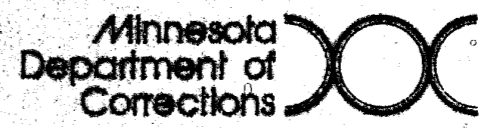




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**Women Helping Offenders, Inc.
1981 Legislative Report**

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U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice

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L E G I S L A T I V E R E P O R T

Women Helping Offenders, Inc.

1981

submitted by:

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
430 Metro Square Building
Seventh and Robert Streets
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

NCJRS

SEP 17 1982

ACQUISITIONS

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SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

INTRODUCTION

This report is in response to Minnesota Laws 1979, Chapter 336, Section 4, Subdivision 4, which mandates that the Commissioner of Corrections shall evaluate the Women Helping Offenders (WHO) program and report back to the Legislature by June 30, 1981. The Fiscal Year 1980 - 1981 legislative appropriation for the Women Helping Offenders' program was \$118,526 for each year. This money has been channeled through the Department of Corrections and paid to WHO in monthly installments according to a contract between the Department of Corrections and WHO.

CLIENTS SERVED

WHO provides emergency services such as referrals for food and shelter and a variety of direct services such as job development, counseling, and parole planning. During the one-year data collection period (May, 1979 through April, 1980), 373 clients were served by WHO. Most of WHO's clients were Black, male, and ex-offenders on probation or parole. The majority of clients who were served while incarcerated were in state-operated correctional facilities.

COSTS

For the wide variety of services provided, the average cost for an hour of service was \$62.68. The average cost per client was \$317.79.

CONCLUSIONS

The WHO program has accomplished many of its goals as stated in its Mission Statement. It is significant that WHO serves a substantial number of minority clients (62.1%). Few non-residential correctional programs in the state have such a high number of minority clients. It is also significant that WHO places emphasis on job development and employment services. It is especially important during this time of high unemployment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Department of Corrections recommends:

1. That Women Helping Offenders, Inc., in cooperation with the Department of Corrections, develop and implement a comprehensive evaluation system which will more precisely measure program results.
2. That the Legislature fund Women Helping Offenders, Inc. in the amounts of \$70,000 for Fiscal Year 1982 and \$81,100 for Fiscal Year 1983. This funding request is at approximately one-half the funding for the 1980-1981 biennium.
3. That Women Helping Offenders, Inc. seek additional funding from other sources.

BACKGROUND

Women Helping Offenders, Inc. (WHO) is a Minneapolis based multi-service agency which presently has a contract with the Department of Corrections for non-residential service provision: Minnesota Statutes (1978, Sections 15.061, 242.21, and 241.32) allow the Department of Corrections to contract with public/private agencies for special services to persons committed to the Commissioner of Corrections or under the control of the Minnesota Corrections Board, and provide programs for the prevention and decrease of crimes.

The intent of this organization is stated in its Mission Statement which follows:

"Women Helping Offenders is a non-traditional program for non-traditional offenders, and potential offenders, both men and women, who are normally excluded from traditional service usually because of their (1) lifestyle; (2) the multiplicity or complexity of their social needs; and (3) negative attitude that the WHO clientele has of traditional service organizations. WHO's goal is to effect productive and permanent positive life developments in individual clients, and to prevent any further involvement of clients in the criminal justice system.

Since its inception, the program has developed a range of services, particularly job development, based on the articulated needs of the clientele seeking help from WHO. These services cannot

be performed by any other single agency, nor are they being addressed within the penal system."

The WHO organization defines a non-traditional client as "that person who would not be able to go to the usual human service/government agencies without some one-to-one contact or support". Some terms which could be used to describe these clients would be: frightened, inexperienced with the system or job market, "negative attitude", poor self-concept, presents himself or his case poorly, frustrated or angry with the system, has been directed from one agency to another without receiving an explanation, has a lack of patience with the delays of a bureaucracy.

