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## Supporting Successful Community Reintegration for Maricopa Reentry Center Residents Justine

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### Introduction

- In 2018, the combined state and federal imprisonment rate was 431 sentenced prisoners per 100,000 U.S. residents (BJS, 2020).
  - Arizona is #5 in the nation with the highest imprisonment rate, 559 sentenced prisoners per 100,000 state residents (BJS, 2020).
- As of May 2020, there are currently approximately 5,300 offenders under community supervision in Arizona with a majority (4,600 offenders) serving a Truth in Sentencing (TIS) (ADC, 2020).
- Barriers to reintegration:** laws and legal restrictions, societal stigma and employer attitudes, limited education, limited cognitive skills, limited work experience, inadequate job skills, unstable housing, inadequate social services, lack of a state-issued identification card, lack of transportation, lack of technological proficiency due to prolonged incarceration, negative community context upon release, and lack of access to healthcare to address needs
- Aims of the project**
  - Create and provide programming to parolees for community reintegration focused on essential skills needed for work readiness and socialization.
  - Explore the value of occupational therapy within community corrections and the criminal justice system.

### Methods

- Setting:** Maricopa Reentry Center (MRC) is a community corrections facility in Phoenix, AZ that is operated by the Arizona Department of Corrections, Rehabilitation and Reentry. MRC provides programming for parolees to support transition from prison to the community.
- Participants:** Men, ages 18 and older, with a history of incarceration and substance use disorder enrolled in MRC's 90-day Intensive Treatment with Housing (ITH) program.

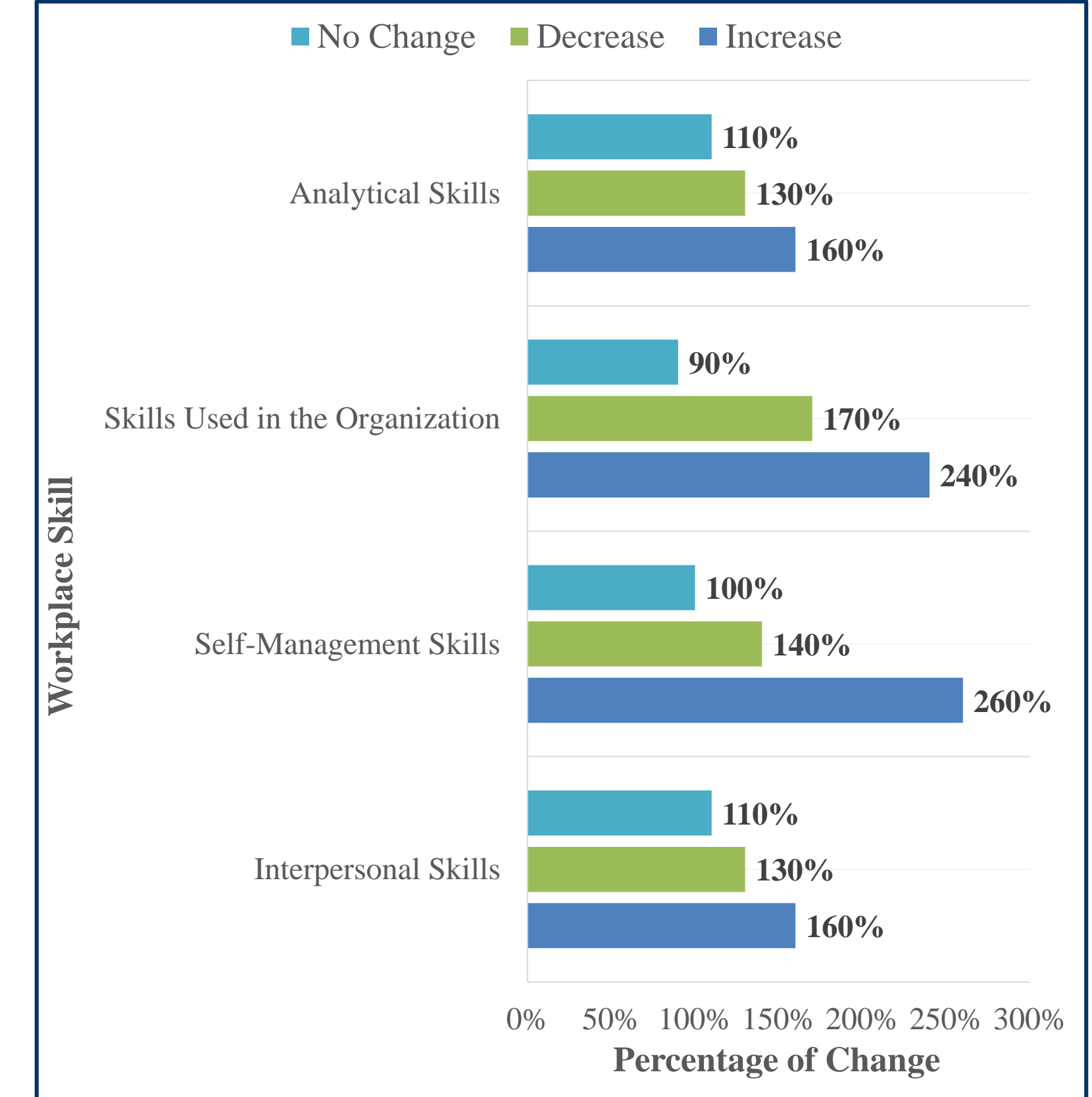
### Program Design

- This program was designed based upon needs pertaining to community reintegration (a) identified in the literature, (b) recognized and shared by the facility staff, and (c) expressed by program participants at the facility.

