



Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC) Overview

Senate Judiciary and Public Safety Committee
February 3, 2024

Mission:

Transform Lives for a Safer Minnesota



Agency Reorganization

- Reorganize the department to break down silos, improve communication both vertically and horizontally, increase cross-unit efficiencies, improve agency leadership awareness, and reduce costs.
- At every level of the agency, grow and develop staff to build trusting teams and achieve results.
- Practice servant leadership at every level within the agency to grow and develop staff, build trusting teams, and achieve results.

Transformative Programming


- Increase public engagement, in the creation and revision of agency programs and policies, particularly those impacted by them.
- Increase the use of evidence-based practices in the rehabilitation of those who are incarcerated, or under supervision.
- Increase a continuum of community intervention partnerships who embrace effective delivery of community-based programs to address needs so client may remain safely in community.
- Reduce the number of technical readmissions to prison by 70 percent overall, including American Indians and Minnesotans of color, through effective utilization of community supervision and supportive services.

Safety and Wellbeing

- Continue to implement transmission mitigation plans to reduce the spread of COVID-19 among DOC staff and the people we serve.
- Protect all staff, currently incarcerated individuals, victim survivors and clients under supervision from additional harm and injury.
- Improve the quality of the experiences of new employees entering the agency.
- Embed employee wellness across the agency under the leadership and activities of the Peer Support Team.
- Provide sufficient resources & effective training to DOC staff and community partners to reach zero re-victimization of victim survivors.

DOC Strategic Plan

What Do We Do?



Create and deliver individualized plans to better help the people we serve.

Prepare people in our care to have success when they return to our communities.

Provide services in the community to help people under supervision build connections and transform their lives.

DOC by the Numbers

- **Employees:** approx. 4,300
- **Prisons:** 11
- **Facility capacity:** 9,522 beds (double-bunked)
- **Current Population:** approx. 8,300 individuals
- **Total DOC facilities footprint:** 7.5 million sq. ft.
- **DOC-provided supervision:** 20,000 individuals
- **DOC district supervision offices:** 13



MCF-Shakopee
built 1986
capacity: 656



MCF-Faribault
opened 1989
capacity: 2,026



MCF-Lino Lakes
built 1963
capacity: 1,325



MCF-Red Wing
built 1889
capacity: 42-A, 111-J



MCF-Rush City
built 2000
capacity: 1,018



MCF-Oak Park Heights
built 1982
capacity: 444



MCF-St. Cloud
built 1889
capacity: 1,058



MCF-Stillwater
built 1914
capacity: 1,561



MCF-Togo
built 1955
capacity: 90



MCF-Moose Lake
built 1938
capacity: 1,057



MCF-Willow River
built 1951
capacity: 177



Over 95% of those incarcerated will return to our communities. Setting them up for success helps ensure fewer victims and greater public safety.

DOC's Person-Centered Approach

- Human dignity is the foundational, organizing principle of Minnesota's corrections system.
- We are putting people at the center of our decision-making.
- Creating multi-disciplinary teams to work with the people we serve to design and deliver transformational services.



Community Supervision/ Probation

Minnesota relies heavily on community supervision

- Approximately 80,000 people in community on supervised release or probation statewide
- DOC is one of **4 delivery systems** for supervision
 - Minnesota Community Corrections Act (CCA)
 - Department of Corrections (DOC)
 - DOC/County Probation Officer
 - Tribal Supervision
- The DOC supervises two types of people:
 - Felony sentenced individuals who have served the mandatory two-thirds of their prison sentence who have been released from prison.
 - Probationers who were not committed to the custody of the Commissioner of Corrections but resides in counties that do not operate a local supervision system.



Considerations for Policy Makers

- The Department of Corrections has a **Constitutional obligation** to provide healthcare and a standard of living for those that are incarcerated under state law.
- **24/7/365 operation.** Supporting staff, keeping everyone safe, and providing transformational services are central to public safety.
- **96%** of the DOC's budget is appropriated by the General Fund.
- We must have safe, secure facilities to provide services.
- Our staff is the backbone to that work.
- We strive to be **transparent, responsive, and accountable.**

The background image shows the interior of a prison. A large, multi-paned window at the top allows natural light into the space. Below the window, a group of people, likely inmates, are seen from behind, walking away from the camera down a hallway. Some individuals are wearing orange jumpsuits and caps. The walls are made of brick, and a white door is visible on the right side of the hallway.

1% of the
population is
accountable
for 63% of all
violent crime
convictions.*

*Falk O, Wallinius M, Lundström S, Frisell T, Anckarsäter H, Kerekes N. Soc Psychiatry Psychiatric Epidemiol. 2014 April.