Women Helping Offenders, Inc. is a private, non-profit organization which orients its service primarily to the Twin City Metropolitan area. Its office is situated at 1422 West Lake Street in the Hennepin-Lake district of Minneapolis.

There is a Board of Directors which makes major policy decisions, hires, and supervises the Director of the program. The Director has the overall responsibility for the continuing operation of the organization. The Administrative Assistant supervises the secretary, three counselors, and also provides direct client service which supplements the work of the counselors. This position reports to the Director. Three counselors provide the direct service and collateral contacts with and for the clients. The organization has all six of its full-time positions filled at the present time.

CLIENTS SERVED

During a one-year data collection period (May, 1979 through April, 1980) 373 clients were served by WHO. Clients include persons who completed intake forms and returned for at least one contact with WHO staff. Incarcerated persons were counted as clients if they completed an intake form and were contacted at least once at the correctional institution by WHO staff. More specific client identification criteria have recently been developed by the current WHO administration in an effort to eliminate counting persons who have received little if any real services.

Of the total 373 clients served during this report period, 130, or 35 percent were incarcerated at the time they were served in correctional facilities within Minnesota as shown in Table 1.

| TABLE 1 WOMEN HELPING OFFENDERS, INC. LOCATION OF INCARCERATED CLIENTS | |
|--|--------------------------|
| <u>CORRECTIONAL FACILITY</u> | <u>NUMBER OF CLIENTS</u> |
| Stillwater | 52 |
| St. Cloud | 28 |
| Shakopee | 3 |
| Lino Lakes | 5 |
| Suak Centre | 4 |
| Red Wing | 1 |
| Federal or County Institutions | <u>37</u> |
| | 130 |

Other information regarding WHO clients includes the following:

- ◆ Thirty of the clients served, or 8 percent, were released on parole by the Minnesota Corrections Board (MCB).
- ◆ Forty-five or 12 percent of the clients served were on probation from Minnesota county and district courts.
- ◆ Of the 373 served, 63 or 17 percent were incarcerated in states other than Minnesota. Some of these clients were former Minnesota residents wishing to return to the state.
- ◆ Seventy or 19 percent of the clients served were under no formal jurisdiction (incarceration, probation, parole) at the time they were served. From this group of 70 clients, 38 or 54 percent said they had been involved in criminal activity earlier in their lives.
- ◆ There were 35 or 9 percent of the total clients who were given one-time referrals regarding food, housing and/or clothing.

Table 2 shows a breakdown of clients by court or corrections jurisdiction.

| <u>JURISDICTION</u> | <u>NUMBER</u> | <u>PERCENT</u> |
|--|---------------|----------------|
| Incarcerated in Minnesota | 130 | 35% |
| On Parole | 30 | 8% |
| On Probation | 45 | 12% |
| Incarcerated outside of Minnesota | 63 | 17% |
| No Formal Jurisdiction | 70 | 19% |
| No Formal Jurisdiction/One-time referral | 35 | 9% |
| | 373 | 100% |

Clients were referred to WHO by a number of different sources including correctional institution caseworkers, court services officers, probation/parole officers, other human service agencies, family, friends, public service announcements, or "word of mouth".

Most WHO clients were Black, male, and ex-offenders. See Tables 3 through 5.

| <u>LEGAL STATUS</u> | <u>NUMBER</u> | <u>PERCENT</u> |
|---|---------------|----------------|
| Incarcerated | 147 | 39.5% |
| Ex-offenders (on probation or parole) | 187 | 50.0% |
| Potential criminal justice system clients | 39 | 10.5% |

| <u>RACE</u> | <u>NUMBER</u> | <u>PERCENT</u> |
|-------------|---------------|----------------|
| Black | 209 | 55.9% |
| White | 141 | 37.8% |
| Indian | 14 | 3.7% |
| Other | 9 | 2.5% |

| TABLE 5 | | |
|---|---------------|----------------|
| WOMEN HELPING OFFENDERS, INC. WHO CLIENTS BY SEX | | |
| <u>SEX</u> | <u>NUMBER</u> | <u>PERCENT</u> |
| Male | 259 | 69.5% |
| Female | 114 | 30.5% |

SERVICES PROVIDED

The services provided by WHO are divided into two programs; emergency services, and direct services.

