

Department of Corrections

FY 2026-27 Joint Budget Committee Hearing

Wednesday, January 7, 2026

9:00-11:20 AM

9:00 – 9:50 Introductions, Opening Comments and Topics

Main Presenter(s):

- Andre Stancil, Executive Director

Supporting Presenter(s):

- Mitchell Karstens, Director of Finance and Administration

9:50 – 10:30 Male prison population and capacity

Main Presenter(s):

- Mitchell Karstens, Director of Finance and Administration
- Mark Fairbairn, Director of Prisons

Topics:

- Additional prison capacity: Page 5-9, Section 1.1 Questions 1-3 in the packet, Slides 20
- Releases: Page 9-10, Section 1.2 Questions 1-2 in the packet
- Age and prior arrests: Page 11-15, Section 1.3 Questions 1-3 in the packet, Slides 23-25
- Programming: Page 15-19, Section 1.4 Question 1 in the packet

10:30 – 10:40 Prison population management

Main Presenter(s):

- Mark Fairbairn, Director of Prisons

Supporting Presenter(s):

- Dave Lisac, Deputy Director of Prisons

Topics:

- Custody classification: Page 19-21, Section 2.1 Questions 1-2 in the packet, Slides 28-29
- General questions: Page 21-22, Section 2.2 Questions 1-2 in the packet

10:40 – 11:00 Parole

Main Presenter(s):

- Kito Bess, Director of Adult Parole

Topics:

- All questions: Page 22-27, Section 3.1 Questions 1-3 in the packet, Slides 30-35

11:00 – 11:10 Youthful offender system food

Main Presenter(s):

- Lacy Monday, Director of Clinical Services
- Mark Fairbairn, Director of Prisons.

Topics:

- All questions: Page 27-31, Section 4 Questions 1-6 in the packet, Slides 36-39

11:10– 11:15 Inmate phone calls

Main Presenter(s):

- Mitchell Karstens, Director of Finance and Administration
- Eddie Caley, Director of Business Innovations Group

Topics:

- All questions: Page 31-34, Section 5 Questions 1-2 in the packet, Slides 40-42

11:15– 11:20 Private prison per-diem

Main Presenter(s):

- Mitchell Karstens, Director of Finance and Administration
- Mark Fairbairn, Director of Prisons

Topics:

- All questions: Page 35, Section 6 Question 1 in the packet, Slides 43-44

**Department of Corrections
FY 2026-27 Joint Budget**

Committee Hearing

Wednesday, January 7, 2026

9:00-11:20 AM

Common question For Department Hearings (Written-only Response)
(PLEASE RETAIN THE NUMBERING IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN
CONSISTENT LABELING ACROSS DEPARTMENTS.)

1. Please provide a breakdown of your department's total advertising budget for the current and prior fiscal year. Specifically:
 - a. What is the total amount budgeted and expended on advertising and media placement type?

CDOC Response:

FY 24/25 PAID	FY 25/26 ENCUMBRANCE BUDGET
\$572,003 Six months of a ten-month contracted advertising campaign was approved to roll into FY 25/26 due to delayed contract start of the media campaign (total "value" rolled: \$224,961). The overall campaign funds reported above include this rolled campaign, as this was paid in FY 24/25. Statistics reported below of all media expenditures are calculated into FY 24/25 summary as well.	\$279,257

b. How are those advertising dollars allocated across different media types (e.g., television (national/local/cable), radio (terrestrial vs streaming), SEM, digital (display, YouTube), connected TV, social media, print, outdoor, etc.)?

CDOC Response:

Category	FY 24/25 (Paid)	FY 25/26 (Budget)
KKTV Campaign (Multi-Channel)	\$374,835	\$95,000.00
Outdoor & Venues (DIA, Broadmoor, DU)	\$135,995.00	\$80,500.00
Social & Recruitment (LinkedIn, Indeed, etc.)	\$37,063.	\$96,647
Graphic Design	\$23,510.00	\$5,100.00
Other (Radio, Print)	\$600.00	\$2,010.00
TOTAL	\$572,003	\$279,257

c. How much of that spending is directed to Colorado-based or local media outlets? How is the media currently purchased?

CDOC Response:

Expenditure Category	FY 24/25 Actual (Paid)	FY 25/26 Budget (Encumbered)	% Change in Allocation
Colorado-Based Media	\$534,940 (94%)	\$180,600 (65%)	-28%
Nationwide Media*	\$37,063 (6%)	\$98,657 (35%)	+29%
Total Media Spend	\$572,003	\$279,257	-51% (Total)

*Nationwide channels include: LinkedIn, Indeed, Paid YouTube, Facebook, and Digital Professional Newsletters. These ads reach both nationwide and Colorado-based constituents.

For both fiscal years, all media is acquired using a combination of State-negotiated vendor contracts, annual subscription purchase orders, and direct credit card purchases for transactions under \$10,000.

d. What performance metrics or evaluation tools does the department use to measure the effectiveness of these advertising campaigns? What are the goals of the campaigns, and what key performance indicators are measured for success?

CDOC Response: The Cultivating Advocacy, Recruitment, Employee Engagement & Retention (CAREER) team relies on live analytics for most digital and broadcast advertising. These tools provide real-time data on ad performance, geography, and demographics. The team continuously monitors these insights (e.g., KKTU analytics) and works with strategic recommendations to adjust tactics, maximizing impact and achieving campaign objectives.

The primary method for tracking the effectiveness of recruitment sources is the Welcome Day Survey. Every new hire is asked to identify the advertisement that most influenced their decision to apply to the Colorado Department of Corrections (CDOC), along with providing demographic data (work location, age range). To ensure a high response rate, the survey is promoted across multiple touchpoints: a post-hiring email, verbal reminders, QR codes, and during the formal Welcome Day presentation. A portion of the campaign budget is allocated exclusively to brand "awareness" initiatives (e.g., at performing arts and athletic events, radio ads, social media posts) where specific, measurable analytics on individual application generation are not available.

All media placements share the overarching goal of attracting, informing, securing, and retaining new personnel.

Primary Goals:

- Attract and hire new personnel to meet immediate Departmental staffing needs.
- Establish and strengthen the CDOC brand to increase public awareness and acceptance.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

- **Increase in the Volume of Applications:** Specifically tracking the total number of applications received during and after campaign periods.
- **Recruitment Source Effectiveness:** The percentage of new hires who attribute their application decision directly to a specific advertisement or campaign

source, as measured by the Welcome Day Survey.

- **Campaign Agility:** The speed and effectiveness with which we can customize and pivot advertisements based on the real-time personnel needs of the Department.

e. If any portion of advertising is managed through third-party vendors (or 'partners') or media buying firms, please provide any available data or reporting from those companies on campaign performance and spending. How often do the departments discuss media placements with these vendors?

CDOC Response: CDOC is in constant communication with media vendors as it assesses the performance of each purchased media buy. Campaigns are adjusted within our annual contracts to ensure media spend captures the highest ROI each month.

Upon contract renewal, CDOC assesses our campaign on an annual basis, making adjustments to media selections based on the campaign's analytical performance.

Overall Grey Media/ KKTV Campaign Performance (Highlights):

- Impressions: Consistently around 1.25M to 1.3M per month.
 - The largest percentage of impressions comes from Local Station Display Ads (approx. 28-29%) and Targeted Display Ads (approx. 21-22%).
- Clicks: Ranged from 5.11K to 5.61K per month.
 - Targeted Email Ads generated the vast majority of clicks, consistently accounting for 58% to 62% of all campaign clicks, despite having a smaller percentage of overall impressions (approx. 9.1-9.6%).
 - Search Engine Marketing also performed well in terms of click percentage relative to impressions (approx. 17-21% of clicks from less than 1% of impressions)

Trends & Observations:

- Email is the strongest driver of engagement (clicks) by a significant margin.
- Search Engine Marketing demonstrates excellent efficiency by converting a high percentage of its small number of impressions into clicks.
- Streaming (Over-The-Top) successfully delivered the video message, as indicated by the high Video Completion Rates.

f. Monthly or quarterly reporting - how is reporting delivered?

CDOC Response: Analytic reports are available on an as-needed basis, but campaign performance meetings are held between CDOC and contracting vendors at least monthly.

1. Male prison population and capacity

1.1 Additional prison capacity (2026 JBC Hearing - CDOC Slide Deck - Slide #20)

1.1.Q1. What are the options for adding additional male prison capacity in-state, and how much do those options cost? Please address buy, lease, and build options and indicate the Department's short- and long-term preferences.

CDOC Response: CDOC is gathering information on options to expand the department's capacity, based on new forecasts and the need for additional capacity. CDOC has recently completed a 10-year facilities master plan that is guiding this direction and planning. Any capacity changes require a significant state investment and extended timelines. To address the projections, CDOC and the state will need to adopt a multi-pronged approach that includes short, medium, and long-term solutions. It is the CDOC's goal to maintain facilities that are safe and secure for inmates, staff, and the community.

The options available to CDOC's are summarized as:

- **Internal Changes to Handle Capacity:** CDOC has evaluated a number of options that can be implemented to handle short-term solutions for the overall male inmate population. This includes converting single bunks to double bunks. This is a short-term, non-permanent solution to capacity and would require a CDPHE waiver. These waivers are for short-term use in this manner, and CDPHE would need to know and understand how CDOC is working towards a permanent solution. This would require funds for bunks, mattresses, lockers, and other unit costs. These costs do not include the normal costs associated with the bed caseload that would be requested when the beds can be turned on. Double bunking would allow the

department to add approximately 450 beds to the overall level III capacity, focused at the Limon Correctional Facility and the Arkansas Correctional Facility. CDOC is also looking at options that would make these conversions permanent. This would require a Capital project to permanently update the facilities per required shower ratios, toilet ratios, day hall space, dining, and education space.

- **Purchase of an Existing Facility:** CDOC has begun conversations with owners of private facilities that could be purchased by the state to create additional capacity. These facilities are located across the state and are in different states of repair and security levels. CDOC is in the process of evaluating the need for specific bed types and the repairs and construction alterations to these facilities. At this time, CDOC estimates that the purchase and renovation of these facilities would require between \$140M and \$160M per facility acquired. Other facilities in other states have recently sold for \$100k-\$150k per bed. More information will be available as these evaluations are completed.
- **Leasing of Existing Facility:** CDOC has also evaluated options for leasing private facilities. This cost also ranges from \$6.2-7M per year. These leases would have a mandatory 4-to-5-year term, a no-cancellation clause, and a 2.5-4% annual inflation rate. Additional costs would be needed for utilities and regular caseload needs.
- **Out-of-State Private Facilities:** CDOC has looked at the option of out-of-state housing for Colorado Inmates. This would range from \$95-105 per inmate per day as well as additional costs for the transportation of inmates and the Colorado Staff Monitoring unit that would be needed on site. As of right now, the closest facility that CDOC knows about with openings for this is located in Mississippi. CDOC is also aware of multiple other states that are pursuing this option, and the availability may become even more limited.
- **Building of New Facility:** CDOC does see the need for the state to invest in a new facility to handle the additional capacity, but also to address crumbling, subpar facilities that are aging and becoming extremely difficult and costly to maintain.

After the January 9 CDOC caseload submission to address the caseload short-term, the Executive Branch looks forward to conversations with the legislature throughout the spring about medium- and long-term solutions.

1.1.Q2. What are the options for sending inmates out-of-state and how much do those options cost?

CDOC Response: To engage in a contract for housing individuals out of state, CDOC would need to secure a contract with a third-party vendor. Based on other states' use and other available information, CDOC per diem rates would range from \$95 to \$105 per inmate per day, depending on the number of inmates and location in the United States. This cost does not include the additional transportation costs for these inmates. Many states (including MT, ID, AR) are also considering options like this, meaning options that are open now may or may not be available in 6-12 months. CoreCivic, the state's current private prison vendor, has the closest available beds in Mississippi. Since this contract involves a private prison and is not part of the interstate compact, the Colorado Department of Corrections (CDOC) would need to expand the Private Prison Monitoring Unit (PPMU). This expansion is essential to ensure that the contracting agency provides services comparable to those available in Colorado facilities while ensuring safe and humane management. The expansion will require an additional four Correctional Officer III (COIII) positions to ensure that at least two CDOC staff members are present at facilities out of state at all times. The number of full-time equivalents (FTE) required would increase if multiple private contracted facilities were involved. Additionally, there will be extra costs associated with staff travel and per diem for those working out of state continuously.

1.1.Q3. What would it cost to get the 118 minimum security beds at Buena Vista up and running?

CDOC Response: The 118 beds referenced at the Buena Vista Correctional Complex (BVCC) are located in the Transitional Work Center (TWC). Once renovated, this building could house 120 male inmates at Level II in a dormitory style, with 30 men in each of the four dormitories. This total of 120 beds is two higher than previous reports, as the building's alterations during renovation would allow for an additional two beds.

The TWC building is situated outside the main BVCC perimeter fence. Bringing the building back in use requires substantial investment in infrastructure improvements to meet current building code, ADA, Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA), and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) regulations. The anticipated cost for these improvements is \$13,105,263, which includes toilet and shower renovations, new cameras, fire protection, perimeter improvements, sanitary sewer remediation, and inmate furniture (bunks, mattresses, bunk shelves, foot lockers, and standard desks). Funding for these improvements will require a Capital Renewal request. Renovations are projected to take 18 to 24 months for planning, contracting, and construction.

The staffing information provided is based on the building's previous use and full capacity under the former Colorado Correctional Alternative Program (CCAP) bootcamp. Staffing requirements would be adjusted based on the specific inmate population and programming added upon reopening, so the current staffing information is provided only as a baseline.

BVCC 120* Beds		
Facility	Classification	Estimate
BVCC	CO I	14.0
BVCC	CO II	6.0
BVCC	PM I	1.0
BVCC	CM I	1.0
BVCC	CM II	2.0
BVCC	CSTS I (Food Service)	1.0
BVCC	CSTS I (Maintenance)	2.0
BVCC	Nurse I	2.0
BVCC	Teacher I	1.0
Total		30.0

FTE / Operating Estimate for BVCC 120 beds	
Expenditure	
Inmate Phone Calls	\$ 26,481
Facility Operating	\$ 305,467
Centralized Start-Up Costs	\$ 38,795
FTE (including FTE Operating)	\$ 3,064,812
Total	\$ 3,435,554

1.2 Releases

1.2. Q1. [Sen. Bridges] Please provide an update on the impact of statutory prison population management measures. Also, please summarize the factors inhibiting the release of those that qualify under statute?

CDOC Response: The measures have had very little impact on the department's vacancy and backlog. The department monitors inmates who become eligible for review under the statutory criteria every week. Colorado Revised Statute Title 17-1-119.7, as follows, points CDOC to Colorado Revised Statute Title 24-4.1-302 and Title 16-22-102 for a list of 95 crimes that disqualify inmates from eligibility. On average, 10 to 12 inmates meet these eligibility requirements each month, and their names are submitted to the Colorado Board of Parole for consideration. We currently have 3,417 inmates with-Parole Eligibility Dates (PED) that have passed. Of these, only 242 meet the criteria of the above referenced statutes. This includes 33 individuals who have met the Mandatory Release Date (MRD) criteria as outlined in statute C.R.S. 17-1-119.7 2(a)(II) (*Request that the parole board review a list of inmates who are within ninety days of their mandatory release date, have an approved parole plan, and do not require full board review or victim notification pursuant to section 24-4.1-302.5 (1)(j);.*)

It's important to note that CDOC does not make the determination regarding the release of individuals who may qualify for potential early release under this statute; this

decision-making authority is retained with the Colorado Board of Parole. The inhibiting factors for CDOC are Colorado Revised Statutes Title 24-4.1-302 and Title 16-22-102, which list 95 crimes that disqualify inmates from eligibility.