Minnesota's Incarcerated Population

- Average age: **39.9 years**
- Average time in DOC prison: **36 months**
 - 27 have life sentences
 - 167 of those without the possibility of parole
- **89%** have high school / GED or higher
- **68%** have minor children
- Race:
 - White: **51%**
 - Black: **37%**
 - American Indian: **9%**
 - Asian: **2.5%**
 - Unknown/Other: **0.2%**
- Health:
 - **85%** are diagnosed with an alcohol or substance use disorder
 - **39%** have a cardiovascular condition being treated
 - **37%** are on psychiatric medication
 - **10%** have diabetes
 - **41** individuals have cancer
 - **20** with Hepatitis C
 - **7** with tuberculosis
- **25%** of those leaving MN prisons are homeless
- **27%** unemployment rate for formerly incarcerated
- **64%** of incarcerated individuals remained free of felony convictions for three years post-release

Staffing – Recruitment and Retention

The DOC has been using **every tool available to recruit and retain staff.**

- In 2023, the Legislature passed a significant investment in the staff and operations of the DOC – funding compensation increases and staff wellness.
- Compensation increases for corrections staff led to needed and historic increases for corrections officers.

The DOC is currently at a 99% staffing level across the agency.

- Current staffing level exceeds 2019 levels.

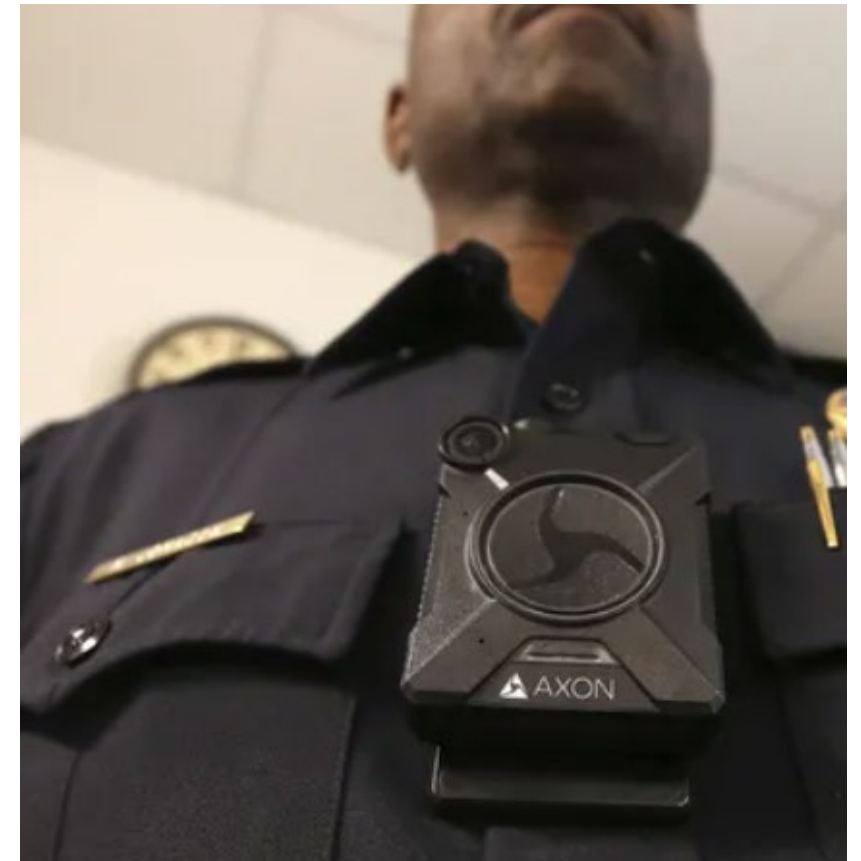
With the success of hiring efforts there has been a **reduction in OT**, but challenges persist.

- Forced overtime has decreased greatly



Safety in Prisons – Body-Worn Cameras

- The body-worn cameras pilot program began **December 2024**.
- 2020 OLA Report found **significant need to increase data collection and security technology**.
- DOC Ombuds 2022 Report on Sexual Assault in Prisons Recommendation concluded **Minnesota should provide correctional officers with body cameras**.
- Will increase the expectation of **transparency** in correctional facilities – similar to law enforcement.
- Allows for more **transparent investigations** into assaults against staff members or in allegations of staff use of force complaints.