EMERGENCY SERVICES PROGRAM

Provides referrals in the areas of food, clothing, and shelter on a one-time basis. A significant number of persons need immediate care in the above areas for themselves or their families. Addressing these needs can make possible opportunities to provide more significant assistance at a later time.

DIRECT SERVICES PROGRAM

Provides the following five distinct services:

• Job Development

Involves continual contact with the business community in seeking job openings for clients and in developing an attitude among employers of openness toward hiring ex-offenders. WHO's job developer interviews, counsels, and screens each individual client to assist the client in applying for an appropriate job. After the interview is arranged and application made, the job developer follows through with both applicant and employer in the stages which follow which include performance assessment, notification of WHO staff if problems arise, and general support of the client toward establishing responsible employment practices. When appropriate, the job developer encourages further

education for the client and/or involvement in specific job training opportunities.

● Court Advocacy

On behalf of the client is provided in a variety of forms. The WHO staff helps the client secure legal representation, either through the Public Defender's Office or private counsel. The WHO advocate works closely with the legal representative and other court officials to point out the appropriateness of short-term incarceration, community treatment, chemical dependency treatment, or other alternatives to long-term incarceration.

Another important part of this work is the time spent with the client and client's family to explain the nuances and obligations involved in the legal system as they apply to the client.

Following the court's decision, WHO's advocate will often monitor progress and attendance of the client in whatever program the court may have placed the client.

● Counseling

Is provided for non-chemically dependent clients, and though a great deal of one-to-one supportive, general counseling is provided, the staff are not therapists. Therefore, they make a significant number of referrals to counseling centers in the Twin City area for those persons whose problems require specialized help.

● Parole Planning

Involves thoughtful, direct supportive services to the inmate, the caseworker, and the parole agent to assist the client in the

development of a parole plan. Part of this plan includes goal setting with the client, and responsible monitoring of client progress. Where appropriate, WHO staff can interpret to the client's family their role (the family's) in the parole plan where the client plans to return home.

● Referral Services

Are extensively used by the WHO staff. Agencies in the Twin City area offer a multitude of specialized service delivery programs. The help available to WHO clients is greatly increased by the use by WHO staff of these many available programs. When a client is referred for service elsewhere, the WHO counselor maintains contact and follow-up regarding that client's progress and any additional needs.

The most frequently provided service was employment/job development during the report period. The following information in Table 6 is a breakdown of the services provided by WHO staff. Clients frequently received more than one service. Figures do not include referrals.

| TABLE 6 | | |
|---|---------------|----------------|
| WOMEN HELPING OFFENDERS, INC. SERVICES PROVIDED BY WHO STAFF | | |
| <u>SERVICE PROVIDED</u> | <u>NUMBER</u> | <u>PERCENT</u> |
| Employment/Job Development | 365 | 42.1% |
| Education | 53 | 6.1% |
| Parole Plan | 128 | 14.8% |
| One-to-one Counseling | 149 | 17.2% |
| Court Advocacy | 121 | 13.9% |
| Housing | 15 | 1.7% |
| Food/Clothing | 7 | 1.0% |
| Chemical Dependency | 28 | 3.2% |
| | 866 | 100% |

Table 7 shows the number of times both direct (face-to-face) and collateral (phone calls, letters, appointments with a variety of persons on behalf of the client) contacts were made during the report period.

| TABLE 7 | | | | |
|---|---------------|--------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|
| WOMEN HELPING OFFENDERS, INC. CONTACTS BY TYPE AND BY TIME | | | | |
| <u>TYPE</u> | <u>NUMBER</u> | <u>AVERAGE NUMBER PER CLIENT</u> | <u>HOURS</u> | <u>AVERAGE HOURS PER CLIENT</u> |
| Direct Contacts | 1,035 | 2.77 | 1,051 | 2.81 |
| Collateral Contacts | 2,192 | 5.87 | 845 | 2.26 |