The CDOC has provided the Colorado Board of Parole with two separate lists to comply with statutory reporting requirements for population management and continues to do so as additional inmates become eligible.

The first list contains individuals who have met the Mandatory Release Date (MRD) criteria as defined in statute, Section (2), subsection (a)(II). The second list comprises individuals who meet the criteria specified in statute, Section (2), subsection (a)(IV), for the Colorado Board of Parole's further review and consideration. CDOC ensures that all such measures comply with established legal and procedural guidelines.

Even with the measures, the CDOC continues to remain at a vacancy rate under 3%.

1.2.Q2. [Sen. Amabile] Why have discretionary paroles declined as of late?

CDOC Response: A release decision is rendered by the Colorado Board of Parole. Discretionary releases may be affected by several factors. For specific information related to the decline in discretionary parole releases, the Colorado Board of Parole would be the appropriate source for this information.

The Department has made efforts to strengthen release readiness for individuals appearing in front of the Colorado Board of Parole for an application hearing.

RESTORE (Reformative Engaging System of Transitional Opportunities for Re-Entry) programming is located in all facilities across the state. Facility and Release Case Managers work in conjunction with Community Re-Entry Specialists and the Benefits Acquisition Team to establish housing plans, individual resources, treatment referrals, transportation, and Medicaid for individuals returning to the community. Individuals without a stable release plan are strongly encouraged to engage in RESTORE programming to address their release barriers and connect with a community partner. Efforts continue to create a parole plan in the absence of offender participation/refusal. During the current fiscal year, 1,890 offenders have participated in RESTORE programming.

1.3. Age and prior arrests (2026 JBC Hearing - CDOC Slide Deck - Slides #23-25)

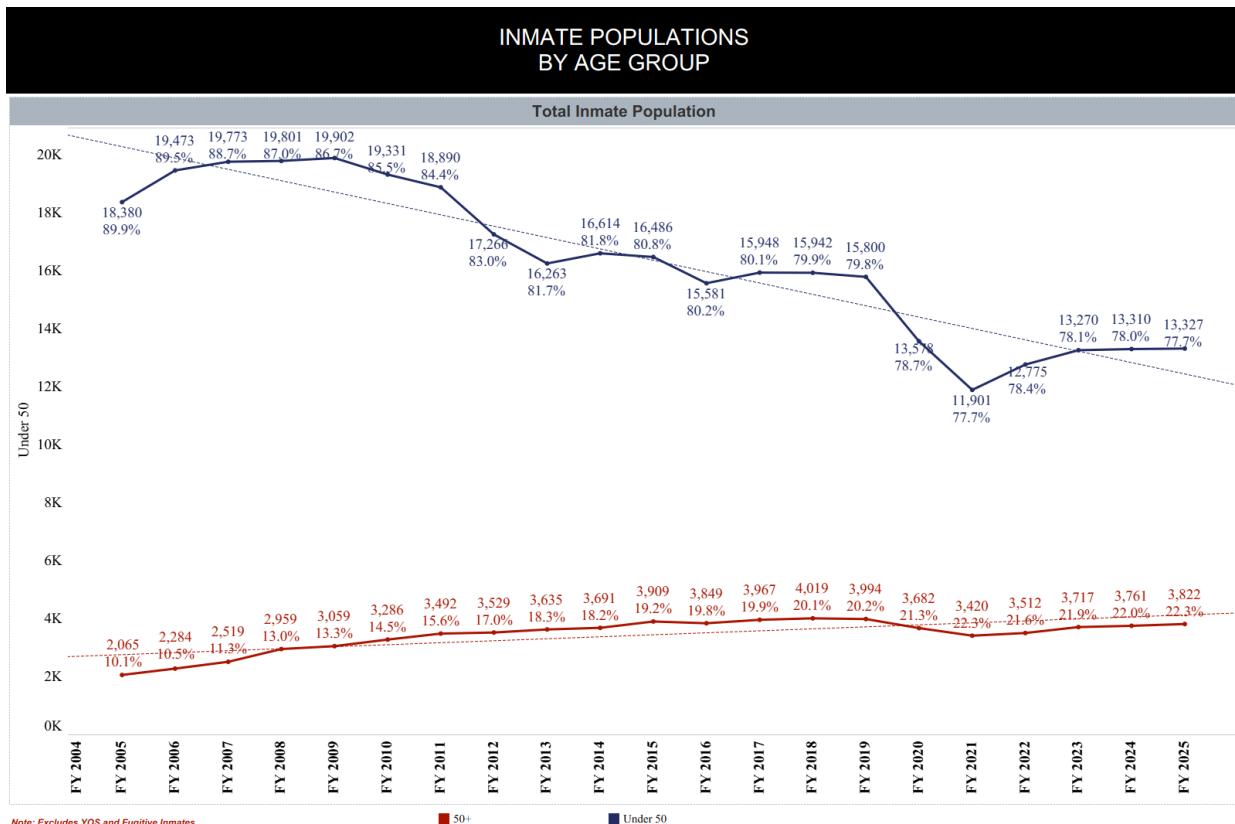
1.3 Q1 [*Rep. Brown*] Regarding the aging population, is the Department seeing an increase in the average age at the time of sentencing? Or is it because of inmates staying longer? Or is it some combination of the two?

CDOC Response: Below are three data visualizations that demonstrate how the aging population is affecting CDOC. Chart 1 visualization contains two charts showing the inmate population and the annual admissions broken down by Fiscal Year and by 50+ and under 50. Chart 1 shows that the share of the total inmate population that is 50+ has more than doubled since FY 2004-05 but has remained fairly consistent since FY 2020-21; similarly, the share of inmate admissions aged 50+ have doubled since FY 2004-05 but has been relatively consistent for over a decade.

Chart 2 demonstrates the rise in average age since FY 2020-21. This chart shows the average age of the Male Population, Female Population, and Overall Population. The overall age of the inmate population was 40.13 years old at the end of FY 2020-21, and as of 11/30/2025, the average age of the inmate population is 40.84 years old.

Chart 3 shows the number of inmates with a life sentence, using the same parameters as 50+ and under 50. This visualization was included because these inmates will require incarceration or supervision by CDOC for the rest of their lives. In FY 2020-21, there were 2,673 inmates serving life sentences in CDOC Facilities, 1,184 of whom were 50+. As of 11/30/2025, there were 2,967 inmates serving life sentences in CDOC Facilities, 1,408 of whom were 50+. This is a rise from 44.3% in FY 2020-21 to 47.5% as of 11/30/2025. The inmates serving a life sentence made up 17.5% of the total CDOC population in FY 2020-21. As of 11/30/2025, the inmates serving a life sentence make up 16.5% of the total CDOC population.

Chart 1 Inmate Population by Age Group and Average Age at Admission



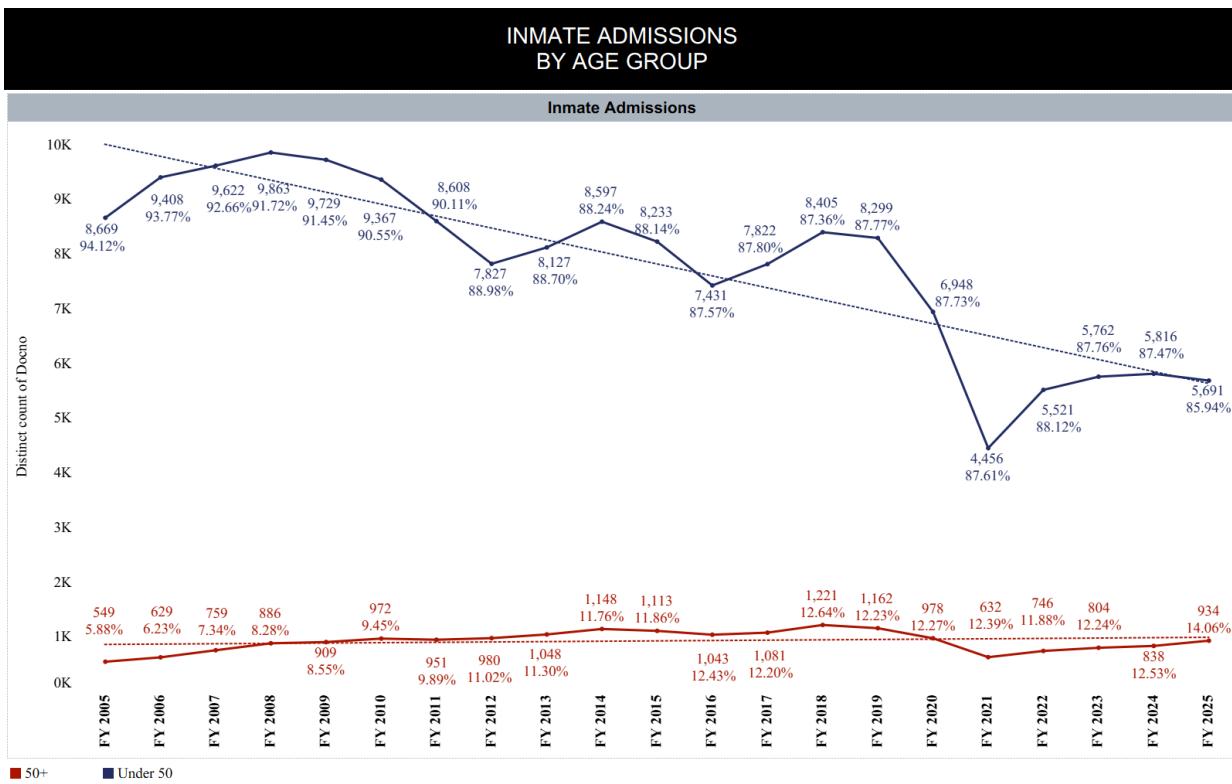


Chart 2 Offender Population Average Age

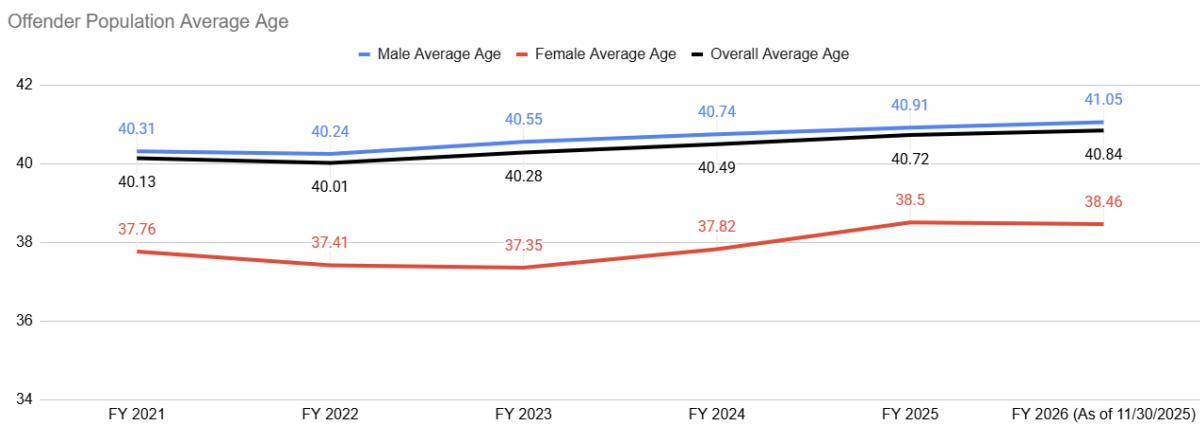


Chart 3 Life Sentence Population



1.3.Q2. [Sen. Bridges] Are there any states where the sentencing guidelines are based on the age at the end of the sentence rather than the specifics of the crime?

Does the Department have any data that show recidivism by age at the time of release into the community? If so, what conclusions might we draw from these data?

CDOC Response to question “Are there any states where the sentencing guidelines are based on the age at the end of the sentence rather than the specifics of the crime?: While no U.S. state bases sentencing solely on age at sentence's end, Judges can and often do consider advanced age as a mitigating factor, leading to shorter sentences or less incarceration, though this isn't a formal guideline rule for states. Many states and the federal system allow age (especially youth or advanced age) and diminished culpability to significantly influence sentences, leading to resentencing for juveniles (like in CA, FL, IL, MI, NJ) or lighter sentence terms (within the statutory limits) for older offenders, though sentencing guidelines themselves focus on crime/history, not age at completion.

CDOC Response to question “Does the Department have any data that show recidivism by age at the time of release into the community? If so, what conclusions might we draw from these data?”: CDOC does not have recidivism

figures by specific cohorts, such as by age. The recidivism numbers we publish are based on the year the offenders are released.

1.3.Q3.[Sen. Amabile] How many inmates in the DOC have 4 or fewer prior arrests? How many have 5 or more? 10 or more?

CDOC Response: We do not have full and complete data on the number of arrests for each inmate in our current population. However, we were able to pull the number of "non-CDOC" convictions. The non-CDOC Convictions include, but are not limited to, convictions for misdemeanors, felony convictions in other states resulting in prison time, and lower-level felonies that did not result in a sentence to prison. The column on the left represents the total number of "non-CDOC" convictions by each inmate. The column on the right represents the number of inmates that fall into that category. For example, 8 inmates have 50 or more "non-CDOC" convictions. These figures do not include the convictions that resulted in a sentence to CDOC.

**Number of Non-CDOC Convictions
(Inmate Population as of 11/30/2025)**

# of Convictions	# of Inmates	
50 and Over	8	These are the number of Non-CDOC convictions for the inmate population as of 11/30/2025. The Non-DOC Convictions figures do not include the conviction(s) that resulted in the inmate being in prison. The Non-DOC Convictions include things such as misdemeanors, felony convictions in other states resulting in prison time, and lower level felonies that did not result in a sentence to prison. For example 8 inmates have 50 or more Non-CDOC Convictions.
40-49	10	
30-39	42	
20-29	429	
10-19	3238	
5-9	5232	
1-4	6756	
0	2267	

*Data include the total CDOC population: Community Corrections, ISP-I, jail backlog, and those in a CDOC or private facility.

1.4. Programming

1.4. Q1[Sen. Bridges] How do we get folks the programming that they need and that would both allow them to succeed on the outside and increase their chances of getting out? Where are program needs the greatest (e.g. classroom learning

vs. substance abuse treatment) and what actually needs to happen to provide those programs?

CDOC Response: Preparing offenders for a successful transition to the community is a collaborative effort that begins the moment an individual enters the Denver Reception and Diagnostic Center (DRDC). To maximize an inmate's potential for rehabilitation and timely release, a dedicated team of Colorado Department of Corrections (CDOC) programmers, case managers, educators, and clinicians works continuously to evaluate and address specific needs.

Together with the inmate, this team identifies:

- **Mandatory Programming:** Requirements such as the Sex Offender Treatment and Monitoring Program (SOTMP) and the Therapeutic Community Drug and Alcohol (TC DNA).
- **Educational and Growth Opportunities:** This includes college-level coursework, vocational training programs as well as inmate jobs on the inside.
- **Criminogenic Needs:** Targeted interventions to address underlying behavioral risks, such as antisocial thinking patterns or negative peer associations.

Whether initiated by CDOC staff recommendations, inmate requests, or a joint effort between both, these resources are vital to reducing recidivism and fostering long-term success on the outside.

CDOC offers multiple substance use disorder (SUD) programming options, including Therapeutic Communities (TC) at six locations. Outpatient services, medication-assisted treatment (MAT) classes, and individual counseling are available at nearly all facilities. Fentanyl education is also included within the substance use treatment service portfolio. Access to these services can be limited by staffing constraints, particularly at outlying facilities. Despite these challenges, demand for substance use treatment services continues to increase.