Safety in Prison – Other Changes Since 2020 OLA Report

Established the Office of Professional Accountability (OPA)

Reduction of double-bunking

Creation of the MN Correctional Facilities Security Audit Group

Increased data-tracking and improved communications

Completion of the agency strategic plan

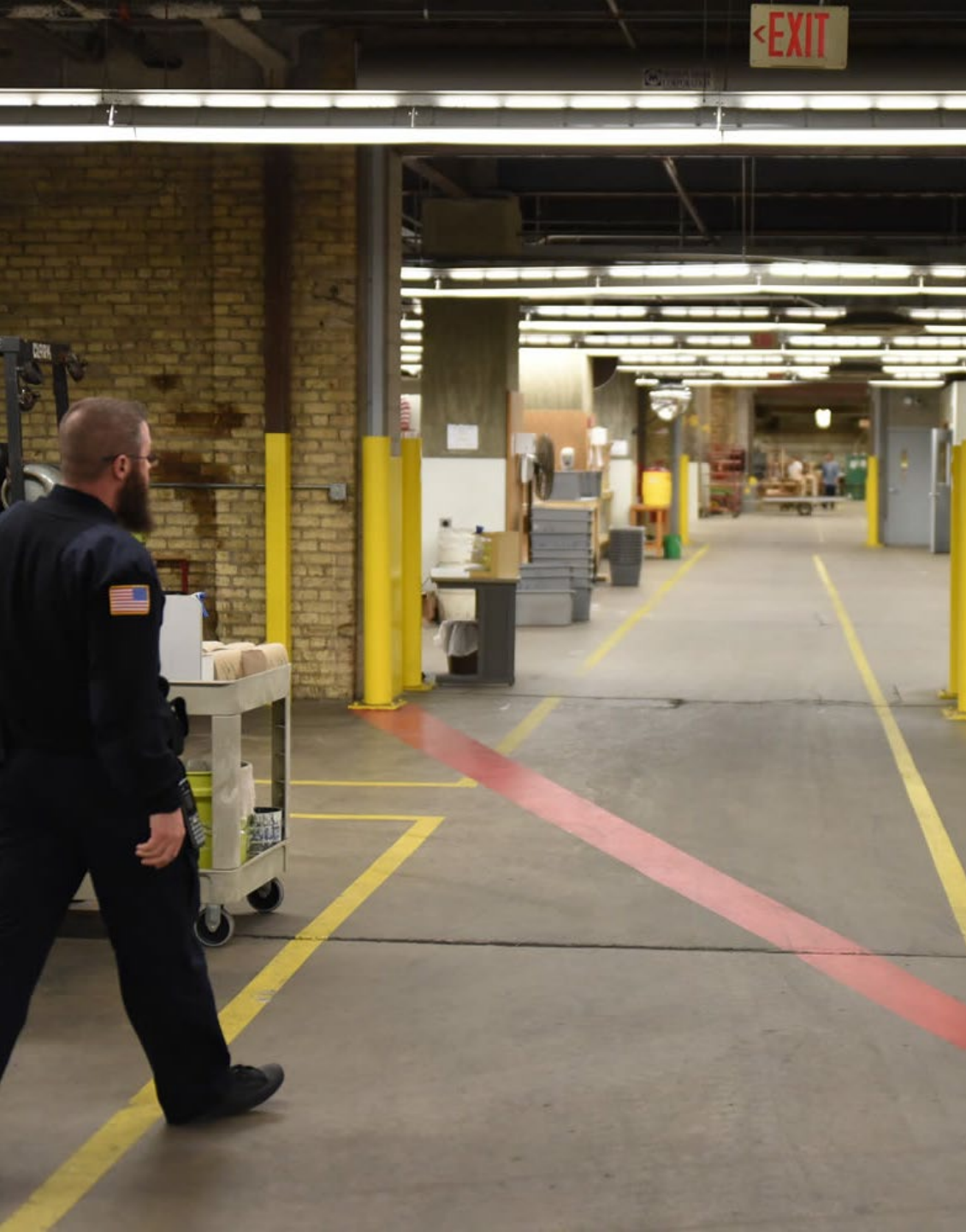
Undertaking an Infrastructure Strategic Planning Study for Stillwater & St. Cloud

Shift to person-centered approach – targeting criminogenic risk factors

Increased staff wellness programs and supports

DOC Budget Proposals





Operating Deficiency

- **\$9M to maintain current service levels in FY25.**
- Remarkably high staffing levels
 - Haven't seen levels this high since 2019
 - DOC compensation is now competitive, helping us attract and retain skilled employees
 - Able to offer programming and services essential to the DOC's mission

Operating Adjustment

- **\$43.3M in FY26, \$66.9M in FY27 and each year ongoing**
- Funds will help to support current levels of staffing and service
- With a larger, well-compensated workforce, an operational budget increase is necessary to support the expanded staffing levels and related staffing costs



Sentencing to Service Program Sunset

- Ending the Sentencing to Service (STS) program at the end of the current fiscal year
 - STS provides the option to sentence nonviolent incarcerated individuals to a period of supervised work in the community
- STS county participation and crew size has steadily decreased since 2019.
- Ending the DOC's contributions to the STS program will result in a **savings of \$1.8M annually.**
- Counties may continue to fund their own STS program, but staff will not be DOC employees.

