

# LIFER'S GROUP INC.

A REPORT ON THE SOURCES AND USES OF FUNDS  
FROM THE MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF  
CORRECTION'S

CENTRAL INMATE BENEFIT FUND

CENTRAL LAW LIBRARY FUND

AND

CENTRAL PROGRAM ACCOUNT

For The Period of July 1, 2020 Through June 30, 2021

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# A REPORT ON THE SOURCES AND USES OF FUNDS IN THE MA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION'S CENTRAL INMATE BENEFIT FUND, THE LAW LIBRARY FUND, AND THE PROGRAM ACCOUNT FOR FISCAL 2021 (JULY 1, 2021 - JUNE 30, 2021)

## 1. Introduction

The Central Office of the Massachusetts Department of Correction (DOC), pursuant to internal DOC Regulation 103 DOC 476, maintains two separate accounts or funds, the Program Account (103 DOC 476.10) and the Law Library Fund (103 DOC 476.11). These accounts, along with the Central Inmate Benefit Fund (CIB) or Z-1 Account, were established to provide services and benefits to prisoners. The Program Account and the Law Library Fund are financed by assessments paid by each correctional institution as a percentage of the total revenues received each month in the respective correctional institutions. The Law Library Fund receives 20% of said revenues; the Program Account receives 10%. Interest payments are also earned on account balances.

Institutional revenues consist of commissions paid to an institution by the Keefe Commissary Network (KCN) as a percentage of sales to prisoners for commissary, appliance, and clothing items. Over 90% of an institution's revenue is generated from such commissions. The remaining revenue sources are: locker fees, soda bottle refunds, vending machine commissions, and bank interest. KCN also pays commissions on sales of tablets, tablet accessories, emails, movies, games, music, and Secure Pak orders. These commissions, however, are paid directly into the CIB and are not shared with institutions.

The DOC established the Program Account as "an effort to identify and utilize all available resources ... to supplement existing programs or funding of new programs throughout the Department." [103 DOC 476.10(11)] The DOC does not indicate why the Law Library Fund was established or any guidelines as to how or where funds are to be expended from the Law Library Fund. The Law Library Fund did fund the computerization of law libraries in each institution. Since the smaller institutions did not generate enough revenue to pay for individual conversions, the assessments to larger institutions compensated for the shortfalls. All institutional law library computer conversions, however, were completed over a decade ago. Yet, the monthly 20% assessments continue resulting in a large unused balance in excess of \$1,000,000 being continuously maintained in the Law Library Fund.

The CIB appears to be an extension of the individual Z-1 (Inmate Benefit Accounts) maintained in each institution. Individual superintendents have the authority to expend funds within broad guidelines. According to 103 DOC 476.12(2): "Expenditures of such funds shall benefit the general inmate population or be for any goods or services determined by the

Commissioner to be necessary to maintain and/or enhance the delivery of services to inmates." Superintendents may petition the Central Office for payment of major institutional expenditures from either the Program Account of the CIB on a case-by-case basis. Any expenditure exceeding \$1,000 at the institutional level must receive written approval from Administrative Services in the Central Office. [103 DOC 476.12(5)]

## 2. Total Sources and Uses of Funds For Fiscal 2021

<b>Account/Fund</b>	<b>Total Sources</b>	<b>Total Uses</b>	<b>Differences</b>
CIB	151,793.46	87,179.54	64,613.92
Law Library Fund	285,809.83	499,640.88	(213,831.05)
Program Account	<u>141,377.70</u>	<u>8,897.51</u>	<u>132,480.19</u>
Totals	578,980.99	595,717.93	( 16,736.94)

## 3. Central Inmate Benefit Fund (CIB)

### a. Balance Sheet

Beginning Balance (7/1/20)	450,202.38
+ Sources of Funds	<u>151,793.46</u>
Subtotal	601,998.84
- Uses of Funds	<u>87,179.54</u>
Ending Balance (6/30/21)	514,819.30

### b. CIB Sources of Funds (7/1/20 - 6/30/21)

Secure Paks	91,156.38
MP3, Music, Movie and Game Commissions	29,053.60
Access Commissions	22,629.30
Returns of Unused Funds	4,400.33
Institutional Typewriter Payments	2,235.00
Inmate Restitutions	886.60
Interest	735.98
Adjustment	<u>696.27</u>
Total Sources of Funds	151,793.46

The commissions for music downloads, videos, and games decreased from Fiscal 2020 by 76%, while the commissions for Secure Pak sales increased 127%. The Total Sources of Funds in Fiscal 2021 decreased 25% from Fiscal 2020.

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c. CIB Uses of Funds (7/1/20 - 6/30/21)

Swank	36,849.00
Reading Materials	25,000.00
Lionbridge	9,214.87
SHI International	7,581.00
Adjustments	2,183.00
BSN Sports	1,937.87
Curbell Medical Providers	1,784.97
Keefe Commissary	1,079.05
ADC Depalo	957.00
W. B. Mason	314.42
CharmTex	<u>278.36</u>
Total Uses of Funds	87,179.54

In Fiscal 2021, only 57% of the Sources of Funds were spent from the Central Inmate Benefit Fund. No specifics of what service or item was purchased were provided in the data received from the DOC.