There are 8,139 inmates who have been assessed and are in need of substance use disorder programming. Of that overall number, there are 2,512 who are in need of Outpatient programming and 5,627 who are in need of TC programming. In the past twelve months, there have been a total of 950 offenders who have participated in their recommended level of SUD treatment. Please see the breakdown below:

- 282 participants who have completed the Therapeutic Community programming.
- 476 who have completed Outpatient programming.
- 192 who have voluntarily participated in our MAT behavioral health classes or individual sessions.

The CDOC is looking to make a strategic shift, categorizing our efforts into internal stabilization, and external workforce alignment, to maximize return on investment through collaborative and legislative effort. This approach ensures that an individual's progress inside a facility is immediately met with a corresponding opportunity in the community.

Currently Prison Programs include secondary, post-secondary (career and technical education and degree), volunteer programs, life skills and reentry, and peer led programming.

- Access to secondary/academic education has one criteria - no verified high school/equivalency diploma. This is the one education program that generates an automatic referral to a program and has a waitlist. This is also the only program that is universally available in all correctional institutions.
- The only prerequisite for Career and Technical Education and trades training that result in a credential is that the individual has a verified high school/equivalency diploma (HS/ED) and an interest and desire. Trades/work skills programs that do not require an HS/ED are OSHA and Flagger certification; Flagger certification is restricted to within 9 months to PED due to the expiration of the credential.
- Volunteer programs are open to any and all who want to participate. Opportunities vary widely from facility to facility as all volunteer programs require an active, in person volunteer to supervise the program. Volunteer programs range from dance, to book clubs, to journalism.
- Life skills, reentry, and peer led programs are available to all based on the opportunities at each facility. Programs include internal, direct instruction, computer based learning, and contracted programs.
- Post-Secondary degree programs through the Prison Education Program (TSC, CU-Denver, Adams State University and Pueblo Community College) requires a

verified HS/ED and students are required to apply to the college they are interested in attending; TSC is available in 17 facilities, CU-Denver in 2 facilities, Adams State in 4 facilities, and Pueblo CC in 2 facilities. Students must be eligible to receive a PELL grant as determined through submission of the FAFSA.

All individuals approaching PED are strongly encouraged to participate in certificate programs like OSHA, Flagger, trades/work skills programs, staff and/or peer led social science programming, the Acceleron Reentry computer based program, and life skills training.

Currently, the greatest need in Prison Programming is for short-term, resource-building programs, social science based and short-term trades programming.

The department is looking to create additional certified instructors to deliver Thinking for a Change and Decision Points closer to release, and will look to close the "coordination gap" by aligning program completion with parole reviews. The Department is considering redirecting high-cost CDL and Fortified programs toward the HVACR and Electrical Pre-Apprenticeship programs. These trades offer "Direct-to-Work" pathways. To scale, the Department is targeting \$4.5 million over three years from federal Second Chance Act and Pathway Home grants to finance pre-release certifications and post-release navigators, eliminating the "time gap" between incarceration and employment.

However, relying on federal funds presents inherent volatility as grants are often non-recurring, and the upcoming federal budget significantly reduces programmatic support for justice-involved individuals. Furthermore, even pragmatic trades like HVACR and Electrical, and especially high-growth sectors like cybersecurity, face insurmountable barriers due to strict security/financial compliance standards for individuals with felony convictions, necessitating sustained advocacy to reform occupational licensing and hiring policies.

The department is looking for ways to align with HB 25-1214. The Department proposes formalizing support for cross-department data alignment to seamlessly transfer credentials and treatment records, reducing administrative barriers. Focusing

on stackable credentials like OSHA 10 and 30 creates resilient programming less dependent on internal staffing vacancies, addressing both public safety and economic needs, and is the most effective way to address the projected bed shortage for 2026. As of December 31, 2025, 711 released of the 2,245 incarcerated participants completed one or more of the Prison Programs sponsored trades and work skills programs. These programs specifically include the CDOT Flagging, OSHA 10, OSHA 30, Mechanical Lab, Electrical Lab, HVACR Lab, Pre-Apprenticeship/Electrical, Acceleron Reentry and Financial Literacy Program. These programs were all taken within the last 12 months of incarceration prior to release which may also be key.

2. Prison population management

2.1 Custody classification (2026 JBC Hearing - CDOC Slide Deck - Slides #28-29)

2.1.Q1 [Rep. Sirota] Please provide a summary of the changes to custody classification that occurred in 2013, including the reasons why those changes happened.

CDOC Response: The transition from the previous classification system to the 2013 model reflects a move from a punitive, time-based approach to an objective, behavior-focused methodology. By removing "Years to Parole Eligibility Date (PED)" from the point-bearing section, the CDOC allowed offenders with long sentences to be evaluated based on their actual institutional risk rather than their remaining time.

COMPARISON OF INSTRUMENTS		
Feature	Previous Instrument (Pre-2013)	New Instrument (Post-2013)
Criminal History	Focused on multiple convictions (high/highest weight).	Focused on the severity of current and prior convictions.
Disciplinary Record	Scored 4 separate disciplinary factors.	Streamlined to only 2 disciplinary factors.
Rehabilitation	No points awarded for work or program progress.	Includes Program Participation and Work Evaluations.
Age Factor	Age was not granularly weighted.	Current Age provides specific point reductions (older = lower risk).

Parole Eligibility (PED)	1 point added for every year until PED.	PED removed from point scoring entirely.
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The new instrument introduces points that reward pro-social behavior and demographic risk mitigation. Scoring takes into account the current age of the inmate. The score recognizes that recidivism risk typically decreases with age. It awards a -1 point deduction for offenders aged 38–60 and a -2 point deduction for those 61 or older.

The program participation encourages rehabilitation by awarding credit for engagement. Offenders receive a -1 point deduction for being on a waitlist or participating, and a -2 point deduction for successfully completing recommended programs.

The work evaluation is one of the most predictive additions to the instrument. Offenders receive a -2 point deduction for maintaining satisfactory employment over the last six months. Conversely, an unsatisfactory termination or refusal to work adds +2 points to the score.

While the previous instrument tracked four separate metrics for disciplinary history, including convictions without a timeframe, the current instrument focuses on Type and Frequency within a specific window. For example, the type of most serious report is weighted by severity (e.g., Class I vs. Class II) over the past 12–18 months.

The Department contracts with an outside agency to revalidate both the male and female classification tools every five years. The most recent male validation was completed in August 2022 and will be completed again in 2027. CDOC is currently in the process of completing the female validation process. In 2022, the JFA Institute - a non-profit, 501(c)(3) independent criminal justice research organization that specializes in prison and jail analytics, assessment, reform initiatives, and forecasting - was contracted to validate CDOC's male classification tool. The report concluded that the current male classification system uses factors that are commonly found in other objective prison classification systems that have been validated in other state prison systems. The validation study used snapshot data of CDOC's male population to assess both the initial classification and reclassification tools. The study concluded the

final custody level for reclassifications is strongly associated with institutional misconduct (COPD violations) and that overall, the reclassification tool is sorting offenders appropriately by their risk to engage in misconduct.

2.1.Q2 [Rep. Sirota] Is the Department opposed to a custody classification policy that is more flexible about time to release (PED/MRD/SDD) for minimum security placements?

CDOC Response: The Department is currently reviewing possible changes to the Classification policy that would be more flexible toward PED MRD for Min R placement. It is difficult to put a timeframe on implementation of any classification changes but the next male classification validation is due in 2027. This upcoming validation would provide an opportunity for review and validation of any changes that would be made. Validation, and modeling of any of the changes requested would be instrumental in having a safe, security focused, legally defensible instrument.

2.2 General questions

2.2.Q1 [Sen. Amabile] Please explain why the Department is still doing this polygraph testing at all when it has been demonstrated to be a faulty tool. How much are we still spending on it? And why?

CDOC Response: The polygraph process continues to be used as a clinical tool to assist in verifying an individual's sexual history, encouraging honesty, monitoring treatment progress, and facilitating meaningful clinical discussion. It is important to note that the Sex Offender Management Board (SOMB) explicitly recognizes the limitations of polygraph testing and emphasizes that information obtained through the polygraph is only meaningful when interpreted within the context of a comprehensive evaluation and treatment process (which is how the SOTMP uses the polygraph). The use of the polygraph is further outlined as a requirement in the SOMB Standards and Guidelines, which state that a clinician shall utilize the polygraph process in the treatment of individuals who commit sexual offenses. As such, any therapist credentialed to provide offense-specific treatment is required to adhere to this guidance. The current budget for polygraphs in CDOC is approximately \$242,500, the

Department's FY2026-27 offset request reduces this to \$129,320 based on continued reversions in this line as a result of decreased usage of polygraph testing.

2.2.Q2 [Sen. Amabile] Could the Department reduce its need for correctional officers and other security if more rehabilitative services were available for inmates? In other words, if treatment reduced security risks, would it save money?

CDOC Response: The department establishes minimum correctional staffing levels based on a systematic analysis of facility design, inmate population requirements, and available programming, utilizing resources such as those provided by the National Institute of Corrections (NIC). This ensures adequate staff are positioned across all areas to maintain the safety of both staff and the offender population. Staffing plans include personnel for observation posts and incident response throughout the facility, which are essential for preventing violence and victimization. While rehabilitative services support inmate growth and successful re-entry—potentially leading to positive behavior and progression to lower-level institutions requiring less supervision—these services do not reduce the minimum staffing needs of the department. Our current plans represent the foundational, minimum level of staff required to safely manage and respond to the population within our facilities. This would not result in short-term cost savings but could lead to long-term savings in lowering the recidivism rate.

3. Parole (2026 JBC Hearing - CDOC Slide Deck - Slides #30-35)

3.1.Q1 Please provide an update on the measures the Department is taking to ensure that it is safely supervising parolees in the community.

CDOC Response: Department Measures to Ensure Safety

The Division of Adult Parole (DAP) is currently undergoing a leadership transition following the appointment of the new Director on December 1, 2025. This transition provides an opportunity to refine our supervision strategies and ensure that our public safety mission is being met with the highest level of precision. The following initiatives are central to achieving this refinement:

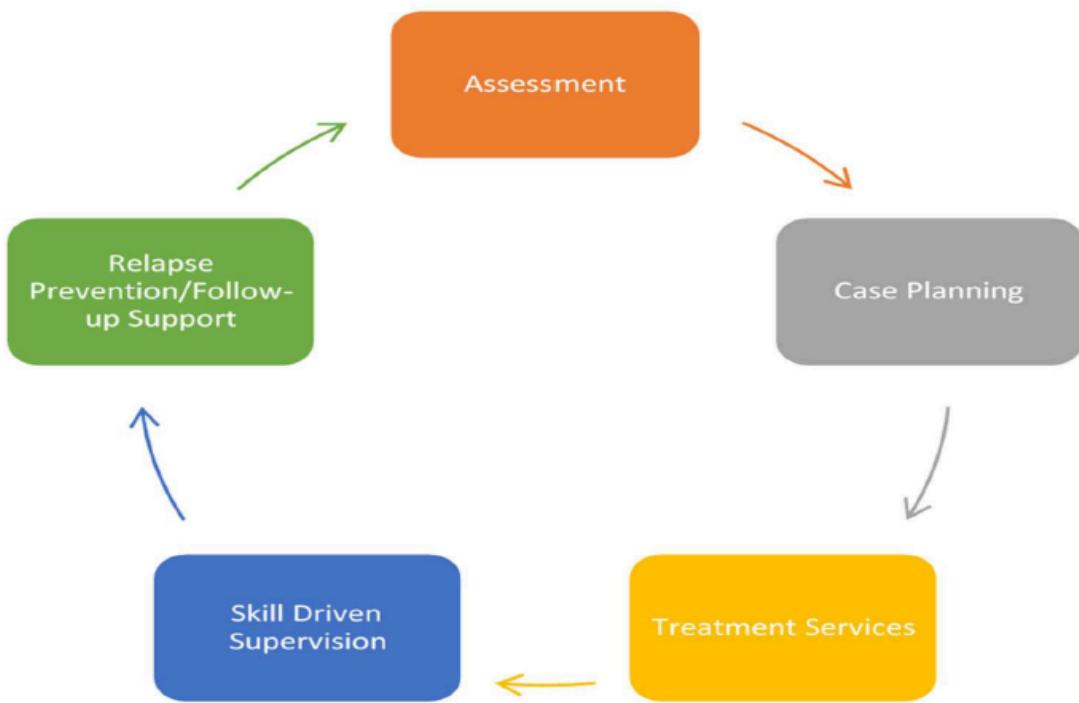
Enhanced Field contacts: Review of field supervision standards to ensure frequency, dosage and quality of contact aligns with a parolees' risk/need level.

Quality Risk Assessments: Assessing and enhancing fidelity of the Community Supervision Tool, risk assessment instrument by ensuring proper training and staff support are reinforced, quality control/quality assurance measures are in place for the timeliness, validity, and application of the CST risk assessment instrument, and evaluation of both override procedures and caseload FTE commiserate with risk/needs and/or specialized caseload factors.

Administrative Supervision Model Modification: Review of the administrative supervision caseload model to ensure appropriate cases are assigned to this caseload and prioritized for submission of early discharge to the parole board for subsequent review.

Integration of “Coaching” Supervision Model: Incorporate an integrated supervision model that builds upon our commitment to public safety through enhanced evidence-based community supervision strategies and law enforcement techniques, where needed. This model will provide our Community Parole Officers (CPOs) with a broader toolkit to translate assessment data into individualized strategies that support positive behavior change. By standardizing this approach, we are creating a unified, sustainable direction that honors the tactical readiness of our staff while meeting the highest national standards for successful reintegration. The diagram below provides a visual framework for how this model can be applied to community supervision within

DAP.



Caseload Evaluation/Realignment: Assessing Community Parole Officer-to-parolee ratios with regard to both caseload supervision needs and expectations, as well as with regard to supervisory staff-to-Community Parole Officer ratios for ongoing support.

DAP seeks to increase both the number of monthly case compliance reviews in order to reinforce supervision expectations and provide ongoing coaching support to staff, as well as parolees.

DAP's intent is to re-evaluate current operations for the purpose of ensuring and incorporating procedures which align with national standards, in accordance with the American Probation and Parole Association.

3.1.Q2 If the General Assembly pursued legislative changes aimed at increasing parole releases to mitigate prison capacity pressures, what budget and policy changes would be necessary for the Department to safely supervise a large population of parolees?

CDOC Response: The FY 2022-23 Cost Per Day estimates the average yearly cost per Parolee is \$8,387 per year, including staffing, operating costs, and contract

services. The Department is unable to estimate the Cost Per Day for FY 2023-24 or 2024-25 due to ARPA and CORE reporting issues that will be resolved for FY 2025-26. **Any increases in programming or resourcing will impact this estimate. However, this provides a rough estimate of possible costs associated with increasing parole releases.** CDOC does not want legislation run; at this time, any policy changes are internal, as our new director evaluates next steps and presents a course of action, as described in the first question. Any external policy changes are premature.

3.1.Q3 [Rep. Sirota] Are intermediate sanctions like short jail stays effective? If so, why? If not, why not?

What drove the huge jump in the absconder population?

Do absconders show up in the data as “No return” to prison within the first year?

CDOC Response: Intermediate sanctions are most effective when the response corresponds to the severity of the violation and when issued swiftly.

SB 15-124 included the use of a brief term of confinement in the county jail as an intermediate sanction. The Division of Adult Parole has a policy outlining the use of short-term confinement as an intermediate sanction to address non-compliant behavior.

The use of short-term confinement is not effective and creates more disruption for the individual, negatively impacting their ability to maintain employment, housing, transportation, and treatment services. To limit disruptions, CPOs could present strategic options (i.e., intermittent confinement [weekend jail], home detention, etc.), while also complying with the swift principle to address noncompliance. For intermediate sanctions to be most effective, the response needs to correspond to the severity of the violation and be issued promptly (shortly after the violation occurs). However, as to intermittent confinement, this would require collaboration with county jails to assist, as access to jail beds present complications for short jail stays to be effective. A CDOC facility cannot currently be utilized for placement due to bed capacity shortages, though statute does allow for placement within a CDOC facility or jail.

