

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

STATE OF ALASKA

PO BOX 112000,
Juneau, Alaska, 99811-2000
PHONE: (907) 465-4652
FAX: (907) 465-3390



PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Richard F Schmitz, Communications Special Assistant
Office: (907) 465 4640
Mobile: (907) 321 0040

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 15, 2005

No. 05-026

CORRECTIONS SEEKS PRIVATE PARTNERS FOR PRISON INDUSTRY

(Juneau) – The Alaska Department of Corrections is seeking private sector partners to operate prison industries at Palmer, Fairbanks and Kenai. The department this week placed notices in Alaska publications seeking letters of interest and announcing the initiative.

“Our goal is to provide inmates with a place to work, and also to get much-needed job training. Many offenders come into our system with few, if any, job skills. So working at a prison industry can teach everything from the importance of showing up on time to technical vocational skills,” said Commissioner Marc Antrim.

“With low cost labor, this is a good opportunity for an Alaskan entrepreneur’s idea to come to fruition. This could be a good way for the private sector to have labor-intensive work done that would not otherwise be affordable,” Antrim said.

Specifically, the department is soliciting letters of interest from individuals or firms to partner with the state to operate a private production or manufacturing business at Palmer, Fairbanks and Wildwood Correctional Centers (Wildwood is located in Kenai).

These facilities – all within prison confines – contain some shop equipment, and will be leased at approximately 60 percent of the prevailing rate for similar space. With a Memorandum of Agreement in place, a business would be responsible for initial renovation, utilities, maintenance and repairs. The department will provide inmate labor and security. Approximately 5,800 square feet of space is available at Fairbanks, 12,500 square feet at Kenai and 5,850 square feet at Palmer.

Inmates are paid a minimum of 85 cents an hour.

The Fairbanks facility consists mainly of open space and offices and has room to employ up to 12 inmates. At Palmer, there's room to employ an inmate workforce of 16 in a former auto body repair shop. In Kenai, the workspace is in a stand-alone building with room for a workforce of 20-50. A considerable amount of shop equipment is available at the site, which once housed a metal fabrication and wood furniture manufacturing plant.

Letters of interest should be faxed to the attention of the procurement manager at 907 465 2006.