

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

CORRECTIONS PROGRAMS

State Prisons and Local Jails: Understanding the Differences



The Florida Department of Health (DOH), HIV/AIDS & Hepatitis Section, Prevention Program leads in the provision of prevention, testing and linkage services within the correctional system. DOH funds two programs for inmates preparing to return to their communities: the Jail Linkage Program and the Prison Pre-Release Planning Program. Another program provides prison-based peer education training. Total funding for the corrections programs is approximately \$1.6 million.

The terms *prison* and *jail* are often, mistakenly, used interchangeably. While both are part of the correctional system continuum of custody, they are very different in their HIV health care functions and in their funding sources.

PRISONS

- Mandated to test each inmate for HIV within 60 days of release from custody
- 55 prisons statewide, 7 are privatized
- Funded and operated by state Department of Corrections
- Less transitional population than jails
- Average length of stay measured in years
- Mandated to provide level of care commensurate with community standards

JAILS

- Not required to test inmates for HIV unless convicted of sex crime or if charged with crime involving exchange of body fluids
- 67 county jails
- Funded by county governments, operated by Sheriff's Office
- More transitional population than prisons
- Average length of stay measured in days
- If sentenced longer than one year, moved to a state prison
- Given local guidelines for inmate health care but not mandated
- ~50% of inmates released within 48 hours of arrest