CDOC Response (to What drove the huge jump in the absconder population?):

To understand the jump in the absconder population, it is first necessary to define what constitutes an “Absconder”.

An absconder is a parolee who willfully evades supervision by failing to comply with reporting requirements, changes their residence without prior notification to their community parole officer, leaves the state without permission, or otherwise ceases contact with supervision, making their whereabouts unknown. The determination of absconding is based upon documented non-compliance, investigative efforts by the supervising officer, and the exhaustion of reasonable attempts to reestablish contact with the parolee.

To distinguish a willful absconder from a parolee who has merely missed a scheduled appointment, Community Parole Officers follow a specific protocol to establish probable cause. This process begins with immediate contact attempts through phone and email, followed by entering a 24/7 hold and page request into CWISE. Officers must then attempt to locate the offender by contacting known associates, family members, employers, and treatment providers, and by conducting physical checks at the residence of record. The officer requests an administrative warrant for absconding only after establishing probable cause by reviewing electronic monitoring data, chronological records, and conducting physical checks at the parolee's last known residence. Any deviation from these procedures requires a formal staffing with a supervisor and detailed documentation in the offender's record.

Factors Previously Impacting the Increase in Absconder Population

A combination of pandemic-related operational constraints primarily drove the subsequent surge in this population. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the transition of officers to remote work limited direct contact, as traditional office visits were replaced by phone calls. This lack of physical presence was compounded by the fact that home visits were restricted to curbside interactions. Because social distancing practices prevented officers from entering residences, their ability to verify living conditions or monitor compliance within the home was effectively neutralized. Additionally, the system faced a critical breakdown in enforcement and detention capabilities. Officers were challenged with accessing detention space due to COVID related protocols that

contributed to unprecedeted court and jail backlogs making it nearly impossible to book parolees for technical violations. The impact of those practices lasted for a number of years. This lack of available detention space resulted in a significant increase in parolees who remained in the community and subsequently absconded multiple times in a single year.

Following this period of operational disruption, focused efforts through the expansion of the Fugitive Apprehension Unit (FAU) and enhanced oversight of the AWOL population have successfully reduced these numbers. The impact of these improved oversight and apprehension protocols is evident in the significant reduction in the at-large population over the past few years. The total number of absconders, which stood at a high of 1422 in June 2021, and has been successfully reduced to 642 as of November 2025.

CDOC Response to “Do absconders show up in the data as “No return” to prison within the first year?”: The absconders are not counted in our return rates due to them not being returned to custody if they are still on absconder status. The only numbers included in our return rates are new crimes and technical returns. Until a parolee has had a complaint filed and parole revoked, they are still an active parolee, and not yet a return to prison.

4. Youthful offender system food (2026 JBC Hearing - CDOC Slide Deck - Slides #36-39)

4. Q1 [Rep. Brown] Please provide an update on any health impacts, etc., of the caloric intake decision. Are youth still losing weight? What is the current status?

CDOC Response: In response to reported concerns regarding the Youthful Offender System (YOS) caloric intake, the Department recently conducted a comprehensive facility-wide weigh-in of all YOS residents. The results of this clinical assessment identified zero individuals currently classified as underweight. Clinical data show no significant changes in weight across the YOS population since the final phase of implementation began on July 1, 2024.

The Department maintains a proactive approach to monitoring the health of all individuals in our care. A medical provider assesses any resident who identifies

concerns or exhibits physical changes. If it is clinically determined that an individual requires additional calories due to their physical activity or underlying health conditions, supplemental caloric snacks are provided.

While the recent weigh-in did not identify a clinical crisis, the Department is taking an extra step to ensure long-term wellness. Our medical team is currently performing an expedited clinical review of the nutritional standards for both male and female residents. This assessment will determine if further adjustments are necessary to ensure we meet the specific needs of the YOS environment.

4. Q2 [Sen. Amabile] Please provide the following information regarding the change in caloric intake:

- When was the decision made?
- Who made the decision?
- Why was the decision made?

CDOC Response:

When was the decision made? The decision was initiated in 2019 as a clinical review in anticipation of the 2020–2025 USDA Dietary Guidelines. While the shift was determined then, operational challenges during COVID-19 delayed the start of the phased implementation until July 1, 2022, with the final alignment completed on July 1, 2024.

Who made the decision? The decision was made through a collaborative professional process involving the CDOC's team of registered dietitians and the Food Service Administrator. All finalized menu adjustments were submitted to the Chief Medical Officer for final review and clinical approval.

Why was the decision made? The decision was driven by an aging population at the Youthful Offender System (YOS), which has seen an average age increase from 16.8 years in 2007 to an average of 21.4 years. Clinical data indicated that the prior adolescent standard of 3,200 kcal was no longer appropriate for an adult population, and the Department sought to align with USDA Dietary Guidelines for "moderately active" adults in the 19–25 age group.

The following table clarifies the specific "Activity Level" adjustments that explain the current caloric targets:

Population	USDA "Moderately Active" (19-25)	CDOC Applied Standard	Rationale
Males	2,800 kcal	2,700 kcal	Midpoint between "sedentary" and "moderately active" to reflect the correctional setting.
Females	2,200 kcal	2,200 kcal	Direct match to USDA "moderately active" standard for the 19–25 age range.

A recent review of population weight of YOS individuals found no clinically significant weight changes since the final phase of implementation began in July 2024. An expedited clinical assessment to review this is scheduled for completion by January 15, 2026, with a yearly assessment to be completed. The USDA updates the Dietary Guidelines for Americans every five years. When these updates occur, our team of registered dietitians reviews the changes to ensure all CDOC menus remain aligned with the latest federal standards. If adjustments are needed, they are submitted to the Chief Medical Officer for final review and approval. In addition to this five-year review, CDOC dietitians conduct an annual internal review of all menus to ensure continued nutritional quality and compliance.

This same professional review process led to the gradual realignment at YOS. These updates are based solely on USDA nutritional criteria to ensure individuals in our care receive appropriate and balanced meals.

4. Q3 [Sen. Amabile] Is counting calories and serving every individual the same amount of food appropriate? How do the departments decide calorie counts? Do they feed everyone the same amounts?

CDOC Response: The CDOC aligns its menu practices with the USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans and recommends a range of caloric intake and nutritional quality based on several factors, which include age, gender, and specific health needs. CDOC menus include a standard menu that meets the needs of the average individual within our care. Additionally, CDOC provides specific diets to meet individual dietary requirements when the standard menu does not meet clinical needs. These diets are based on provider's order related to health conditions and dietitian's consultation.

These diets include:

- Medical Diets
- Religious Diets
- Religious/Medical Hybrid Diets
- High Calorie/High Protein Snacks
- Supplemental Snacks: Snacks may be considered for offenders with diagnosed and documented medical and/or nutritional conditions requiring calorie/protein supplementation to the diet or for underweight offenders.
- Complementary Snacks: Snacks will be offered for offenders if they are prescribed insulin, if there is a documented history of hypoglycemic episodes, or as deemed necessary by the health care provider based on a chart review and assessment.

4. Q4 [Rep. Sirota] Was the same direction given for calorie reduction in both YOS and the Department of Human Services' Division of Youth Services?

CDOC Response: We are not able to speak to the Division of Youth Services menus.

4. Q5 [Rep. Sirota] Did the Department change/reduce caloric standards for the entire Pueblo campus, including La Vista and San Carlos? Or was it limited to YOS?

CDOC Response: No, the 2019 phased reduction in caloric standards was limited to the Youthful Offender System (YOS). It did not apply to the general population menus at La Vista or San Carlos Correctional Facility.

This decision was driven by a fundamental change in the facility's population: whereas YOS once served a younger population, the average age had risen to 21.4 years. Recognizing this, our medical and dietary teams at the time determined it was no longer clinically appropriate to provide "growth-phase" adolescent calories to what is now an emerging adult population.

YOS menus are evaluated separately from women's and men's facility menus due to the median age of the inmate population. However, all menus are reviewed annually to ensure consistency with procured products, and a comprehensive review is completed approximately every five years when the USDA guidelines are published.

To ensure our current standards are balanced for the health and safety of our residents, we have initiated an expedited clinical review. Our team of Registered Dietitians and the Chief Medical Officer is currently conducting a comprehensive review of the current caloric intake standards for both male and female residents at YOS. This clinical assessment is due on January 15, 2026, and will be used to determine our next operational steps and any necessary further adjustments to the nutritional plan.

4. Q6 [Sen. Amabile] Is it possible to separate the YOS food and maintenance costs into separate line items?

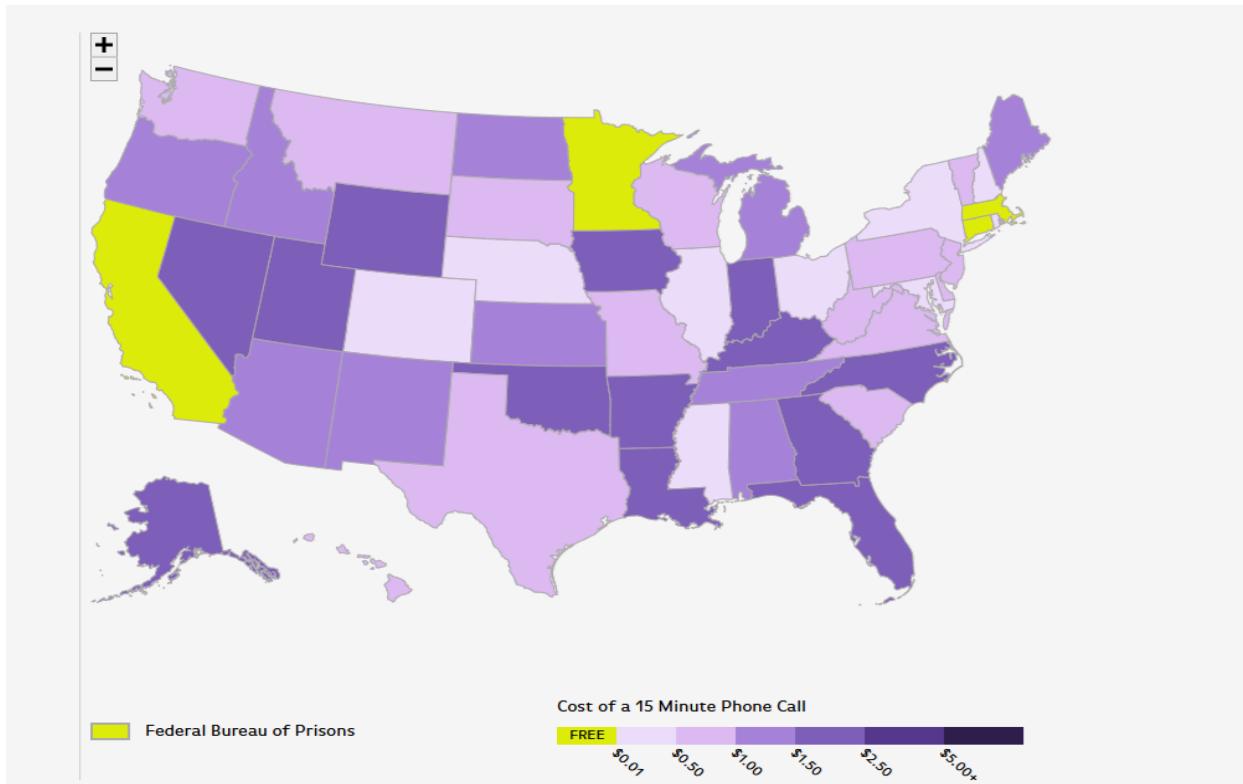
CDOC Response: CDOC has submitted a Budget Amendment on January 2 to separate these costs.

5. Inmate phone calls (2026 JBC Hearing - CDOC Slide Deck - Slides #40-42)

5. Q1 [Sen. Amabile] What is DOC doing to renegotiate rates on the phone calls with providers? Specifically, what is the Department doing to reduce costs related to rates?

CDOC Response: The Department completed a comprehensive Invitation to Negotiate (ITN) process to select its inmate communications vendor beginning in FY 2023-24. The Department reviewed numerous proposals and ultimately selected the current vendor for several reasons, including the proposed telephone rate per minute of \$0.019. This rate sets Colorado among the lowest-cost phone rates for prisons nationwide. These rates are subject to Federal Cost Recovery Charges (FCRC)

pass-through costs for Local and Intrastate calls (2.1735%) and Interstate and International calls (2.1975%) and are in addition to the \$0.019 rate. Like the rate, the state currently covers 75% of these fees and will increase with the same percentage as the phone calls.



As pictured above, Worth Rises¹, an advocacy non-profit supporting lower communications costs for inmates, indicates that Colorado is among the lowest costs for inmate phone calls.

DOC has negotiated some of the lowest rates in the nation. Currently, the phone rate for inmate calls in Colorado is \$.019 per minute, with the inmate covering 25% of that rate (\$.00475 per minute). So, the incarcerated individual's portion of a 20 minute phone call is less than \$0.10. The FCC recently established \$0.06 per minute as the limit for inmate paid phone calls. Colorado rates are a fraction of that amount.

¹<https://connectfamiliesnow.com/data>

That \$0.019 per minute covers much more than just completion of a single 20 minute phone call. Those rates cover:

- The physical installation and maintenance of the physical infrastructure for phone calls, which includes wiring, fiber-optic broadband separate from the state network, and wifi hotspots for tablets and devices. The state does not pay any funds for the phone systems beyond the state portion of the phone call rate.
- Development, implementation, and support of the phone management system. This includes tracking and logging of inmate phone lists and approvals/denials; identification of private phone contacts, such as attorneys; call history, and user acceptance and billing.
- The physical storage and management of historical call recordings for years after the fact.
- Issuance, maintenance, and replacement of tablets and earbuds for 100% of the population.

5. Q2. [Rep. Sirota] Does every offender have to have their own tablet for these purposes?? Please explain whether there are any other models that could avoid building these costs in as an inherent part of caseload.

CDOC Response: A tablet is provided to each inmate by Securus as part of the terms of our contract with Securus. The tablets are included at no additional cost to the Department or the inmate. There is no language in the current contract with Securus stating that the Department cannot take away the tablets; however, revocation of the tablets could lead to unrest among the population, further leading to safety and security concerns for the staff, inmates, and stakeholders. The tablets also provide accessibility options for the offender population, such as Video Relay Services (VRS) for deaf offenders and/or their loved ones. It should be noted that tablets were included in the initial ITN during the procurement process (these documents can be available upon request). Several Department initiatives are intended to be provided on the tablets that incarcerated individuals have in their possession. This does include canteen ordering,

banking, resident-facing applications, e-messaging, virtual and other educational/vocational programming, surveys, and other initiatives. Removing tablets may result in an inability to provide certain programs and services and/or limit programmatic opportunities. Program delivery on tablets is one means of providing opportunities when physical space, security, and other logistical considerations preclude delivery of programs in a classroom.

C.R.S. 17-42-103(1.5) states that, “In administering the use of penal communications services pursuant to subsection (1) of this section, access to penal communications services must not be limited except as permitted in section 17-20-130.”

There may be some ability to control costs, but given current state law and past litigation on this topic, restricting access is not recommended.

With that said, individual call *duration* limits have been upheld as legal and permissible (Arney v. Simmons), to ensure that all inmates can utilize the limited number of telephones in the prison setting. Per the CDOC Administrative Regulation (AR) 850-12 Telephone Regulations for Offenders, phone calls are limited to 20 minutes per call before the call ends. Currently, the inmate can then make another call immediately after the last call and can place phone calls either with their tablet and/or from a wall-mounted phone in a living unit.