The total average number of direct and collateral contacts per client was 8.64. The total average number of hours of direct and collateral contact per client was 5.07. (figures from Table 7)

It should be noted that these hours and contacts were provided by three WHO staff members, and they do not include other client related activities such as staff meetings, educational contacts, seminars, workshops,

inservice training, reporting, and general job development with prospective employers.

COSTS

Since August of 1977 the Legislature has appropriated funds for Women Helping Offenders, Inc.. That money totals \$467,395.00, and has been monitored by the Department of Corrections through yearly contracts for service. Since Fiscal Year 1979 the amount of each contract has been \$118,526.00. The Department of Corrections has paid WHO approximately \$9,800.00 per month after the services have been provided.

Because a number of clients receiving services are not the responsibility of the Department of Corrections, WHO is aware that in the future the level of state funding will be reduced. However, this is not in any way a result of unsatisfactory program performance. Since the spring of 1980, WHO has been pursuing funds from other sources (Hennepin County, private grants, foundations).

The cost per client is calculated by multiplying the average number of hours spent in direct or collateral contact with the client (5.07 hours) by the total number of clients served (373) to find the number of hours spent serving clients. That figure (1,891.11 hours) is divided into the total budget of the organization (\$118,526.00) to find the cost of one hour of service to the client. Using this formula, the average cost for an hour of service is \$62.68. Each client received an average of 5.07 hours of service, thus the average cost per client is \$317.79.

Making cost comparisons to other programs is difficult at best, since the services provided by WHO are unique. However, some comparisons may be useful. For example, the Helping Industry Resolve Employment Difficulties (HIRED) program, which offers job seeking skills and preparation for employment services, has an average cost per client of \$259. This agency has recently been serving approximately three times as many clients as WHO, and benefits from the economy of scale and specialization since they provide only employment services. The probation and parole services provided by the Minnesota Department of Corrections have an average cost per client of \$197.

CONCLUSIONS

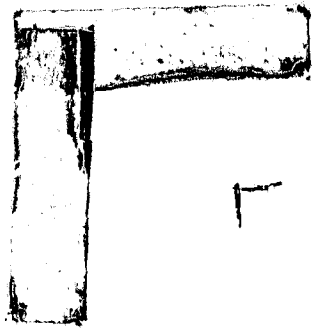
It is the Minnesota Department of Corrections' position that the Women Helping Offenders, Inc. program has accomplished many of its goals as stated in its mission statement. These general goals include provision of services to offenders, ex-offenders, and potential offenders who are normally excluded from traditional services.

The emphasis WHO places on job development and employment services is very significant and should be continued. Also the fact that WHO serves a substantial proportion of minority clients (62.1%) is significant.

However, data that has been collected does not indicate to what extent and exactly how many WHO clients have been assisted by the program. The program has collected aggregate data on the numbers of clients, but does not have a comprehensive evaluation system for follow-up of client progress. How many are, in fact, hired, retain their jobs and for how long is not included in the available data. A comprehensive evaluation system should be an essential element in the WHO program as they request funds in the future from public or private sources.

An informal, unscientific survey letter was sent to some professionals in the field of Corrections and they were asked for their opinions on the helpfulness of the WHO program. The general response from halfway houses was favorable, but they hadn't used the program to

a great degree in the recent past. Correctional institution case-
workers stated that WHO is a resource, but not frequently used.
The inmates more frequently than caseworkers initiate contact with
WHO. The staff of the Pre-Release Program at Lino Lakes is very
pleased with the extra help with community planning and aid to
inmates in preparing for employment. Hennepin County Parole Agents
find WHO staff responsible, professional, and very effective with
their clients.



END