

One Minnesota Budget

Recruitment and Retention

Over the past four years, Corrections Officers have experienced some of the most challenging circumstances in a generation. Like so many corrections departments across the country, the Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC) is facing a staffing crisis. During this time, the DOC has engaged in numerous, robust efforts to recruit, retain, and support its dedicated staff. But stabilizing the workforce needs additional investments. To ensure safe and secure facilities, the DOC must modernize hiring practices, incentivize potential workers, and provide supports and resources for DOC staff to feel respected and supported in the workplace.

“Correctional officers are an essential piece of the criminal justice system. The field needs promising solutions and supportive resources to address recruitment and retention.”

- Center for Justice Information

The Governor recommends an ongoing increase in funding to improve the DOC’s ability to recruit and retain employees and to ensure employee wellness and stability. The request includes the following investments:



Recruitment Efforts

\$460,000 annually to hire additional staff to meet recruitment needs, as well as to increase the DOC’s marketing budget to attract quality candidates. Increasing recruitment will reduce the significant costs of overtime pay that is far above budget.



Correctional Employee College Pilot Program

\$360,000 per year ongoing to create a pilot Correctional Employee College Program, to develop partnerships with higher education institutions, and collect data to ensure measurable benefits for DOC employees and their families. The pilot will strive to align campuses with state prisons to create new career pathways into corrections, new benefits to those pursuing corrections, and improved long-term outcomes.



Staff Wellness Pilot Program

\$2 million in FY2024 and FY2025 to create a Pilot Staff Wellness Program and funding for contracts with community partners who specialize in trauma recovery and wellbeing. Staff support and wellbeing is critical to recruitment, retention, and safety in the facilities and the community as staff trauma and work stress play a significant role in decisions to separate from service.



Staff Support and Wellness Unit

\$300,000 per year ongoing to support the DOC's 4,300 staff in situations that involve harassment or assault and ensure effective collaboration by internal and external support following critical incidents.



Integrated Conflict Management System

\$200,000 to design and implement an integrated conflict management system to prevent, manage, and resolve conflict within the organization. Maintaining a positive work environment that responds to destructive forms of conflict and learn from constructive conflict is essential to the effective functioning of our agency.



Human Resources Support

\$533,000 to ensure the state's corrections workforce is sufficiently supported through maintaining the human resources information system, labor relations assistance, Americans with Disability Act (ADA) compliance, worker's compensation claims, and leave management expertise. Currently, the HR Division cannot effectively support the 4,300 staff that require it.



Staff Training and Professional Development Opportunities

\$2.96 million for training and professional development opportunities for each DOC employee. The investment is one for the future potential and skills of the Minnesota's dedicated corrections staff by providing opportunities for growth and, in turn, a more productive and committed workforce.

\$400,000 per year ongoing to increase the capacity of the agency to provide employee development services. The DOC has a backlog of 13 courses that must be designed and delivered to meet Ombuds recommendations, PREA audits, and grievance settlements.



Critical Incident Review

\$110,000 in FY2024 and \$50,000 beginning in FY2025 to create culture changes around how critical incidents are reviewed. Between 2018 and 2021, the DOC conducted over 2,100 employment investigations. To promote a culture of learning from mistakes, we must be willing to re-evaluate our complaint procedures and employee investigation and disciplinary systems.