The current year-to-date average of telephone minutes used per inmate per day is 31.82 minutes. If the Department were to limit the number of calls and/or minutes per offender, the Department would have to explore if additional programming options within the software are available. The software programming of the current vendor, Securus, does not provide a means to differentiate the state-paid calls from the offender-paid calls. The Department assumes that, even with a cap on state-paid minutes, there would be a strong desire from families of the incarcerated and advocacy groups to allow phone calls above that threshold at a cost to the population, which cannot be supported with current programming.

6. Private prison per-diem (2026 JBC Hearing - CDOC Slide Deck - Slides #43-44)

6. Q1 [Sen. Amabile] Please explain how the current private prison operates have been operating at the current lower rate. And what services are these prisons providing/not providing? Would increasing the rate allow for more services? Is there a way to ensure that the increase in the per-diem rate goes to staff and services?

CDOC Response: CoreCivic is a private, nation-wide corporation and CDOC does not have insight into their internal finances. Our assumption would be that since they are nation-wide, the primary focus would be a global financial perspective. That being said, with costs rising and minimal per diem increases in the past twenty years with CDOC, the pressure on these private facilities continues to increase; recruitment and retention of staff, programming, and facility maintenance are all critical components of the per diem. CoreCivic leadership has indicated that the increased per diem would be used to maintain competitive staff salaries and expressed interest in coordinating with CDOC in the implementation of new programming options.

Committee Hearing: Post-hearing Responses

Common Questions (Written-only Response)

1. Can you please outline a detailed plan for shifting 5.0 percent of General Fund salaries to cash and/or federal fund sources? Please include the following Information:

CDOC Response: State agencies are already incentivized to maximize non-GF fund splits for all positions. Where costs can be billed directly to a non-General Fund source, the department is already billing those fund sources. If an agency cannot bill a fund source directly for general support and administration (e.g. accounting, budgeting, leadership positions), costs are billed through indirect cost plans (internal or statewide). In many instances, the indirect cost model is the most efficient way to recover these expenses. Finally, state agencies must be able to draw a line between the work that individual positions execute and the funds that support that activity - the executive branch cannot just choose to fund an employee with federal funds or cash funds based on desire. There must be a business reason.

1.a. A list of positions and associated funding that can be shifted to cash/federal fund sources without any action from the General Assembly.

CDOC Response: CDOC is not aware of any that could be refinanced. CDOC has already allocated grant-funded positions where feasible.

1.b. A list of positions and associated funding that can be shifted to cash/federal fund sources but would require legislation to do so.

CDOC Response: CDOC is not aware of any positions and associated funding that could be shifted to cash/federal fund sources.

1.c. What other changes could be made – programmatic or otherwise – that would allow your department greater flexibility to use cash/federal fund sources in place of General Fund for employee salaries?

CDOC Response: CDOC is unaware of any changes that could be made.

2. How many hires have been made between the August 27, 2025 hiring freeze executive order and the end of December 2025? Why were these positions hired (e.g., because the position was posted beforehand; an exemption, etc.)? Please provide job classification, division, and fund source (General Fund vs. other funds) for each position hired.

CDOC Response:

CDOC had a total of 614 hires during the period of the hiring freeze. Of these, 376 were new hires and 238 were internal hires or movements, including promotions, transfers, and voluntary demotions. The majority of these positions were essential for public safety and the continuous, safe operation of our facilities, making them exempt from the freeze. These critical roles include POST-certified law enforcement officers and trainees, correctional officers, direct-care staff (such as nurses), program staff (such as teachers and case managers), their supervisors, and other vital personnel in healthcare, food service, education, and maintenance.

Only one waiver for a non-exempt position was requested and subsequently approved by the Governor's Office.

Single Entry List of Hires from 8/28 - 12/31/25

All positions were filled through General Funding.



Joint Budget Committee

FY 2026-2027 Budget Hearing

Colorado Department of Corrections

Andre Stancil, Executive Director

January 7, 2026



FY 2026-27 Requests

Looking forward



R-03/ R-07 Food Service and Laundry Inflation

The Department requests funding in the amount of \$648,870 GF for FY 2026-27 and ongoing to the Food Service Subprogram Operating Expenses line item. The Department is also requesting funding in the amount of \$74,235 for FY 2026-27 and ongoing to the Laundry Subprogram Operating Expenses line item.

- The food service request will allow the Department to **keep pace with inflationary costs** to provide meals to the incarcerated population.
- The laundry request will allow the Department to keep pace with inflationary increases to chemicals, supplies and textiles used to provide clothing items, repair clothing items, and launder clothing provided to the incarcerated population.



R-04 eOMIS Support and Maintenance

The Department requests \$3,388,210 GF for FY 2026-27 and ongoing to support required vendor software maintenance services. The Department further requests a new appropriation line under the 3G Information Systems Subprogram for these funds.

- The eOMIS system was created to replace and update numerous outdated tracking systems used by CDOC. The result will be **one central modernized/current information tracking system**.
- eOMIS is the result of a very large, ongoing information system modernization project that is finally **expected to be completed at the end of FY 2025-26**.
- The request and the associated request for an identified specialized allocation will ensure dedicated funds for **ongoing annual maintenance of the overall system**, safeguarding the future success of the project.



R-06 Drug and Alcohol Contracts Funds Reallocation

The Department requests to reallocate funds from the Drug & Alcohol Contract Services line to both the Drug and Alcohol Personal Services line and the Medical Services Operating line, along with adding 3.7 FTE. **This is a net-neutral request.**

- Decreasing expenses in the Contracts line can allow for reallocation for **optimal utilization of the funds.**
- Expiring grant funds have paid for staff for MAT program counseling, and the Department wishes to continue those services as FTE positions.
- The Medical Operating line requires additional funds to offset rising medical supply costs and to assist with purchases of necessary supplies related to the MAT program.



Gains and Strides

Modernizing the Department



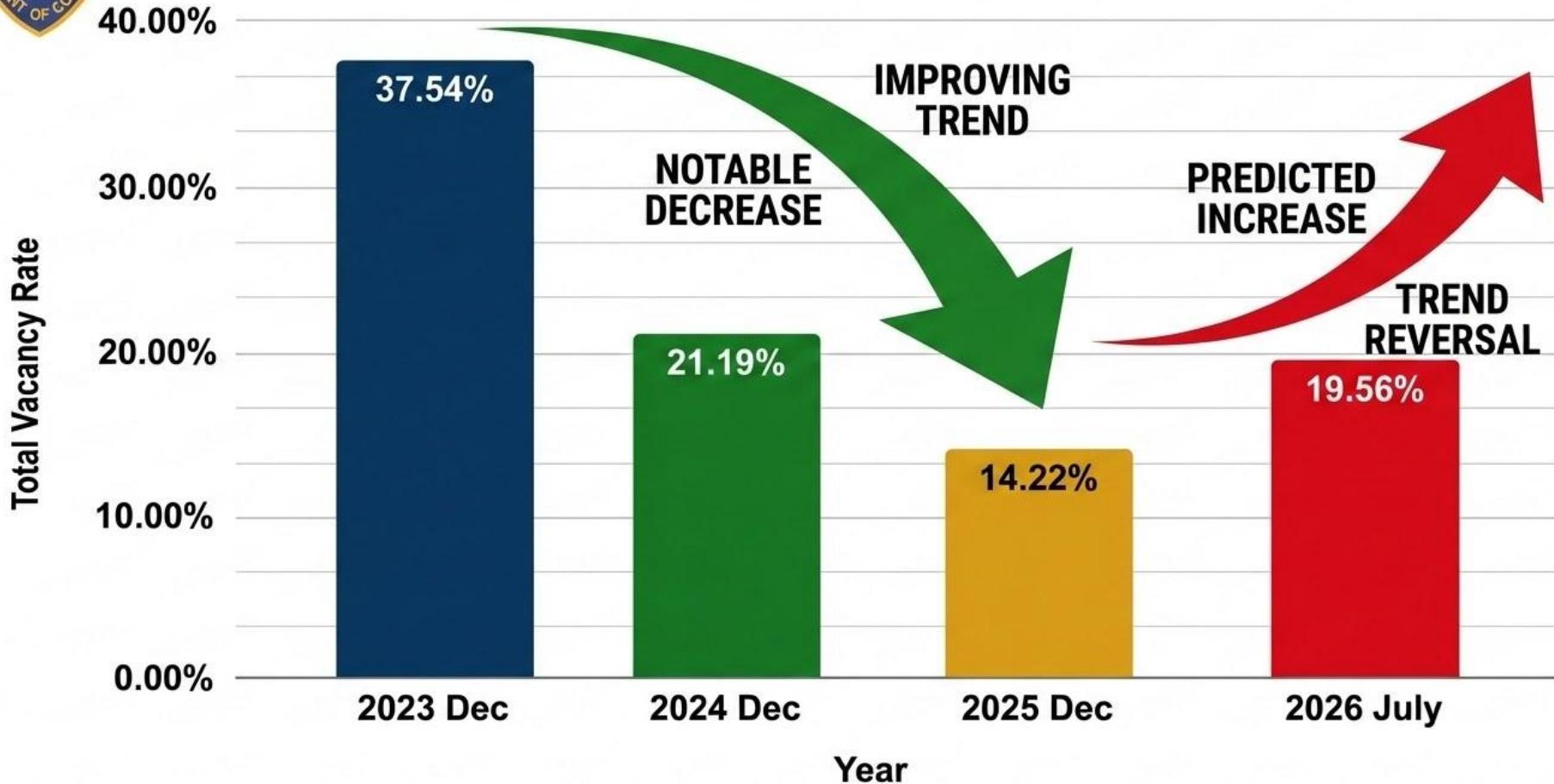
OVERALL VACANCY RATE TREND



Our overall vacancy rate has shown a notable and consistent decrease from December 2023 to December 2025, indicating improved staffing stability.

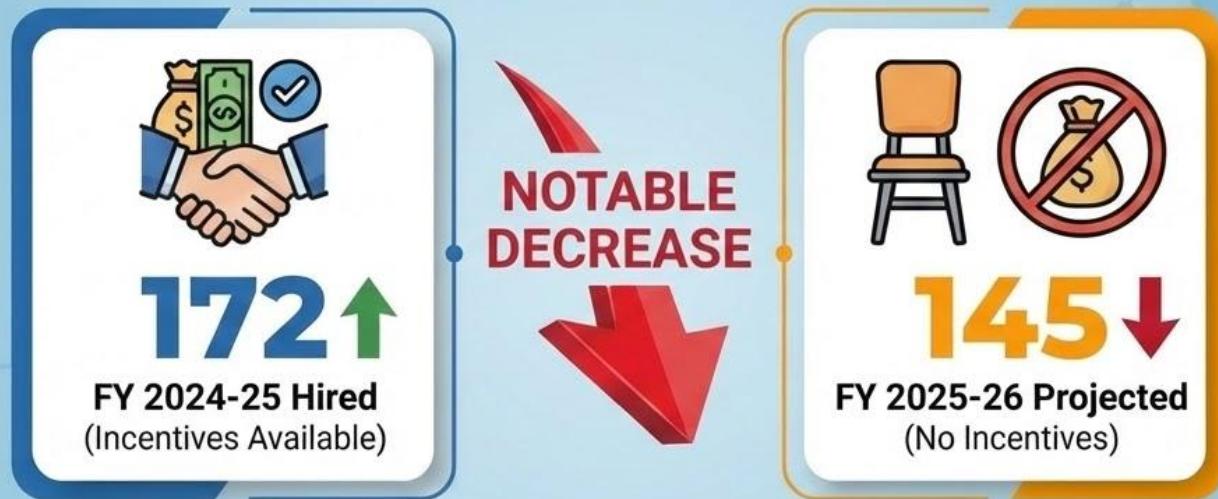


Clinical Positions Vacancy %





CLINICAL INCENTIVES



Furthermore, exit survey data from the past 12 months indicate that the primary reason for clinical employee turnover at DOC is compensation related.



Colorado Correctional Industries

Providing meaningful workforce development



CCI Education

- CCI created and hired a new Education Manager to create, expand and strengthen all education programs. This includes trainings, certificates, apprenticeships, etc.
- Collaborating with Education and Parole on key workforce development initiatives, identifying in-demand job and training opportunities to improve post-release employment rates.
- Launching new financial literacy programs and a college-credit-bearing customer service CTE program in January, providing inmates with essential life skills and valuable academic credit to increase their post-release success.
- Facilitated inmates earning over 80 college credits through the SWIFT program (July – December 2025).
- Supported CI offenders receiving more than 30 industry-recognized certifications (July – December 2025).
- Initiated over 400 certifications currently in progress, demonstrating a strong commitment to skill development and career readiness.
- Collaborated with Education on growing apprenticeships in Leather and Tag Plant (machining) shops.



CCI Incentives Development

- CCI Interview Clothing Incentive program, providing a complete set of interview-appropriate attire upon their release or transition to community corrections. The benefit is provided to current and former CCI inmates who worked for CCI for a minimum of 365 days and remain in good standing with CCI.
 - Seeks to increase employment upon release and during community corrections.
- CCI Inmate Release Bonus awarding qualifying inmates \$100 for each year they were employed in a CCI shop.
 - Provides more financial support for post-release success
 - Seeks to increase employment upon release and recidivism by easing financial barriers
 - Incentivizes longer-term employment which allows inmates more time to build skills and complete training opportunities within their CCI experience while helping CCI shops' productivity
- CCI Inmate Benefit Retirement Accounts to encourage savings for all CCI inmates.
 - Focuses on aiding inmates in achieving financial success by matching 3% of inmates' elective contributions
 - Incorporates a 3-year vesting period that supports employment stability
 - Creates incentive for both releasing and long-term CCI inmates as personal and matching contributions can be dispersed at the time of release or retirement



CCI Financial Stabilization

- Finished FY25 at a profit of \$5.2M
 - Since 2022 re-organization, 3 consecutive years of break-even or better operations (FY23 break-even, FY24 \$1.6M profit)
 - Revised estimate for FY26 of \$5.0M profit, with FY27 budget set at \$6.5M profit
- Able to reinvest in capital and infrastructure while simultaneously eliminating cash deficit and increasing inmate wages
 - Investing a minimum of 10% of annual profits back into programs
 - Have increased daily average wage from FY19 to present from \$5.00/day to \$26.00+/day
 - 6 programs with ability to earn minimum wage
 - Metal
 - Leather
 - Garments
 - SWIFT
 - Surplus
 - Image Processing



Clinical Services

Providing the best care for those behind the walls



340b and Patient Assistance Medications Cost Avoidance

Cost Avoidance	FY 2023/2024	FY 2024/2025	FY 2025/2026
340B	\$3,394,612	\$11,964,291	\$3,342,683
Patient Assistance Medications	\$420,012	\$660,155	\$1,800,161
Totals	\$3,814,624	\$12,624,446	\$5,142,844



1115 Waiver Implementation

- CDOC has created new procedures to comply with Medicaid standards, new billing practices, and worked across leadership and direct clinical and support staff to complete the required readiness activities, documented in a Readiness Assessment to be completed by each facility, expected by January 2026.
- After the Readiness Assessment completion, CDOC can begin billing Medicaid for MAT services rendered 90 days prior to release.
- SB 25-308 guides the financial process to deposit General Fund savings from the federal match into a cash fund.

