

NOROLK INMATE COUNCIL

Massachusetts Department of Correction

Financial Mismanagement II

September 2023

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Massachusetts Department of Correction (DOC)

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Introduction:

This report reflects a date review of public records from the Massachusetts Department of Correction (DOC). Massachusetts Correctional Officers Federated Union (MCOFU) officials in collaboration with DOC administrators continue to manipulate facts and data and oppose any light shined on these facts.

Overview:

The Massachusetts Department of Corrections data:

	2012	2022
Total DOC Budget:	\$518 Million Dollars	\$761 Million Dollars
DOC Total Staff:	5086	4238
Total Prisoner Population:	11,732	6,120
Ratio Prisoner to Staff:	2.3	1.44
Employee Expenses: Dollars	\$333 Million Dollars	\$470 Million
Average Per Employee Pay:	\$64,496	\$110,927
Per Prisoner Incarceration Cost:	\$44,152	\$124,438

MCOFU staffing shortage claims are unfounded according to data. MCI-Cedar Junction removed the last of the prisoner population 2+ months ago. However when staff transferred to other institutions there were no re arrangements (Bidding) of work assignments. In fact all MCI-Cedar Junction staff remained working the same times and days. Thus overstaffing of officers, Sergeants & Lieutenants on certain shifts. It is common to see Lt's some of the highest paid employees in the DOC to be working a yard detail that should be staffed by officers. This was not a final determination of officers but failures of administrators to properly administrate a correctional facility and reassign staff. These failures in staff assignments create an increased need for overtime. This overtime burdens tax payers and the system of corrections, closing program and religious buildings for days.

DOC Officers who complain of heightened anxiety and low morale due to work hours also do not support the "re-bidding" of work assignments (shifts) continuing the excessive overtime. The staff resistance to this is fear of receiving work assignment times and days that are not desired.

DOC institutional "July 2023, Fact Cards" show a failure by administrators.

	Operational Capacity	Facility Count
Boston Pre-Release:	200	35 (-165)
Bridgewater State Hospital:	372	232 (-140)
MA Treatment Center:	680	500 (-180)
MA Alcohol & Substance Abuse:	251	65 (-186)
MCI-Concord:	614	369 (-245)
MCI-Framingham:	701	210 (-491)
MCI-Norfolk:	1,367	1,166 (-201)
MCI-Shirley:	1,129	781 (-348)
NCCI-Gardner:	989	710 (-279)
Northeastern Correctional Center:	277	193 (- 84)
Old Colony Corr. Center:	818	517 (-301)
Pondville Corr. Center:	204	103 (-101)
Souza-Baranowski CC:	1,427	1,050 (-377)

Security Level Operations versus Facility Count

	Operational Capacity	Facility Count
Maximum (73%)	1477	1050
Medium (77%)	6921	5331
Pre-Release Minimum (49%)	681	331

Minimum Security and Pre-Release facilities continue operating at 49% capacity, Medium Security Facilities 77% and Maximum Security 73%. This in large part due to over classification and classification overrides.

A review of this indicates that minimum and pre-release facilities remain under utilized with lower population percentages while higher security facilities operate at higher population percentages.

Additionally facilities remain at reduced operation capacities when facility populations can be combined.

Suggestions: MCI-Concord could shift out it's prisoner population to other medium security facilities (369 prisoners). MCI-Norfolk has a housing unit with 90+ beds which needs a simple repair of a control panel and 90 inmates can be shifted if the repair was completed. This Unit has been left off line for several months (6+ months). However even with this Unit closed according to the DOC Fact Cards there are more than 100+ beds available.

MCI-Shirley has 348 beds open. This could receive most of MCI-Concord Prisoners today and redistribute staff.

NCCI-Gardner also has 279 open beds which could house prisoners for a shift of MCI-Concord.

Old Colony Correctional Center has another 201 open beds which can carry some of the burden of the new prisoners.

In simple words if a prisoner can write letters and obtain the information to propose such a budget reduction , why can't administrators in the DOC.

This does not begin to speak of the projected hundreds of prisoners who are being held at medium security facilities on the DOC Classification Override system. If this system were to be corrected and overrides only allowed for 10 years on any prisoner this would free up many prisoners to move to lower security at a more cost effective rate to better prepare prisoners for society.

There are numerous areas which can cause reduced costs of being smart on crime while preparing prisoners for reentry into society. Even the Massachusetts Parole Board values and recognizes the benefits of lower security, mandating most parolees a designated amount of time in lower security before release as to transition more successfully back into society.

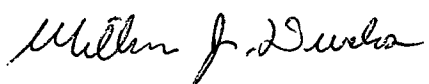
MA-DOC currently has 2,317 beds empty in the DOC. Yet they remain staffed and paid for by tax payers. Additionally many of the closed facilities maintain a skeleton staff at Bay State Correctional Center, MCI-Cedar Junction etc.

Per prisoner cost is currently at \$124,438.33 with an increasing DOC burden there should be a requirement to implement proper management practices and reduce the DOC budget for the welfare of the general public.

One thought talked about is what if one year of incarceration costs for a prisoner was utilized to provide prisoners with all the tools needed for successful reentry over a 3 year span. To utilize \$40,000 per prisoner per year for Mental Health Counseling, General Health Care, Housing, transportation etc. All data suggests that after the first three years of release prisoners are much more likely to not return to custody. Thus would it not make sense to provide all tools upon release for successful reentry and reduce the DOC budget and those who are incarcerated. Take from the DOC budget and pilot program such an effort to continue the successful reduction of prisons and security of the general public while not further inflating an already overgrown DOC.

This is respectfully offered on behalf of the Norfolk Inmate Council (NIC).

Respectfully Submitted,



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cc: file