

Memorandum

Date: July 15, 2014

To: Honorable Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

From: Carlos A. Gimenez
Mayor



Subject: Feasibility of Culinary Arts Program in Miami-Dade County Correctional Facilities - Directive No. 140272

The following information is provided to you in response to Resolution No. R-245-14 directing the Mayor to study the feasibility of implementing a culinary arts training program for inmates housed in Miami-Dade Corrections and Rehabilitation (MDCR) facilities.

MDCR has been committed to providing reentry programming to inmates as a method to improve employability skills and provide vocational opportunities. The implementation of a culinary arts program would be an innovative initiative and would further the department's mission to *"serve our community by providing safe, secure, and humane detention of individuals in our custody while preparing them for a successful return to the community"*.

MDCR is currently working with Miami-Dade Public Schools and Lindsey Hopkins Technical Education Center (Lindsey Hopkins) to evaluate the feasibility of establishing such a training program. An initial meeting was held on May 13, 2014 with MDCR and Lindsey Hopkins' staff to discuss potential program goals and objectives, logistics, certification requirements and programmatic needs. A subsequent meeting was held on June 11, 2014 to discuss curriculum details, classroom capacity, and instructor availability. Lindsey Hopkins' culinary arts program consists of 1,200 hours with four, stand-alone courses, requiring 300 hours each, where certification can be achieved in food preparation, cook-restaurant, chef/head cook, and food services management. Each course consists of approximately 60% practicum and 40% of classroom instruction. Instructors are available Monday through Friday, up to 5 hours per day and classroom capacity is 15 students. In addition to providing instructors, Lindsey Hopkins also provides books, testing materials and prepares schedules. MDCR has reviewed the current curriculum in an effort to determine which components of the current program will provide the greatest degree of employability in the food service industry for inmates.

A culinary arts program is contingent on inmate participation in classroom instruction and practical skills activities. MDCR operates its food services with three locations making food trays and two locations cooking food, and requires over 200 inmate workers to prepare three daily meals for approximately 5,000 inmates. MDCR has recently entered into a facility lease that will consolidate its food services operation into one centralized location with the relocation occurring by March 2015. Once the various food operations are centralized, cooking will only take place in the kitchen at the Turner Guilford Knight Correctional Center availing space for the culinary arts program and greatly reducing the number of inmate workers needed. This will increase the availability of inmates for the classroom instruction required in a culinary arts program while meeting the operational need of inmate workers for food preparation. In the meantime, MDCR will continue developing a culinary arts program while exploring the following:

1. Continued participation in the culinary arts program upon an inmate's release including possible financial aid;
2. Utilization of successful participants of the culinary arts program by MDCR's food service as part-time employees; and
3. Exploration of grant funding availability for the culinary arts program.

For additional information, please contact Marydell Guevara, Director, Miami-Dade Corrections and Rehabilitation Department, at 786-263-6010, or me directly.

c: Genaro "Chip" Iglesias, Deputy Mayor
Marydell Guevara, Director, Miami-Dade Corrections and Rehabilitation Department
Christopher Agrippa, Director, Clerk of the Courts