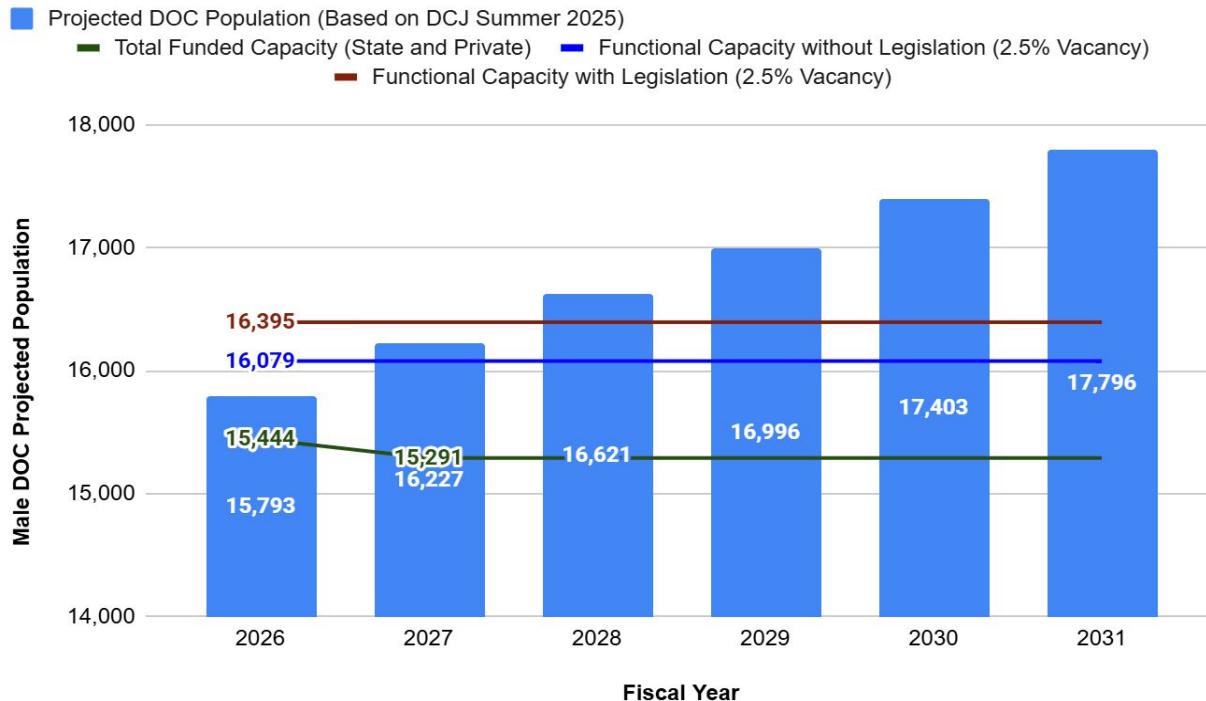


Male Prison Population and Capacity

Our Facilities



Male Prison Capacity and Population Projections



- FY 2025-26 Funded Capacity includes 153 private prison beds approved via a September 1331 emergency supplemental.
- Capacity requiring legislation to utilize include: 316 Level IV beds at CCF-S and 8 Level I beds at RCC.
- Functional Capacity represents all “usable beds” across the state, including currently unfunded and unpopulated beds (excludes Temporary Assignment beds = Restricted Housing and Infirmary beds).



Remaining Unfunded Bed Capacity (FY 2026-27)

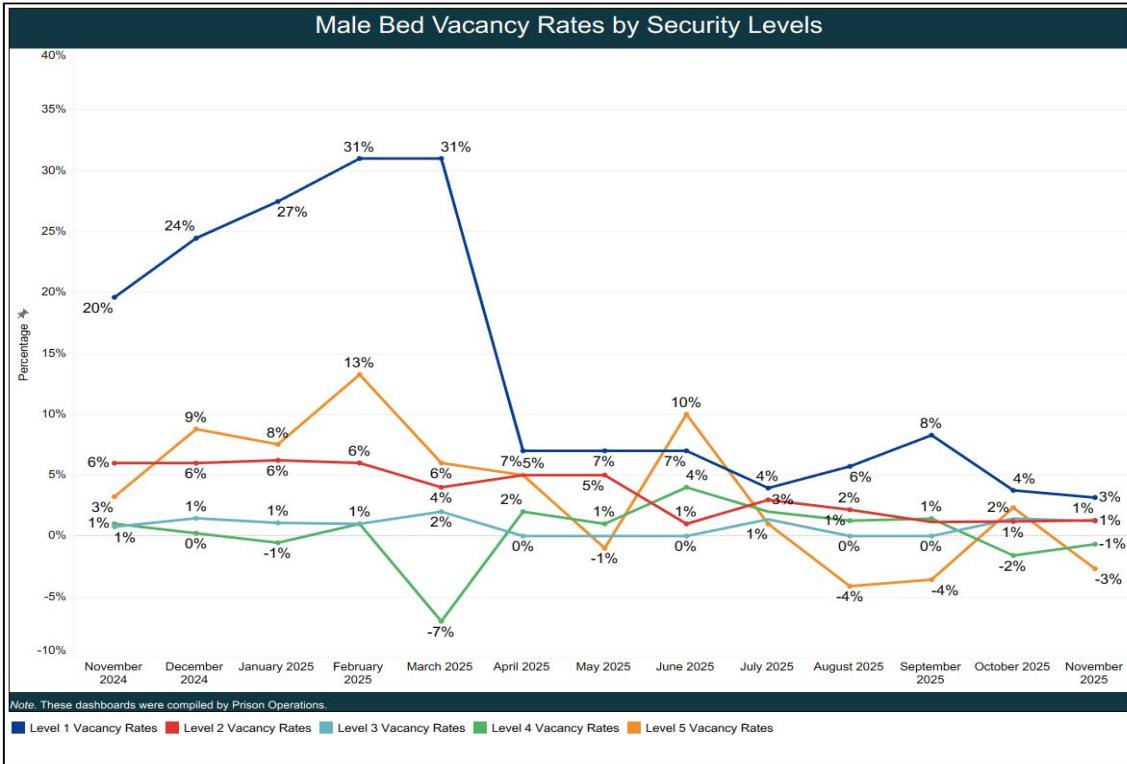
Facility (Security Level)	Custody Level	FY 2025-26 Remaining Unfunded Beds	FY 2026-27 Request	FY 2027-28 Remaining Unfunded Beds
Centennial Correctional Facility (Level IV)	Close	316	0	316
Crowley County Correctional Facility (Level III)	Medium	153	153	0
Buena Vista Transitional Work Center (Level I)	Minimum	118	0	118
Buena Vista Correctional Complex (Level II)	Minimum-Restricted	200	200	0
Delta Correctional Center (Level I)	Minimum	288	288	0
Rifle Correctional Center (Level I)	Minimum	8	0	8
Sterling Correctional Facility (Level II)	Minimum-Restricted	300	300	0
Denver Women's Correctional Facility (Level II)	Minimum-Restricted	216	0	216
Total		1,599	941	658

Additional Capacity Options for CDOC

- CDOC has started the process to evaluate options for additional capacity within the state. This includes
 - ▷ Creating additional capacity within current facilities
 - ▷ Purchasing a private
 - ▷ Leasing a private
 - ▷ Building a new facility
- After the January 9 CDOC caseload submission to address caseload short-term, the Executive Branch looks forward to conversations with the legislature throughout the spring about medium- and long-term solutions.



Vacancy and Security Level

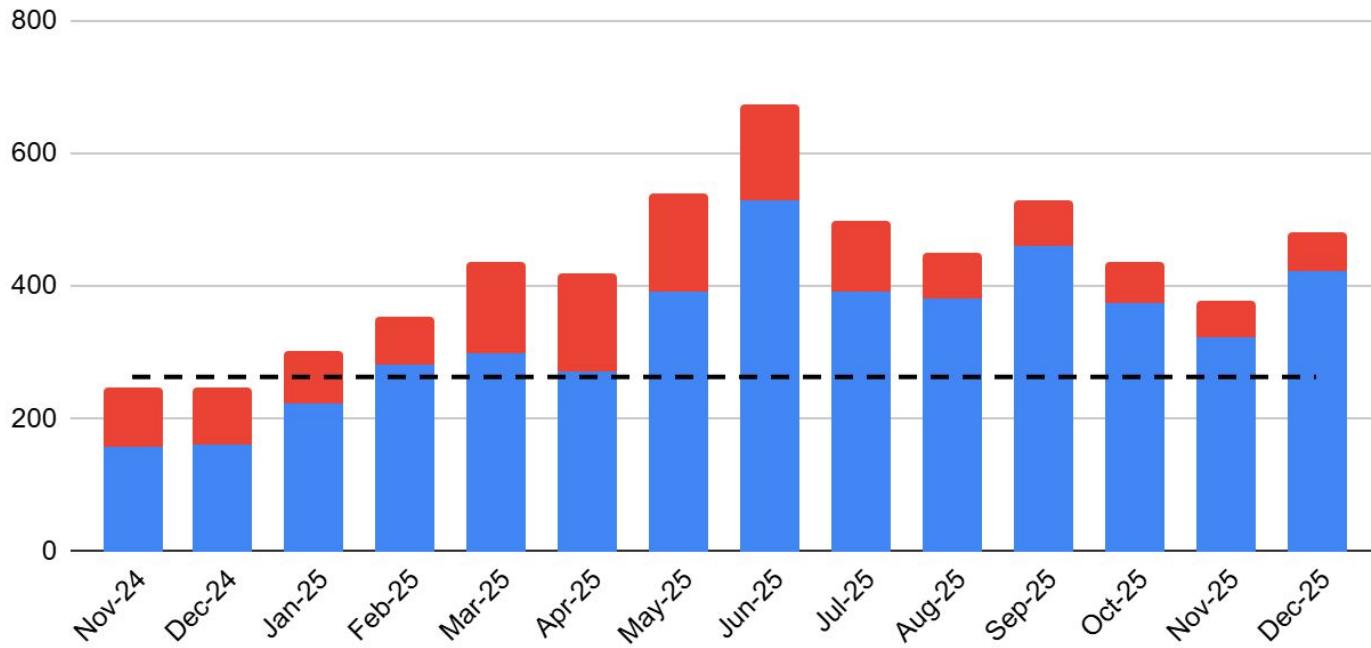


- CDOC tracks and monitors vacancy rates at all levels daily. This is to accommodate intake, release, and inmate movement.
- CDOC uses historical information when evaluating bed caseload requests to help accommodate low vacancy security levels as well as future project requests.



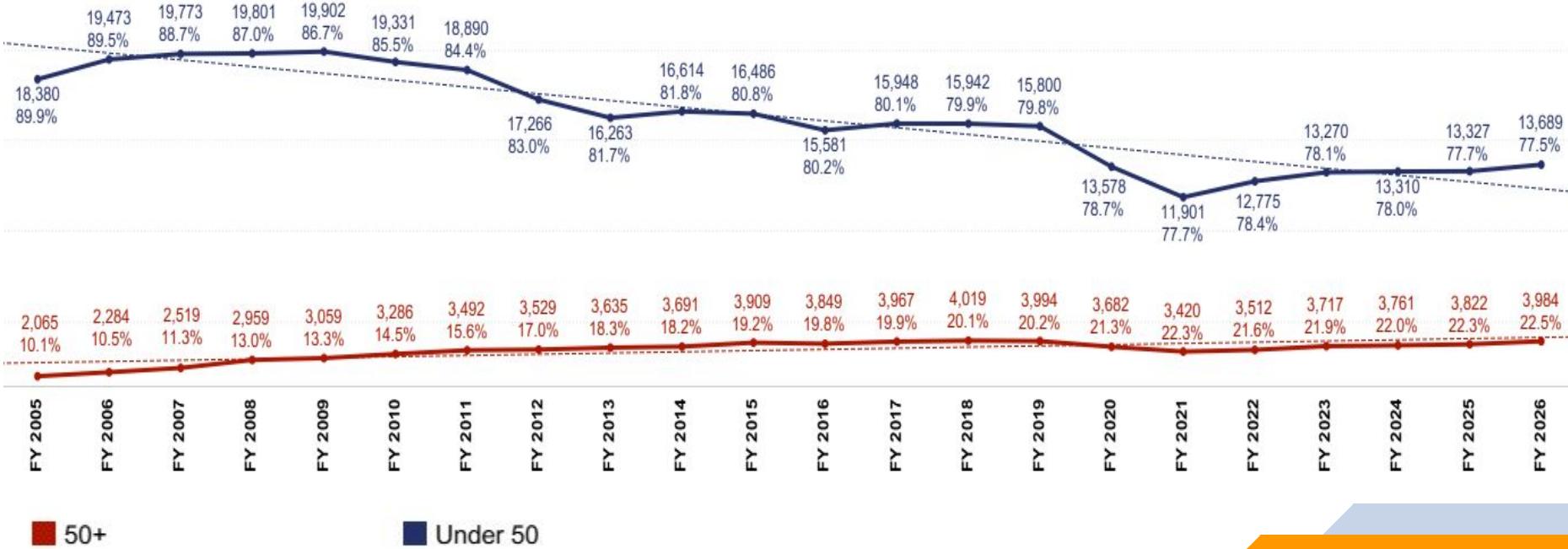
Monthly Jail Backlog Average Daily Population (ADP)