Bed Costs for Theft of Public Funds Penalty Increase

- \$12k in FY26, \$44k in FY27, \$87k in FY28, and \$145k in FY29
- To account for additional bed costs related to increased criminal penalties for theft of public funds



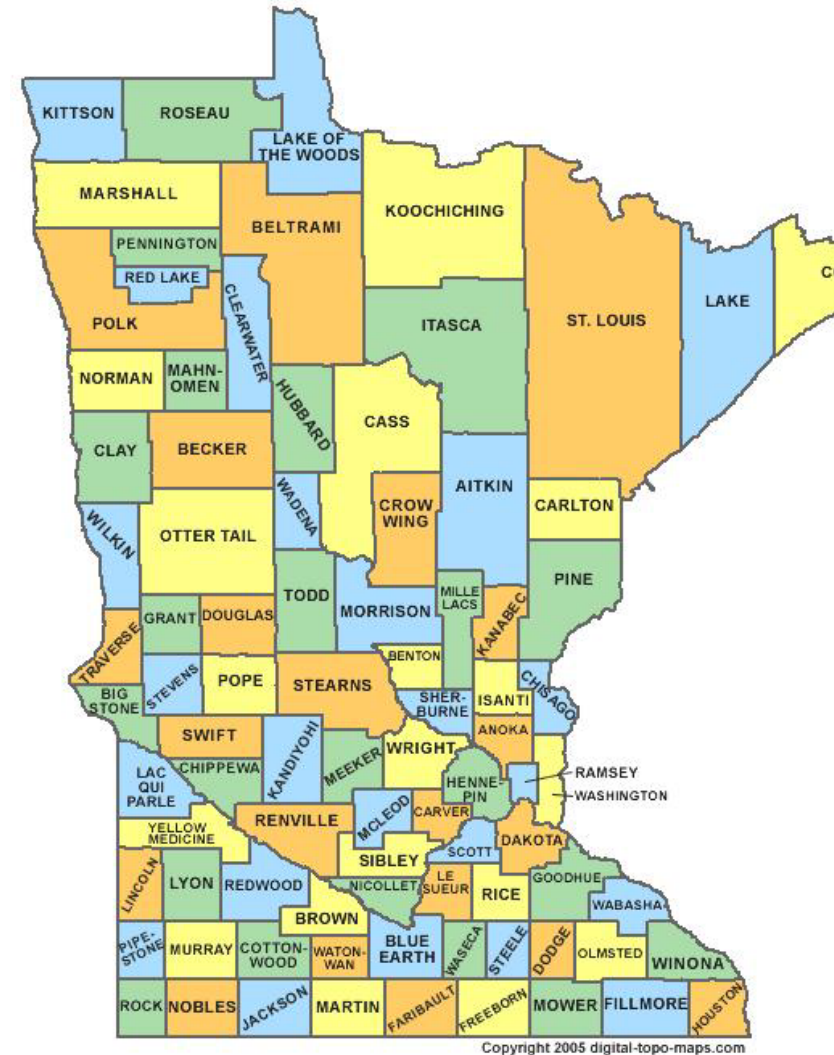
Mental Health Unit (MHU) Pilot Program Extension

- Pilot allows counties to transfer **individuals incarcerated with serious and persistent mental illness** in local jails to the MHU at MCF-Oak Park Heights for housing and treatment
- All cost paid for by the counties
- Jails may not have the **resources or expertise** to care for these individuals
- Extends program to August 1, 2027
- Changes to the “voluntary” requirement