WORK READINESS PROGRAM		SOCIAL SKILLS PROGRAM	
Description		Description	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Person-Environment-Occupation (PEO) model</li> <li>Participants: All residents, mandatory</li> <li>Frequency: 2x/week – Tuesdays and Thursdays (1.0 hour sessions)</li> <li>ARIZONA@WORK: Reentry Job Fairs</li> <li>Self-Assessment Tool for Employees</li> <li>Daily Program Surveys</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Social-Ecological Model</li> <li>Participants: Residents 45+ days at MRC</li> <li>Frequency: 2x/week – Wednesday and Friday (1.5 hour sessions)</li> <li>Co-facilitated</li> <li>Social Emotional-Skills Rating Scale</li> <li>Daily Program Surveys</li> </ul>	
Week	Session Topics	Week	Session Topics
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Six Dimensions of Wellness Model</li> <li>Occupational Wellness</li> <li>Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time-based (SMART) Goals</li> </ul>	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Values and Roles Checklist</li> <li>Meditation, Tai Chi</li> <li>True Colors (personality quiz)</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Soft Skills for Work Readiness</li> <li>Communication</li> </ul>	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Love Languages</li> <li>Styles of Communication (passive, aggressive, passive-aggressive, assertive)</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Job Interviews Skills</li> <li>Situation, Task, Action, and Result (STAR) Interview Technique</li> <li>The Visual-Auditory-Kinesthetic (VAK) Learning Styles</li> </ul>	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Benefits and Risks of Assertiveness</li> <li>Conflict Resolution Skills</li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Problem Solving and Critical Thinking</li> <li>Conflict Resolution</li> </ul>	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Negotiation Skills and Conflict Resolution</li> <li>Attachment Styles (secure, avoidant, anxious, disorganized)</li> </ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Career Clusters Interest Survey</li> <li>ARIZONA@WORK</li> </ul>	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trust, Communication, Problem Solving, Teamwork</li> <li>Personal Boundaries</li> <li>Family Roles and Social Supports</li> </ul>

### Results

Table 1: Pre- to Post-Self Assessment Tool for Workplace Skills



- 44 total participants
  - 10 residents completed the full 5-week program.
- Assessment Tool for Workplace Skills
  - The majority of participants self reported an increase from the pre- to post-test when rating their skills in each category.

### ARIZONA@WORK

- Residents demonstrated an increase in awareness about the program's services.
- Employment Reentry Counselor
  - There was an an increased need by residents for one-on-one meetings.
  - A schedule change was made from 1x/week to 3x/week due to an increased need among residents.

### Reentry Job Fairs

- Total: 34 participants
  - January 2020: 11 participants
  - February 2020: 12 participants
  - March 2020: 11 participants

