



Greg Gianforte, Governor | Brian M. Gootkin, Director

May 31, 2022

Members of the Interim Budget Committee Section D,

The Montana Department of Corrections respectfully submits the following information in response to questions posed by members of the Interim Budget Committee Section D at its March 16, 2022 meeting.

Health Services – Budgetary Spend

As noted by the committee in its meeting, the percentage of budget spend in the Health Services area is lower than anticipated. This can be explained by the following:

Significant pharmacy expense paid in March – Because of a position vacancy within Health Services, the bureau experienced a lag in the coding and paying of pharmacy invoices. This resulted in pharmacy expenses being understated in February. Those invoices were brought up to date in March.

Electronic Health Record expenses – Anticipated expenses had not yet been paid as of February.

Health Services budget not aligned with expenses – For the last three biennia, the department has been required to move appropriation out of Health Services to cover expenses in the secure custody area.

The history behind that relates to the passage of **Medicaid Expansion (SB 405)** in the 2015 Montana Legislative Session. At that time, it was noted that the DOC would experience a reduction in medical expenses since some inmate services would now be Medicaid-eligible expenses (overnight hospital stays). The cost reduction included in the bill's fiscal note was between \$2.3 million and \$2.7 million. However, the Legislature reduced the department's budget by only \$250,000, allowing the department to keep any remaining savings to offset other shortfalls in the department budget.

In the 2013 biennium, the DOC required \$6.5 million in supplemental funding. In the 2015 biennium (which included one year of reduced medical expenses, post passage of SB 405), the request had dropped to \$5.5 million. In the 2017 biennium (the first full biennium with cost reductions in place), the department's supplemental request dropped to \$3.1 million.

While the department was allowed to keep this appropriation, it was never formally/permanently realigned with the area in which expenses are actually occurring. Instead, the department processes a Budget Change Document each year to manually move the appropriation. **Director Gootkin has instructed that these funds be appropriately re-aligned as part of his department reorganization.**



More details on PSI writer hiring plus other P&P positions

P&P Legislative Postions		
Position Number	Position/City	Current Status 05.31.2022
64124775	PSI Billings	Filled (started 4.11.2022)
64124776	PSI Great Falls	Filled (started 4.18.2022)
64124777	PSI Missoula	Not yet filled
64124778	PSI Miles City	Filled (started 2.28.2022)
64124779	PO Billings	Filled (started 7.06.2021)
64124780	PO Billings	Filled (started 8.02.2021)
64124781	PO Billings	Filled (started 2.26.2022)
64124782	PO Billings	Filled (started 3.12.2022)
64124783	PO Billings	Filled (started 3.28.2022)
64124784	PO Helena	Filled (starts on 6.20.22)
64124785	PO Helena	Filled (starts on 6.6.22)
64124786	PO Missoula	Not yet filled
64124787	PO Kalispell	Filled (transferred on 5.07.2022)
64124788	PO Great Falls	Filled (started 5.21.2022)

Distribution and use of ARPA funds

The DOC did not receive any direct allocations of ARPA funding from the federal government. However, the department did apply for the following ARPA funds through other state agencies and the established ARPA commissions:

- \$6 million - requested through ARPA 604 funds to purchase the Acadia building in Butte. Request pending.
- \$2.4 million – grant request to CDC for funding to respond to COVID-19 in confinement facilities. Approved for \$2.4 million.
- \$2 million – received through the ARPA Water and Sewer Competitive Grant to upgrade public water systems at DOC facilities

ARPA funding related to community corrections partners

The DOC did not receive ARPA funding to distribute to community corrections partners. The department encouraged partners to make their own applications where appropriate to cover COVID-19-related impacts. As detailed above, all ARPA funding requested and received by the department has been delivered through other agencies via an application and approval process and is to be used for specific purposes.

The department is committed to assisting its partners in community corrections to research ARPA funding opportunities. Director Gootkin reached out to Director Mendenhall who advised the community corrections providers to detail their need for ARPA funding in a whitepaper. The DOC offered to assist with the preparation of that document. The department does not know whether the providers submitted this document.

Acadia proposal explanation

The DOC applied for ARPA funding to assist with the renovation of the Acadia building in Butte, Mont. for use as a re-entry services center. Historically the DOC contracted for these services, with the current contract provider for the Butte prerelease center providing the building space for the program. It was determined during COVID-19 the contract provider's building space (built in 1898 and 1901) was not adequate to address the

many challenges encountered during the pandemic. By purchasing the Acadia facility, the DOC would own the building and ensure there is adequate ventilation, living space, onsite food preparation areas and medical isolation rooms equipped with private toilets, sinks and showers for quarantined offenders with infectious diseases who require continuous care and isolation.

Acadia is a 25-acre facility consisting of a single-story building with functional living space for residents, treatment, and indoor and outdoor training space. The original building was built in 1987, with an additional wing built in 2012, and the last wing built in 2015. The facility was previously used as an adolescent treatment facility where the residents ages ranged from 5 to 18. The facility was closed in 2019.

