



Feb. 21, 2024.

Members of the Interim Budget Committee Section D,

The Montana Department of Corrections respectfully submits the following information in response to requests made by members of the Interim Budget Committee during its Dec. 13, 2023, meeting. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

**Contract for new sex offender treatment unit provided for in HB 817**

Please see draft, confidential document provided under separate cover.

**Explanation of use of Arizona secure beds' effect on jail hold numbers**

Provided to committee staff on Jan. 30, 2024.

**Implementation plan from each facility participating in the Efficiencies in Community Corrections Initiative**

Please see Attachment A.

**List of criteria used to determine which inmates were transferred to Saguaro Correctional Center**

Please refer to Attachment B, [MSP Procedure 4.8.100](#).

**Evaluations related to program's ability to reduce recidivism in FY24**

These evaluations are not yet complete, but the department will provide them to the committee upon their finalization.

**Montana Community Corrections Association (MCCA) Meeting Feedback - Dec. 13, 2024**

The MCCA requested that the following feedback from the committee's December meeting be included with the DOC's responses. For questions regarding this portion of the document, please feel free to contact MCCA President Amy Tenney at (406) 443-2343.

- There was concern that Prerelease Centers are not accepting high risk offenders. As of 12/31/23, over 73% of the offenders in prerelease centers across the state scored as Moderate, High or Very High Risk on MORRA/WRNA assessments.
- Some members expressed concerns about empty beds in prerelease centers. With the exception of some special circumstances (described below), prerelease centers are on track to expend 100% of their contract maximum amounts. Occupancy at many centers in December was above 98%, with some running at over 100% contract capacity. Exceptions to this include:



- Veteran's Program in Great Falls. This program was developed in 2019 at the request of DOC with the expectation of a capacity of 50 veterans with a guaranteed payment of 22.5 beds. The program was designed for 30 veterans, yet the highest daily population for this program is 14 due to lack of referrals (approval rates for this program are very high). Recently, Great Falls Transition Center and the Department worked together to best meet the needs of both the contractor and the State. As a result, the Veteran's Program, along with the guaranteed payment, will be discontinued as of 3/1/24. In its place, Great Falls Transition Center increased their traditional bed capacity by 15 male beds to better meet the current needs of the Department.
- Missoula Correctional Services. Since the pandemic, Missoula PRC has been struggling, along with the vast majority of businesses in Missoula, to maintain staffing levels deemed acceptable to fulfill the Center's ultimate responsibility and goal of maintaining public safety. Missoula PRC has made the difficult decision to not utilize full bed capacity temporarily until those staffing levels improve and required/mandated training is complete. MCS has been working diligently to rectify this situation; however, this issue is not unique to businesses in the Missoula area.

Respectfully submitted,

**Brian M. Gootkin**

Director, Montana Department of Corrections