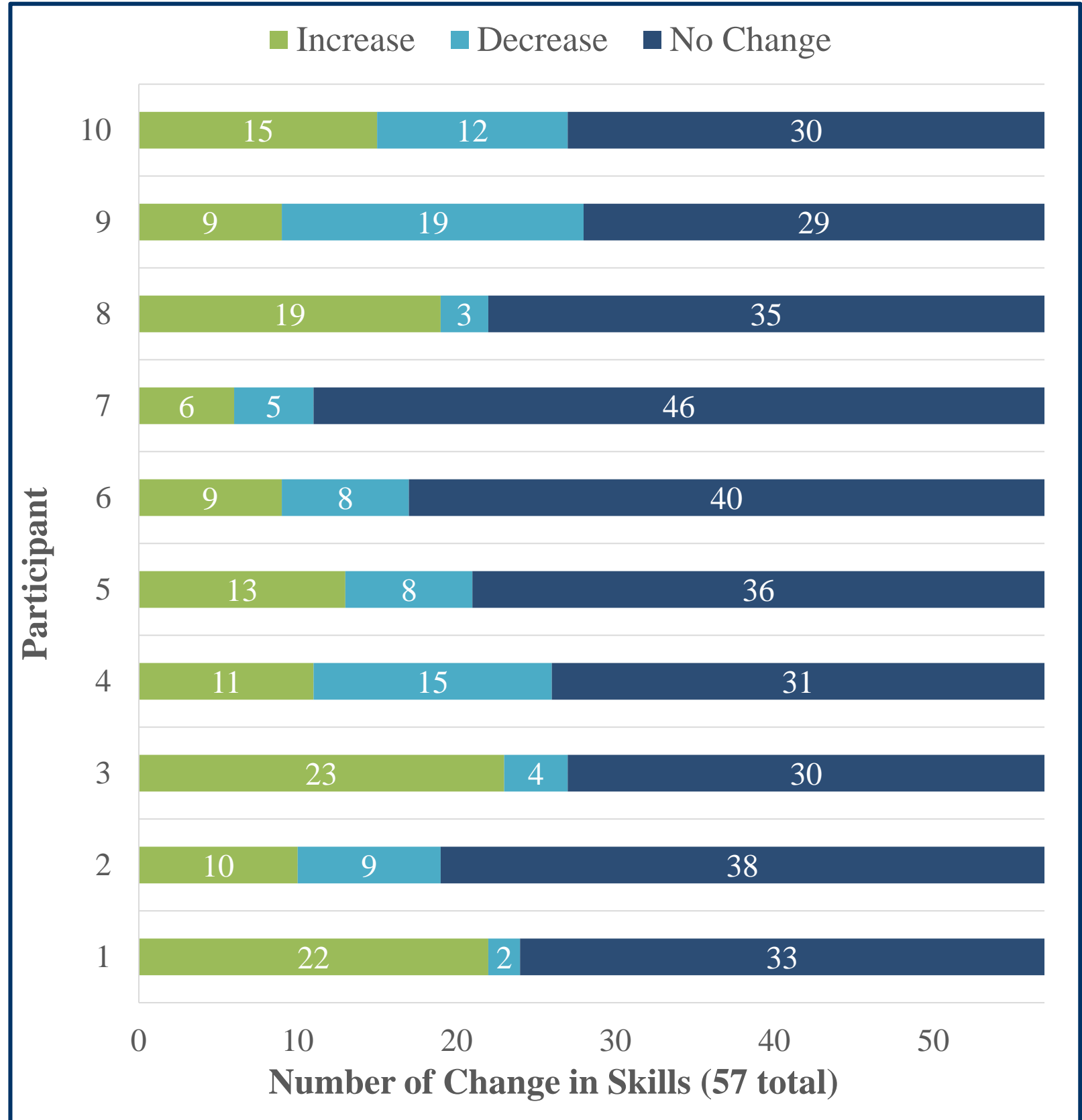
### Social Skills Program

- 24 total participants
  - 10 residents completed full the 5-week program.
- Social-Emotional Skills Rating Scale
  - Mixed results found among participant self report of skills from pre- to post-test.
  - The majority of participants reported "no change" in social-emotional skills from pre- to post-test.
  - Increased skill areas**
    - Asking for help, expressing feelings, offering help, and dealing with failure
  - Decreased skill areas**
    - Being optimistic, choosing the right time and place, giving advice, and making an accusation

### Clinical observations

- Residents demonstrated increased comradery when interacting with others in the group.
- Overtime, residents were able to open up more regarding social fears upon release.
- Residents displayed an increased interest in improving social skills with topic suggestions.

Table 2: Pre- to Post-Social-Emotional Rating Scale



### Conclusions

- Participants were often unaware of resources and services available to them upon release.
- With an additional member on the team at MRC, the number of resources available to participants at MRC for community reintegration increased.
- Participants demonstrated feeling more prepared and confident in their own skill set for reintegration when self-efficacy and motivation was emphasized throughout programming.
- There is a need for more access to substance use and mental health services during the reintegration process based upon the needs of participants.
- Program findings demonstrated:**
  - Participants often reported difficulty during transition from the structured prison environment to an unstructured community environment upon release.
  - Many participants are not proficient in the use of technology and would benefit from more computer training, especially when applying for jobs online and resume writing.
  - Professionalism and interview techniques were important skills participants valued learning and/or reviewing for community reintegration.
  - There is a strong need to address social skills, such as relationships and intimacy among participants for reintegration to aid in healing old social ties or create new relationships.
  - The use of roleplay and hands on activities were effective methods implemented in programming when addressing workplace skills and social skills among participants at MRC.
- Limitations:**
  - Participants had varying detox timelines and were all at different stages of recovery.
  - There were occasional time conflicts with other programming and urine analysis (UA) testing.
  - MRC lacked access to computers for participants to practice their skills during programming.
  - Participants identified a lack of autonomy, which sometimes led to resistant behavior.
  - The measures used were non-standardized, self-reported retrospective surveys.
  - It was not possible to implement the 2nd phase of the capstone project due to COVID-19.

### Implications for Occupational Therapy

- Occupational therapists (OTs) have the ability to play a significant role in addressing the needs of former offenders within the criminal justice system (Muñoz et al., 2016).
  - There is a need for more advocacy for occupational therapy services in the criminal justice field.
  - More research and evidence-based approaches are needed to support current and future OT contributions to community corrections and the criminal justice field.
  - OTs currently practicing within the criminal justice system should increase networking and interprofessional collaboration.

### References

See provided reference list

### Acknowledgments

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Arizona Department of Corrections Rehabilitation & Reentry