Once the building has been purchased, updates will be performed to make the building suitable to house re-entry services. When these updates have been completed, the current contract provider would occupy the building to provide prerelease services. However, the contract provider's contract will expire in June 2025. Prior to this date, the DOC will issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) to select a new contract provider. The DOC follows the RFP process outlined by the Montana State Procurement Bureau procurement process.

Estimated Cost of Project/ARPA Funds Requested: \$8,050,020

DOC-wide Employee Turnover

Year	Position Counts	Turnover
FY 19	1354	25%
FY 20	1344	19%
FY 21	1344	22%

DOC Recruitment Efforts

As is the case throughout state government and the private sector, the DOC is encountering difficulties hiring staff — particularly in the areas of security and health care. To assist with this problem, the DOC uses an integrated approach to recruiting for new employees involving online and in-person activities. The department employs a Talent Acquisition Specialist who coordinates these efforts in cooperation with DOC leadership from every division within the department.

Online:

- Indeed (sponsored and un-sponsored posts)
- LinkedIn
- Facebook (sponsored and un-sponsored posts) (posts in community forums i.e. Helena Classifieds)
- Corrections1 (an online resource for correctional professionals including careers)
- Job Service
- Veterans Ascend (hiring service for members of the military, veterans)



- Handshake (recruitment site focused on students) – able to target students focused on criminology, nursing, clinical therapy and more (DOC usage extends to schools throughout the Northwest)
- Virtual Career Fairs, Networking Events

Texting:

The DOC uses a texting service to conduct pre-interviews and provide potential candidates with information about the application process. This service is also used to communicate with candidates as they progress through their applications.

In the Community:

- Career fairs – the DOC participates in numerous career fairs throughout the state. Whenever possible, the DOC recruiter is accompanied by department line staff who are available to speak to potential candidates about the open positions.
- Class presentations – the department’s recruiter and line staff present for students ranging from high school to college age to discuss the variety of career opportunities and paths for DOC employees. (Montana State University, MSU-Billings, University of Providence, MSU-Northern, University of Montana)
- Transition Assistance Program (Malmstrom Air Force Base) – the DOC attends this training bi-weekly to talk to individuals transitioning out of the military about careers in corrections.
- Practicums – the DOC participates in the social work practicum for UM students
- Advertisements in trade publications – the department uses this strategy minimally, but can target specific audiences through this method (Montana Nursing News, Wyoming Nursing News)

American Indian Outreach:

- Tribal college fairs – the DOC attended the 2022 Montana Tribal College and Career Fair Circuit in April (Blackfeet Community College, Stone Child College, Aaniiih’ Nakoda College, Fort Peck Community College, Chief Dull Knife College, Little Bighorn College)
- Class presentations – the DOC recruiter presented in the classrooms at the University of Providence in April. This school has a significant number of students with tribal affiliations. Recruiter also plans to visit Salish-Kootenai College and Flathead Valley Community College (TBD).
- Tribal contacts – working with the department’s American Indian liaison and Governor Gianforte’s director of Indian Affairs to develop contacts on Montana reservations.
- In process – working on development of American Indian-specific recruitment materials

Updates on collective bargaining agreements

The new collective bargaining agreement provides a \$2 per hour raise for correctional officers at Montana State Prison (MSP) and includes changes to the employee grievance procedure, allowing for more efficient resolution of grievances.

Provide summary from master plan.

See Attachment 1.

Prison population forecasts

An updated projection of secure populations is in progress, and the preliminary results have been compared to the projections provided in the July 2020 Strategic Master Planning Report. Some differences from those projections have been identified.

The Strategic Master Planning Report contains projections using data from before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic; therefore, the projections in that document do not reflect the impact of the virus on the flow of individuals through the justice and correctional systems. For both male and female prison populations, COVID-19 resulted in a large drop in the incarcerated population, especially during FY 2021. This was due to the limitation of offenders being admitted to facilities in an effort to prevent and control the spread of COVID-19 to Montana's prisons.

Considering the effects of COVID-19 on the population projections, the male population appears to be growing at a similar rate as reported in the Strategic Master Planning Report; however, because of the decrease in the incarcerated population due to COVID-19 measures, the updated population projections are suggesting that projections provided in the report may be an overestimation.

For the female population, the rate of growth appears to be higher than what was reported in the Strategic Master Planning Report, and despite the effects of COVID-19, may reach or even exceed the projections found in the report.

Please note, these projections do not take into account any policy changes at the state level. Additionally, the department continues to focus on helping offenders succeed on community supervision, thereby lowering the number of revocations to prison.

Required Reports

Quarterly Treatment Bed Report

See Attachment 2

10-Day Jail Hold Report

See Attachment 3

Thank you for your interest in these items. Please let us know if we can be of any more assistance.

Respectfully,

Brian Gootkin, Director