

Legislative Prison Overcrowding Costs Forum
Connecticut Department of Correction
Responses to Inquiries
Thursday, April 10, 2008

1) Delineate any operational cost for expansion

The Department's overall deficiency is \$18.5 million.

- Increase of 700 inmates over FY 07 average- \$3.4-million Personal Services, \$2.5-million Other expenses, \$1-million inmate medical, \$1-million Community Support Services.
- Expanded GPS for Burglary 1 and 2- \$251,000
- CRCI Quad retrofit, 48 Correction Officers and 18 support staff- \$3.5-million in FY08,
- Governor's Public Safety Enhancements- 13 parole officers, 3 correctional counselors, 50 correction officers, added halfway house and non residential services for non-violent offenders- \$2-million for FY 08
- Public Act 08-01, as enacted, - nine parole officers, 300 GPS, five fulltime board members, one psychologist, video conferencing, 108 re-entry beds (35 in FY 08), 12 sex offender beds, re-entry furlough eliminated, Burglary 1 and 2 switched to 85% level- \$1,275.943 for FY 08- \$6.5-million for FY 09

2) List the number of cases that are assigned to each parole officer

Parole and Community Services Organization and Staffing:

- * 5 District Offices (Htfd, NH, Bpt, Wtby and Norwich) with Statewide Residential Unit
- * Specialized Units (Fugitive, MH, SMU and Central Intake)
- * Caseloads:

- 64 General Caseload Officers now carry avg. 48 (target is 55-60)
- 13 Specialized Officers now carry avg. 19 (target is 25-30)
- 13 Officers oversee residential network
- 8 Officers assigned to Fugitive Team (no caseload)
- 5 Temp assigned to BOPP
- 8 Release Coordinators
- 111 Total (plus 3 vacancies-1 Retirement, 2 Ext Work Comp)

3) List the types of employment programs offered to inmates who are incarcerated and to ex-offenders who are being released

- Six, and soon a seventh, facilities offer job centers which link offenders with the Department of Labor Job Bank
- DOC has recently hired a job developer who will work to increase access to employer for released offenders.
- Unified School District #1(USD #1) has 55 vocation training programs in 24 different content areas.
- Inmates can earn their GED to enhance their employability
- USD #1 has a 21 day re-entry class that includes completing job applications, resume writing, cover letters, mock interviews including answering the felony question.
- Resource/Career Fairs are conducted at nine facilities each year.
- DOC contracts with a number of agencies and programs that provide released offenders with employment services: OIC- New London, CPA Employment - Hartford, New Opportunities Jobs Now- Waterbury, CSI- New London, FIC Fathers Works.
- DOC contracted halfway houses work with offenders to find and maintain employment.

4) How are sex offenders introduced to employment opportunities post-release?

- While incarcerated, general population sex offenders are eligible to participate in the same programs listed above. In the community, sex offenders are referred to the same network of non-residential service providers, as are all offenders in the community.

5) The prison overcrowding has reduced the space allocated for education, counseling, and other mental health interventions. How are they being addressed, currently?

- The infringement into these areas has been minimal and temporary.

6) Do we have any halfway housing for mental health ex-offenders?

The Department contracts for 23 mental health halfway house beds at Rogers House (co-ed) in Waterbury and Sierra (male) in New Haven. The agency also works closely with the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services on re-entry planning for mental health offenders, addressing housing and a continuum of care and treatment once they are released to include doctor's appointments and medication. We have also piloted supportive housing in Hartford for those with issues including mental illness that leads to them cycling through corrections.

7) How many offenders are released without any housing?

- It is the agency's goal that no offender be released without housing. Our re-entry and discharge planning seeks to address housing as one of the offender's core issues. If the offender is without his or her own housing, attempts are made to place offenders with family and friends or arrange for placement into our halfway house network prior to discharge in order to allow for a period of time to save for their own housing. If all else fails, the facility will work with a shelter in the offender's community to insure that a bed is available and, if necessary, will take the offender to the shelter upon discharge.
- Three years ago the DOC added a "need" to our classification system called Community Resource. This measures those offenders who have significant re-entry needs such as housing, employment, treatment, etc. When we look at those offenders eligible for discharge in the next 5 years the number is 433. At any given time there are at least 100 inmates who have been approved for community release who lack suitable housing.

8) What services or mental health interventions are required of sex-offenders while incarcerated?

- An offender's sex offender treatment need score on a 1-5 scale (5 being the most severe) is determined during their initial assessment upon admission. It is important to note that the Department does not rely on the offender's current offense to determine this score but also considers the underlying facts, charges that may have been plea bargained, and even past behavior. Sex offenders are strongly encouraged to seek treatment while incarcerated as a requirement to be considered for parole. Ultimately however, it is not possible to force an offender's engagement in such programming. For these offenders however, there are very often requirements through probation, that they engage in treatment once placed in the community.