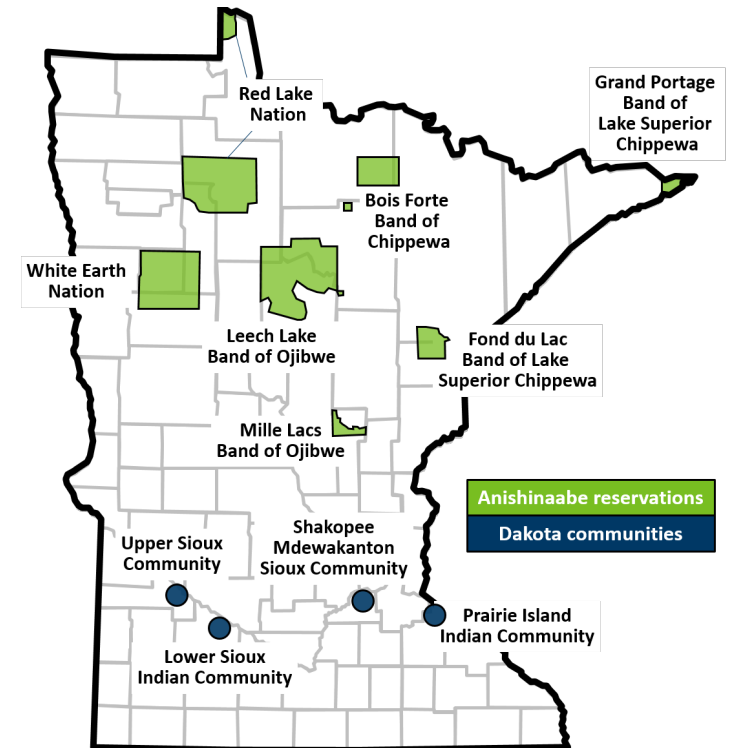
Interstate Compact Unit (ICU) Cost Sharing

- This unit handles **all interstate transfers of supervision** under the Interstate Compact for Adult Offender Supervision.
- The ICU is **currently solely funded by prorating DOC supervision counties**, though it provides services for all 87 counties
- Amends the statute to allow the cost of the ICU to be spread **across all 87 counties**.
 - Prorating the share of the unit by the county's share of the most recent probation population



Tribal Supervision Funding Updates

- Legislature allots \$250k to each Tribal Nation to provide community supervision or to fund cultural reentry services
- The statute providing for the allotment does not contain any further requirements for Tribal Nations to receive funding nor does it specify how the funds should be paid out
- This proposal helps **streamline the distribution of Tribal Nation supervision funding and clarifies how these funds can be used**
- Requires abbreviated comprehensive plan be submitted to the commissioner for how these funds will be used



Other Budget Neutral Items in Budget

Finance Technical Changes

- Provides the DOC with the authority to transfer certain appropriated funds internally to align with recent budgetary and financial restructuring

Chapter 2940 Repeal / HRU Codification

- Much of rule is either obsolete, duplicative, already in statute, or better addressed in policy
- Repeals the rulemaking and codifies in statute any necessary provisions

Fictitious Emergency Definition Expansion

- Expands the definition of “corrections employee” in the reporting of a fictitious emergency of certain public officials a felony.
- Current language only covers those physically working in a correctional facility, and not supervision agents and central office staff who are exposed to similar risks of retribution.

The image shows the interior of a grand, classical hall, likely a museum or a government building. The space is characterized by tall, fluted marble columns with Corinthian capitals. The ceiling is high and features a large, colorful fresco depicting several figures in classical attire. The floor is made of polished stone, and a red carpeted staircase leads to a higher level in the background. The lighting is warm and focused, highlighting the architectural details and the artwork.

Implementation Updates

Minnesota Rehabilitation and Reinvestment Act (MRRA)

- MRRA is a **discretionary policy, that incentivizes incarcerated individuals to potentially earn early release and/or supervision abatement**. Savings realized from decreased population will be reinvested in victim services, crime prevention initiatives, and community-based correctional programs.
- Anticipated implementation and rollout plan:
 - **This week** – Finalize and share retroactive MRRA policies and procedures for earned incentive release and supervision abatement.
 - **February 2025** – Begin pilot of retroactive review, analyze processes, and implement best practices.
 - **Spring 2025** – Continued review of processes and best practices while refining MRRA policies and procedures. Early releases for qualified individuals in the pilot programs. Preparation for full MRRA implementation and retroactive review.
 - **Summer 2025** – Retroactive review continues along with final preparation for full implementation of the regular MRRA policy.
 - **Fall 2025** – All new DOC commitments will be subject to MRRA policy. Retroactive reviews to continue for those already incarcerated.

Other Recent DOC Implementation Efforts



DOC Data Infrastructure Overhaul



Expansion of Post-Secondary Education



Supervision Formula and Standards Reform



Evidence-Based Practices Unit



Free Phone Calls



Supervised Release Board



Family Support Unit



Expansion of Shakopee Programming Space



Housing Stability Investments



Cannabis Expungement Board
Establishment



Staff Wellness Pilot



Clemency Review Commission
Establishment

Questions

