



U.S. Department of Justice  
Federal Bureau of Prisons

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## Bureau of Prisons Issues Directive to Fully Implement First Step Act and Second Chance Act

WASHINGTON, DC - In order to restore integrity and fiscal responsibility to the federal prison system, the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) today issued a policy memorandum to staff directing the robust and comprehensive implementation of both the *First Step Act of 2018* and the *Second Chance Act of 2008*—two bipartisan cornerstones of modern criminal justice reform.

“This is the dawn of a new era, one in which the Bureau of Prisons will realize the full potential of the First Step Act and Second Chance Act,” said BOP Director William K. Marshall III. “The comprehensive policy outlined today will eliminate barriers to maximize the availability of home confinement to those who qualify for community release under the First Step Act and Second Chance Act. This change in policy will fully operationalize the laws as intended by Congress and ensure a smoother transition for many individuals to return to productive lives after incarceration.”

The new policy announced today will have immediate and meaningful benefits. It will:

- **Avoid wasting millions of taxpayer dollars** on unnecessary incarceration,
- **Reduce strain on prison bedspace and staffing,** and
- **Eliminate prolonged and unnecessary burdens on inmates and their families**—particularly those with stable home environments and strong community ties.

The new directive ensures that:

- **FSA Earned Time Credits and SCA eligibility will be treated as cumulative and stackable**, allowing qualified individuals to serve meaningful portions of their sentences in home confinement when appropriate.
- **Conditional Placement Dates**—based on projected credit accrual and statutory timelines—will drive timely referrals, not bureaucratic inertia.
- **Stable housing and community reintegration readiness**, not past employment, will guide placement decisions.
- **RRC bed capacity limitations will not be a barrier to Home Confinement** when an individual is statutorily eligible and appropriate for such placement.

Director Marshall continued: “This action marks a bold shift from years of inaction toward a policy rooted in **public safety, fiscal responsibility, and second chances**. By empowering the agency to release more people who are ready to return to society, we not only save taxpayer dollars, we strengthen families, ease overcrowding, and build safer communities.”

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