engineers.

(2) Availability to incarcerated individuals who are within 24 months of release and express interest in careers in the trades.

(3) 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:

- (A) Employment and training services, including job readiness workshops, occupational skills training, preapprenticeship placement, and paid transitional work opportunities.
- (B) Behavioral health and substance use services, including mental health counseling, cognitive behavioral therapy, substance use disorder treatment, and peer recovery support.
- (C) Housing support services, including emergency shelter, transitional housing, housing navigation, and rapid rehousing assistance.
- (D) Transportation assistance, including public transit passes, rideshare vouchers, and driver's license reinstatement support.
- (E) Family and childcare support, including parenting classes, childcare subsidies, and family reunification services.
- (F) Legal services, including expungement and record sealing clinics, support with fines and fees, and reentry-related legal navigation.
- (G) Digital and financial literacy services, including digital skills training, budgeting support, credit repair, and access to communication tools.
- (H) Basic needs support, including access to work clothing, hygiene items, food assistance, and mobile phone access.

(4) 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.

(e) 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.

(f) Participants who complete the program shall receive an MC3 certification from a certified training provider.

6276. (a) The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation shall submit a report to the Legislature, beginning January 1, 2029, and each year thereafter, that includes the following information:

(1) The number of individuals who have enrolled in the Preapprenticeship Pathways to Employment Program.

(2) The number of individuals who have completed the Preapprenticeship Pathways to Employment Program.

(3) The number of individuals placed in registered apprenticeships or related employment.

(4) The number of individuals from each participating facility and program site who fit the criteria in paragraphs (1) to (3), inclusive.

(5) Identified barriers to access and participation.

(b) The report submitted pursuant to this section shall be submitted in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government Code.

6277. This chapter shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2032, and as of that date is repealed.