— Funded -263 Beds Female Male



INMATE POPULATIONS BY AGE GROUP

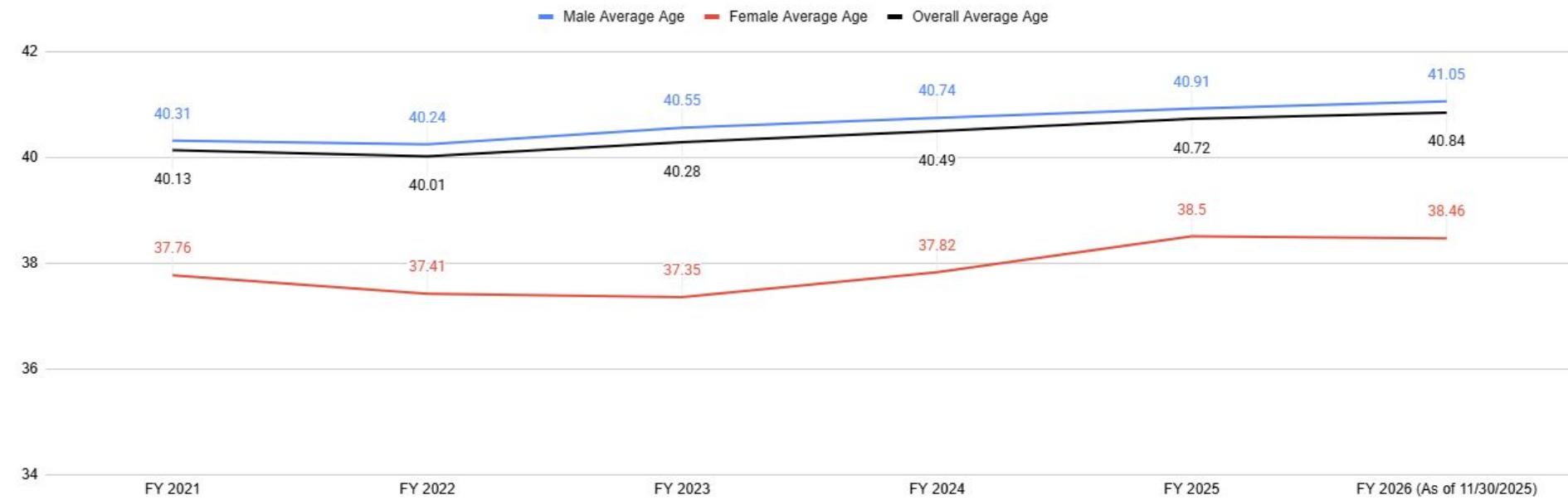
Total Inmate Population



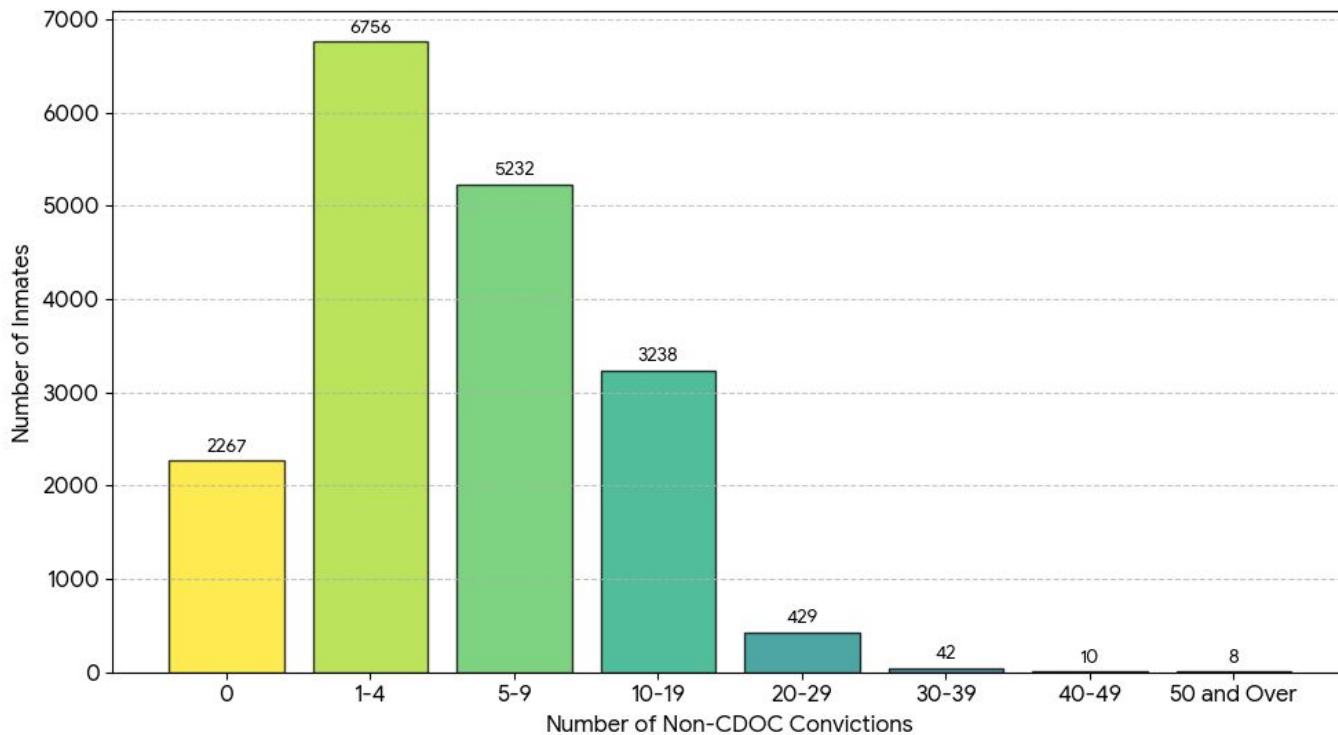
50+

Under 50

Offender Population Average Age



Non-CDOC Convictions per Inmate Population (as of 11/30/2025)



These are the number of Non-CDOC convictions for the inmate population as of 11/30/2025. The Non-DOC Convictions figures do not include the conviction(s) that resulted in the inmate being in prison. The Non-DOC Convictions include things such as misdemeanors, felony convictions in other states resulting in prison time, and lower level felonies that did not result in a sentence to prison.



Prisons Population Management

COMPARISON OF INSTRUMENTS

Feature	Previous Instrument (Pre-2013)	New Instrument (Post-2013)
Criminal History	Focused on multiple convictions (high/highest weight).	Focused on the severity of current and prior convictions.
Disciplinary Record	Scored 4 separate disciplinary factors.	Streamlined to only 2 disciplinary factors.
Rehabilitation	No points awarded for work or program progress.	Includes Program Participation and Work Evaluations.
Age Factor	Age was not granularly weighted.	Current Age provides specific point reductions (older = lower risk).
Parole Eligibility (PED)	1 point added for every year until PED.	PED removed from point scoring entirely.



Classification

- The CDOC uses a classification system that is consistent with national standards, similar to systems used in other state and federal correctional departments, and follows widely accepted industry best practices.
- To ensure the efficacy and defensibility of our system, it is validated by an outside vendor every five years. This process incorporates suggestions and best practices from across the correctional field.
- The dept utilizes four General Population classification levels the lowest being level I or Minimum and the highest being level IV or Close. Classification in each of these levels is primarily based on risk which is closely associated with behavior.
- The CDOC uses four General Population security levels (from Level I/Minimum to Level IV/Close).
- Classification is primarily based on the offender's assessed risk, one of the predominant drivers of risk is offender behavior. The higher the risk, the higher the security level.



Classification

- The CDOC is actively reviewing its classification criteria to identify adjustments that could benefit the system. Specifically, the department is looking into ways to increase movement opportunities for certain identified Level III inmates to progress to Level II.
- Although the department is currently struggling with vacancy across all of the above levels, historically we have had issues with level I placements for a couple of reasons.
 - a. High Turnover: Level I inmates are often excellent candidates for parole or community placement. As a result, they leave the system at a very high rate, causing constant, high-volume movement and leading to higher-than-average vacancy.
 - b. Safety vs. Capacity: The CDOC must balance the need for capacity against public safety. The department feels confident that the offenders currently classified as Level I are appropriate for that low-security level. Expanding this classification too broadly could introduce risks and cause concern for the safety and security of the general public.



Parole/Community Reintegration

Engaging partners to ensure success



Technical Parole Violations

C.R.S 17-22.5-404(9) defines Technical Parole Violation

A violation of a condition of parole that is not conviction for a new criminal offense or not determined by the state board of parole to be a commission of a new criminal offense.

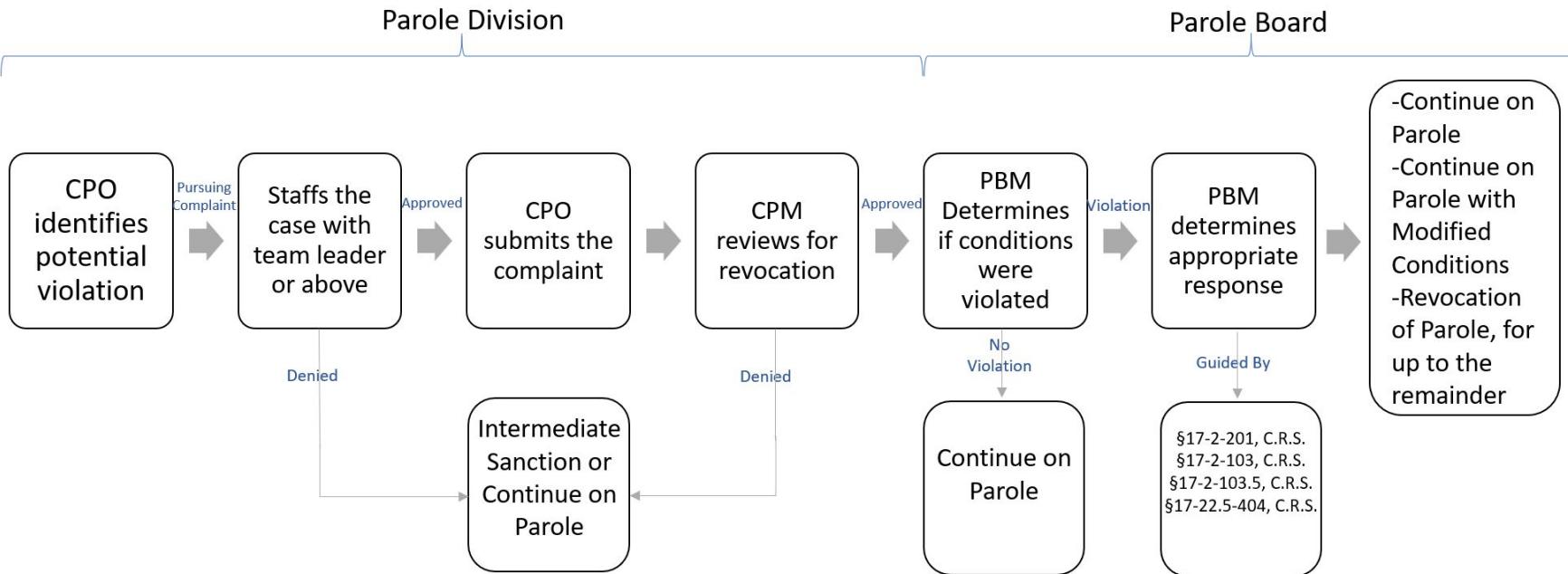


Reasons for Technical Violations Can Include...

- Self-revocation requests granted by the Parole Board
- Parolees convicted of a new felony but not sentenced to prison
- Parolees convicted of a misdemeanor offense
- True TPV (no criminal convictions)
 - Absconding from parole supervision
 - Termination from sex offender treatment/noncompliance with sex offender treatment
 - Possession of a Deadly Weapon
 - Willful Failure to Appear for a Summons
 - Unlawful Contact with a Victim
 - Willful Tampering or Removal of an Electronic Monitoring Device

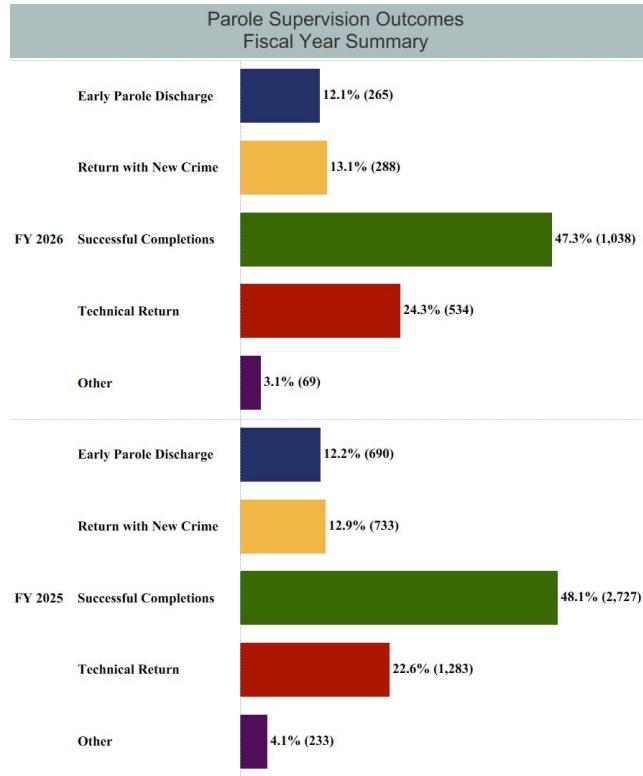


Parole Revocation Process



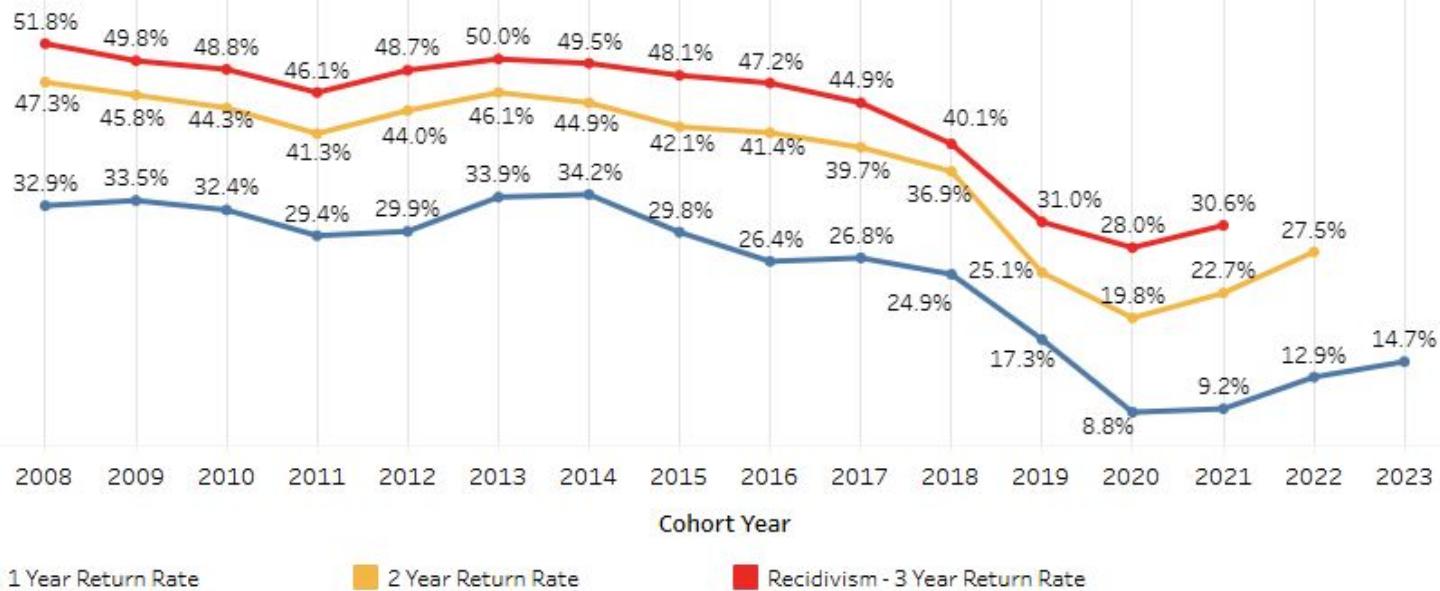


Parole Supervision Outcomes



Note: FY 2026 is Fiscal Year to Date (FYTD) as of December 31, 2025

CDOC RECIDIVISM AND RETURN RATES

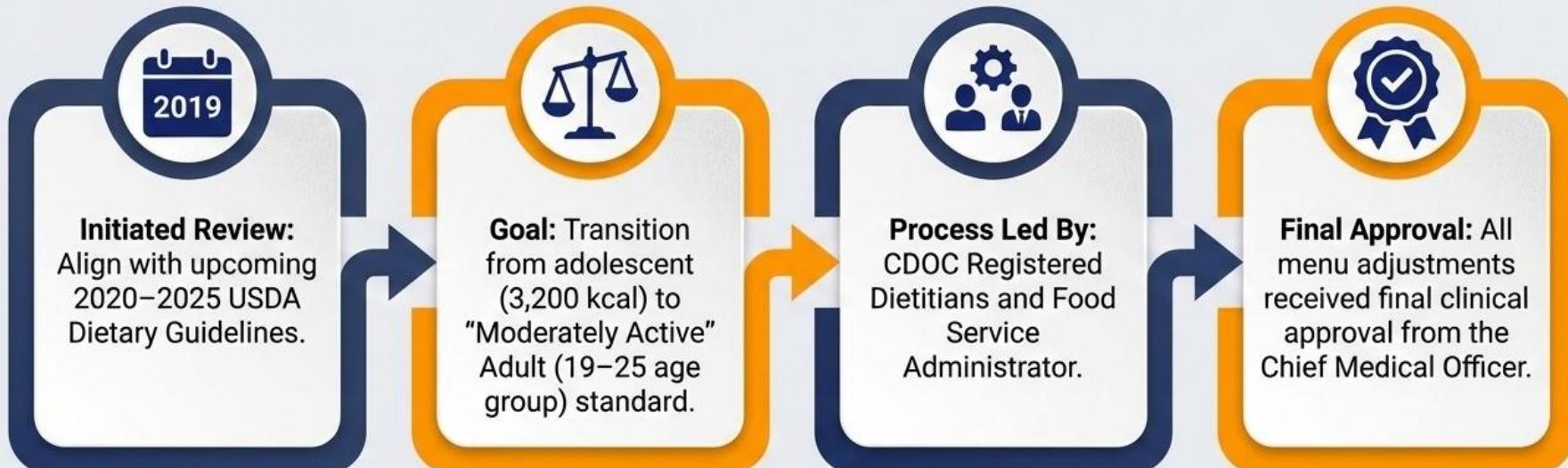




Youthful Offender System

Food

History and Rationale (2019-2024)



Multi-Year Phased Implementation

July 2022

(Phase 1 begins)



July 2024

(Final Phase Alignment completed)



 2019 Shift Determined, Gradual Approach for Stability

 COVID-19 Pandemic Delay

The following table details the multi-year, gradual plan to align YOS menus with federal nutritional standards.