4. Central Law Library Fund (Z-176)

a. Balance Sheet

Beginning Balance (7/1/20)	1,548,858.06
+ Sources of Funds	<u>285,809.83</u>
Subtotal	1,834,667.89
- Uses of Funds	<u>499,640.88</u>
Ending Balance (6/30/21)	1,335,027.01

b. Law Library Fund Sources of Funds (7/1/20 - 6/30/21)

1) Assessments From Institutions

MCI-Norfolk	53,183.37
MCI-Shirley	50,610.69
MCI-Gardner	35,127.37
Old Colony	29,210.80
MCI-Concord	24,243.75
Souza-Baranowski	19,480.93
MCI-Cedar Junction	15,937.46
Treatment Center	13,038.98

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MCI-Framingham	9,475.01
N.E.C.C.	7,421.20
Pondville	6,270.23
Bridgewater State Hospital	3,398.09
Community Corrections	3,041.09
Bridgewater Complex	2,478.68
So. Middlesex	2,001.70
MASAC	1,124.16
2. Other	
Unattributed	3,387.41
Error Adjustment	3,185.20
Interest	1,835.09
Voids	<u>1,358.62</u>
Total Sources of Funds	285,809.83

The total of the institutional assessments was 276,043.51, a .07% increase from Fiscal 2020. The Total Sources of Funds for Fiscal 2021 for the Law library Fund decreased 5% from Fiscal 2020.

c. Law Library Fund Uses of Funds (7/1/20 - 6/30/21)

Dell /EMC	230,950.16
Matthew Bender	119,400.00
Integration Partners	46,980.62
Comcast	40,961.00
Thomas West	28,721.00
Intrasystems	18,700.00
Mass. Lawyer's Weekly	8,778.00
Lawyer's Diary	<u>5,150.00</u>
Total Uses of Funds	499,640.88

Despite the fact that in Fiscal 2021, more funds were expended from the Law Library Fund than were received, i.e., 175% Uses over Sources, the ending balance in the Law Library Fund as of June 30, 2021 was over \$1.3 million. The DOC needs to consider why so much in this fund is continuously left unused. The funds stockpiled in the Law Library Fund could be used to meet program needs at the institutional level. If the DOC is unwilling to apportion at least some of the funds held in the Law Library Fund, the DOC should consider reducing the 20% assessment. At the very least, then the DOC should reimburse individual institutions for

the expenses they incur for maintaining their law libraries. These expenses include, but are not limited to: typewriters, photocopier leases, copy paper, toner, legal books, and assorted office supplies such as typewriter ribbons, envelopes, and typing paper, all of which is required to be made available to prisoners for their legal work.

## 5. Central Program Account

### a. Balance Sheet

Beginning Balance (7/1/20)	244,521.97
+ Sources of Funds	<u>141,377.70</u>
Subtotal	385,899.67
- Uses of Funds	<u>8,897.51</u>
Ending Balance (6/30/21)	377,002.16

### b. Program Account Sources of Funds

The sole reported source of funds for the Program Account is the 10% assessment paid by each institution on their total revenues each month. In Fiscal 2021, the total of all institutional assessments was 141,377.70 or 118% over Fiscal 2020. As in Fiscal 2020, the DOC did not provide the amounts assessed each institution in Fiscal 2021, but provided only the total of income per quarter.

### c. Program Account Uses of Funds (7/1/20 - 6/30/21)

Booklets For Inmate Journaling	7,613.61
Virtual Volunteer Program	721.24
Indirect Charges	<u>562.66</u>
Total Uses of Funds	8,897.51

In Fiscal 2021, in the Program Account, the Sources of Funds exceeded the Uses of Funds by 94%.

## 6. Total Ending Balances For Each Account

Central Inmate Benefit Fund (Z-1)	514,819.30
Law Library Fund (Z-176)	1,335,027.01
Central Program Account	<u>377,002.16</u>
Total Ending Balances - 6/30/21	2,226,848.47

The decrease in the total of ending balances for the three Central Accounts from Fiscal 2020 was \$16,733.94 or .7%. Overall, the ending balance for the Central Inmate Benefit Fund increased 14%, the ending balance for the Law Library Fund decreased 14%, and the ending balance for the Program Account increased 54%.

In closing, the question needs to be asked, as it has in previous reports on the DOC's three Central Accounts: Why does the DOC continue to maintain over \$2.2 million sitting in these three accounts combined, rather than increasing spending for programs proven to reduce recidivism, such as education, or return funds to individual institutions for their use?

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The Lifer's Group Inc. continues to thank Lois Ahrens, Founding Director of the Real Cost of Prisons Project for her generous, much valued, and continuous support. This report as well as many other Lifer's Group Inc. reports on such topics as Parole Decisions For Lifers, Recidivism Rates, Elderly Prisoners, Expenditures and Staffing Levels of the DOC, and reports on specific issues concerning lifers and the DOC, can be found at: [www.realcostofprisons.org/](http://www.realcostofprisons.org/) writing. Copies of this report and others found on the Real Cost of Prisons website can be obtained upon request from the Lifer's Group Inc.