

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
Rent for Division of Criminal Investigation Headquarters

Background

The Division of Criminal Investigation needs office space that meets the specialized requirements of a state law enforcement agency. The division's existing office space in the Scott Hart Building, on the corner of Roberts and 8th Ave., has been inadequate for many years – a situation that has worsened with increasing security concerns:

- DCI staff is now split between the Scott Hart Building and Fort Harrison, where approximately 10 staff members work in a poorly heated, cinder-block building that was never intended to be office space.
- Building and fire codes in the five-story Scott Hart Building require that, in case of a fire or other emergency, DCI's main entrance be left unsecured. Even a false alarm could potentially compromise case files, evidence and other sensitive information.
- Due to lack of space, the division's criminal investigative files are now stored in the basement of the Montana Law Enforcement Academy, with plumbing overhead.

Advantages of Alternative Office Space

The Division of Criminal Investigation has identified new office space on 11th Ave that would allow all division staff to work in one location and would provide:

- a secure evidence room
- a private interview room
- adequate storage for the division's criminal investigative files and expensive law enforcement equipment, which includes firearms and specialized forensic computer equipment

The off-campus space would also provide increased security in the Capitol area since the division's clientele would no longer be visiting less secure areas of state agencies that serve the general public. This includes:

- sex and violent offenders who have questions about their registration on the Sex and Violent Offender Registry, or who are hand-delivering the required address verification form so that it can be notarized
- individuals who are being interviewed in criminal cases, some of whom subsequently become suspects or are arrested in DCI's office.

Rent Requested

The Division of Criminal Investigation requests an additional \$350,000 for rent and moving expenditures for the biennium:

Funding Source	FY 08	FY 09
General Fund	\$171,500	\$178,500