Effective Date	Male Calorie Target	Female Calorie Target	Justification / Reason for Change
July 1, 2022 (FY 23)	3,200/day	2,600/day	Maintained prior calorie amounts.
July 1, 2023 (FY 24)	3,000/day	2,400/day	Begin our gradual reduction plan to meet federal guidelines
July 1, 2024 (FY 25)	2,700/day	2,200/day	Final alignment with USDA guidelines for the “moderately active” 19-25 age group for females, and midpoint between “sedentary/moderately active” for males, i.e., lightly active.
July 1, 2025 (FY 26)	2,700/day	2,200/day	Maintain established nutritional standards



Clinical Assessment Results

- A comprehensive facility-wide weigh-in conducted in late 2025 identified zero residents currently classified as underweight.
- Clinical data show no significant changes in weight across the population since the final implementation phase began in July 2024.



Individualized Nutritional Care

- Supplemental caloric snacks are provided to any resident clinically determined to need them due to physical activity or health conditions.
- Medical providers assess any resident exhibiting physical changes, and individualized medical or high-protein diets are provided as needed.



Ongoing Review

- An expedited clinical review of YOS nutritional standards is currently underway and set for completion by end of January.
- CDOC dietitians conduct annual internal reviews of all menus to ensure continued quality, compliance, and alignment with federal standards. Additionally, upon the official publication of the 2025–2030 federal standards, the Department will immediately initiate a comprehensive reassessment of all YOS menus to ensure continued alignment with the latest national health criteria.



Phone Calls

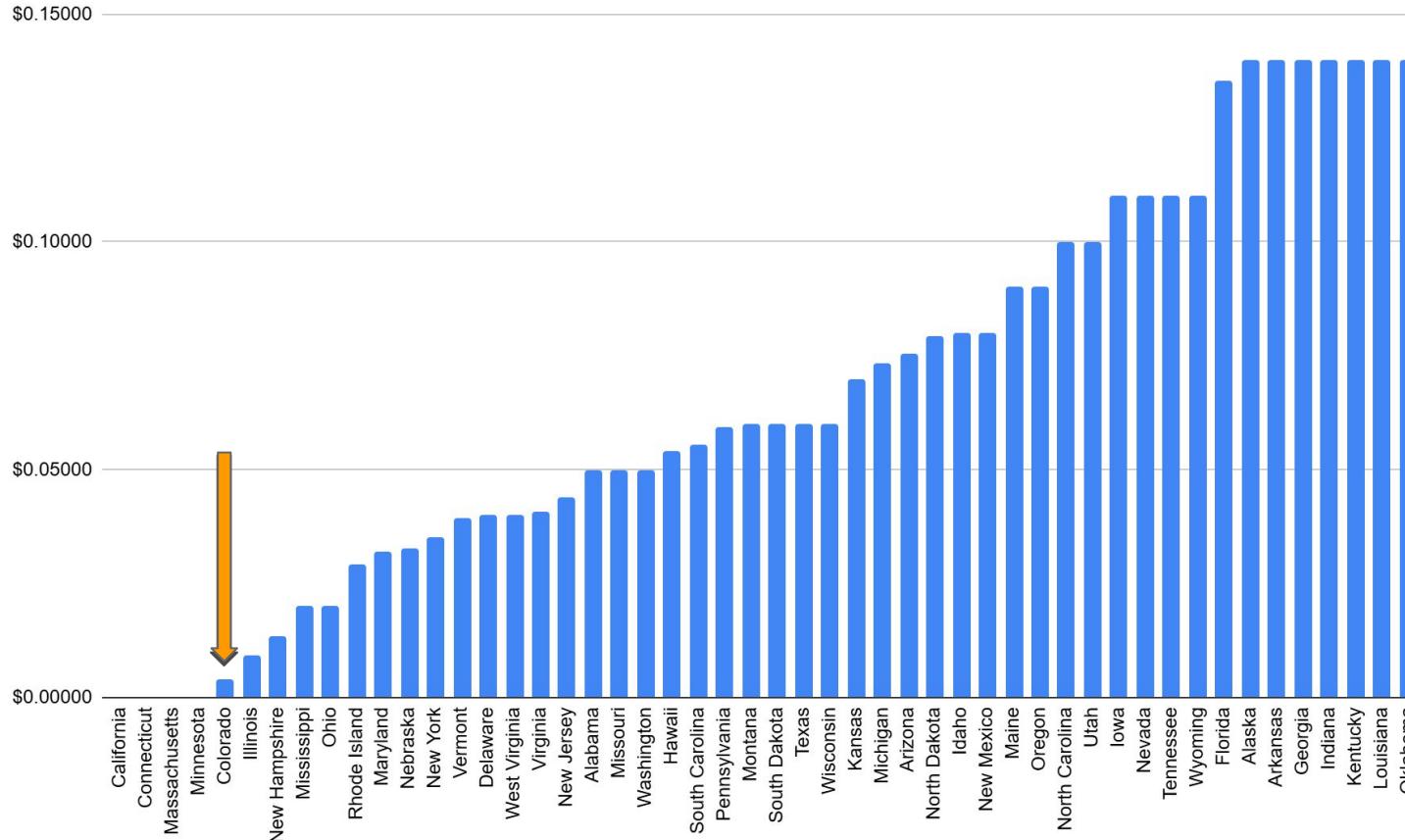


R-09 Inmate Phone Calls Cost Cap

The Department requests the JBC sponsor a bill to revise C.R.S. 17-42-103 (1.5) to continue capping CDOC cost-sharing for inmate phone calls at **75%** in FY 2026-27 and ongoing, **avoiding \$2,308,237 in General Fund costs**.

- In the last two budget cycles, the Department submitted Supplemental budget requests to address the **higher-than-expected utilization**.
- Inmate utilization per day **increased by 56.8%** in FY 2024-25 (29.38 minutes) compared to FY 2023-24 (18.74 minutes) when cost-sharing increased from 25% to 35%.
- The current contract with Securus caps the rate at **\$0.019 per minute**. Inmates are currently paying \$0.00475 per minute and the Department pays the remaining 75%.
- This is a VOIP system, and charges cover the cost for the security needed around inmate phone calls.
- **Colorado is the fifth (5th) cheapest in the US for inmate phone calls** and has seen an 99.93% decrease in the cost to inmates from 2008 to 2026.

Cost Per Minute to Inmate By State Department of Corrections





Private Prison Per-Diem

Private Prison Per Diem Historical Rates

Fiscal Year	Long Bill	Per Diem	YOY Increase	YOY Percent Increase	CPI-U (BLS Data)
2015-16	S.B. 15-234	\$56.02			2.0%
2016-17	H.B. 16-1405	\$56.02	\$0	0.0%	2.1%
2017-18	S.B. 17-254	\$56.80	\$0.78	1.4%	1.9%
2018-19	H.B. 18-1322	\$57.37	\$0.57	1.0%	2.2%
2019-20	S.B. 19-207	\$57.94	\$0.57	1.0%	2.1%
2020-21	H.B. 20-1360	\$57.36	(\$0.58)	-1.0%	2.1%
2021-22	H.B. 22-1170	\$63.32	\$5.96	10.4%	5.1%
2022-23	H.B. 22-1329	\$63.32	\$0	0.0%	5.3%
2023-24	S.B. 23-214	\$65.22	\$1.90	3.0%	4.0%
2024-25	H.B. 1430	\$66.52	\$1.30	2.0%	3.2%
2025-26	S.B. 25-206	\$66.52	\$0	0.0%	TBD
		Total	\$10.50	18.74%	30.4%



QUESTIONS



This concludes our presentation. Thank you for your attention and support.

CONCLUSION

JBC Hearing Questions, 1/7/2026

eOMIS Support and Maintenance

(Rep. Taggart) \$3.4M maintenance and support price seems high. Was this known at the time the original project was requested? Why is the price so high?

CDOC Response: The Department was aware that there would be an ongoing cost to maintain and support the eOMIS offender management system. The state experienced steady year-over-year cost increases during the development contract with Marquis. As we transition to the long-term maintenance model for the system, we are seeing rates catch up with long-term inflation, which has impacted most technologies. The increase from the previous figure equates to an annualized compounding increase of 9.2% over the course of the past 10 years. Industry averages have shown an annual increase between 8% - 15% for enterprise software solutions. The Department has negotiated a nominal annual increase of just 3% year-over-year for the next 10 years to keep costs maintained. The cost is significant, but it is due to several factors: 1) The software is custom, complex, and must be flexible enough to stay current as circumstances, operations, and statutes change. 2) Corrections is a very niche software sector, with very few alternatives for management solutions. 3) The software is mission critical and directly impacts public safety and operations of both Parole and Prisons. The Department also obtained figures from the vendor of maintenance costs paid by other states for the software. That review found that the average maintenance cost paid by other states is \$3,766,094, and the median amount is \$4,064,375. This demonstrates that the costs quoted to the Colorado Department of Corrections are in line with those of other states using the software.

Clinical Incentives

(Sen. Amabile) Do these roles include providers providing SO treatment?

CDOC Response: Yes, all levels of SOTMP that provide treatment were included in the hiring incentive to include SW/C II, SW/C IV, Psychologists, and Health Professional series. Ten positions were hired with this incentive and nine remain employed with the CDOC.

Staffing

(Sen. Kirkmeyer) In December of 2023, how many FTE did we actually have at the Department and how many FTE did we have in December 2025? Also needing these data for clinical staff at the Department.

CDOC Response:

Department-wide:

DATE	TOTAL FTE	TOTAL POSITIONS	FULL-TIME	PART-TIME
12/1/2023	6,977.0	7,030.0	6,924.0	106.0
12/5/2025	6,992.5	7,031.0	6,954.0	77.0

Clinical:

DATE	TOTAL FTE	TOTAL POSITIONS	FULL-TIME	PART-TIME
12/1/2023	699.0	718.0	680.3	38.0
12/5/2025	666.5	682.0	651.0	31.0

There was a reduction of 32.5 FTE in clinical; the largest portion (28.0 FTE) is due to the Department's FTE Realignment project where long-standing vacant positions (those vacant over 24 months) were reassigned to areas where positions could be filled. For these clinical positions, some had been vacant since 2016.

As CDOC completes work on Personal Services recommendations in the Performance Audit, there is also a plan to right-size FTE to align with the Long Bill.

(Sen. Kirkmeyer) What is the strategic plan to address the workforce shortage long-term?

CDOC Response:

Long-Term Strategy: Addressing the Workforce Shortage

The Colorado Department of Corrections (DOC) will address its long-term workforce shortage through two key initiatives by adjusting the employee relief factor and right-sizing pay. As the state's largest cabinet agency, as of December 2025, we have 5,911 active staff, excluding Temporary Aides. The DOC has unique 24/7 operational requirements, similar only to the Department of Human Services (DHS with 4,852 staff).

Key Initiatives for Retention and Morale

- 1. Adjusting the Relief Factor:** This crucial step will significantly benefit current staff by reducing stress, minimizing mandatory extra shifts ("holdovers"), allowing staff to take their paid time off, and allowing for dedicated time for professional development, family, and friends. The currently used calculation is off by a factor of over 10%.

Currently, outdated relief factor calculations strain employees, leading to burnout, fatigue, high turnover rates, and increased active leave cases, such as Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI) and Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Staff utilized 800,000 hours of job protected leave in FY 24-25. Additionally, 39.12 % of our staff have an active leave case. Our demanding positions require committed individuals dedicated to public safety. A primary goal of rectifying the relief factor is to ensure staff can focus on their primary roles—preventing positions like Case Managers and Teachers from having to provide coverage for critical security posts. This promotes less stress,

better sleep and better outlook overall. This adjustment is vital for staff well-being and a more positive work environment.

A request for an updated relief factor will be forthcoming in the November 1, 2026, submission.

2. **Right-Sizing Pay:** The State has made efforts through STEPS to correct employee pay. Only having time in class series as the measure to increase pay has not benefited many of our state personnel who haven't worked in the same class series their entire career. At the direction of the Department of Personnel and Administration(DPA), through a training given to agencies in June of 2024, DPA covered the use of other relevant factors that can be utilized by agencies under Colorado's Equal Pay for Equal Work Act (EPEWA) to explain why someone makes more than someone else in the same position. DOC then created its own compensation policy in October of 2024 around the allowable factor of relevant experience under (EPEWA).. We had our policy vetted by both DPA and the AG's office to ensure compliance with state guidelines and rules. Due to funding, we could only apply this factor to new hires and current staff looking to promote out of their class series. This helps us be more competitive in the market and encourages staff who are moving class series to have relevant experience to increase the chance of a promotion equaling more pay as they grow their career. The challenge lies in not being able to pay our current staff due to the cost of right-sizing their experience to match where they should fall in the pay grade. Former pay practices of bringing in staff at the minimum of the pay range has created situations around current staff not being paid **properly** in accordance with the new compensation policy. This creates situations where seasoned staff are making less and leads to poor morale and staff being paid their worth. This contributes to increased turnover and the inability of the agency to retain current talent who are able to find outside opportunities that pay more. By fixing the pay (right sizing) of our current staff we will see increased morale and a boost to retention.

Long-Term Impact

Implementing these two key initiatives—adjusting the relief factor and right-sizing pay—is projected to have a massive, long-term positive effect on DOC staffing. By hiring more full-time equivalents (FTEs), we can offer an accurate relief factor, which combats burnout and allows current staff the necessary time and focus to perform their primary duties, while providing adequate security staff to maintain the safety and security of our facilities.

Securing adequate funding for salaries is critical. It is inherently difficult to persuade highly qualified professionals, such as Licensed Clinical Social Workers, to choose a correctional facility over private practice, often due to significant wage differences and the lack of options like remote work or flexible scheduling.

We require all staff—including Law Enforcement, clinical staff, and trades—to report to a facility every day for a specific shift, a significant commitment. We request your support to help make a career within the DOC the most attractive and rewarding choice, positioning Colorado as a

leader for wages and work-life balance in Corrections.

Recruitment and Public Visibility

Our staff are our most valuable resource, and personal recommendations are a frequent source of new employees. The CAREER team (Cultivating Advocacy, Recruitment, Employee Engagement, & Retention) is dedicated to maintaining a consistent public presence to support this vital recruitment channel.

While a guaranteed, multi-year budget would allow for long-term initiatives—such as a sustained physical presence in sports arenas, movie theaters, and billboards—our current funding requires us to focus primarily on successful digital engagement. DOC can target recruitment for hard to fill positions, such as clinical and trades with a more stable, long-term budget that would allow for significant expansion of these efforts.

The team actively engages with the public weekly to recruit job seekers and connect with individuals seeking a career where they can truly make a difference.

The Department is committed to recruiting qualified and talented individuals by maximizing public visibility through the following avenues:

Digital and Media Outreach:

- Local News Broadcast Television
- Geofenced Television Streaming Services- A virtual geographic boundary, or "geofence". This boundary allows software to trigger a specific response whenever a mobile device moves into or out of the defined area.
- Geofenced Direct Email Messaging
- Geofenced Display Ads
- Geofenced SEM Paid Search
- YouTube Advertisements (standard and paid campaigns)
- Facebook Advertisements
- CDOC Social Media Advertisements
- LinkedIn/Indeed Advertisements
- Digital Professional Newsletters

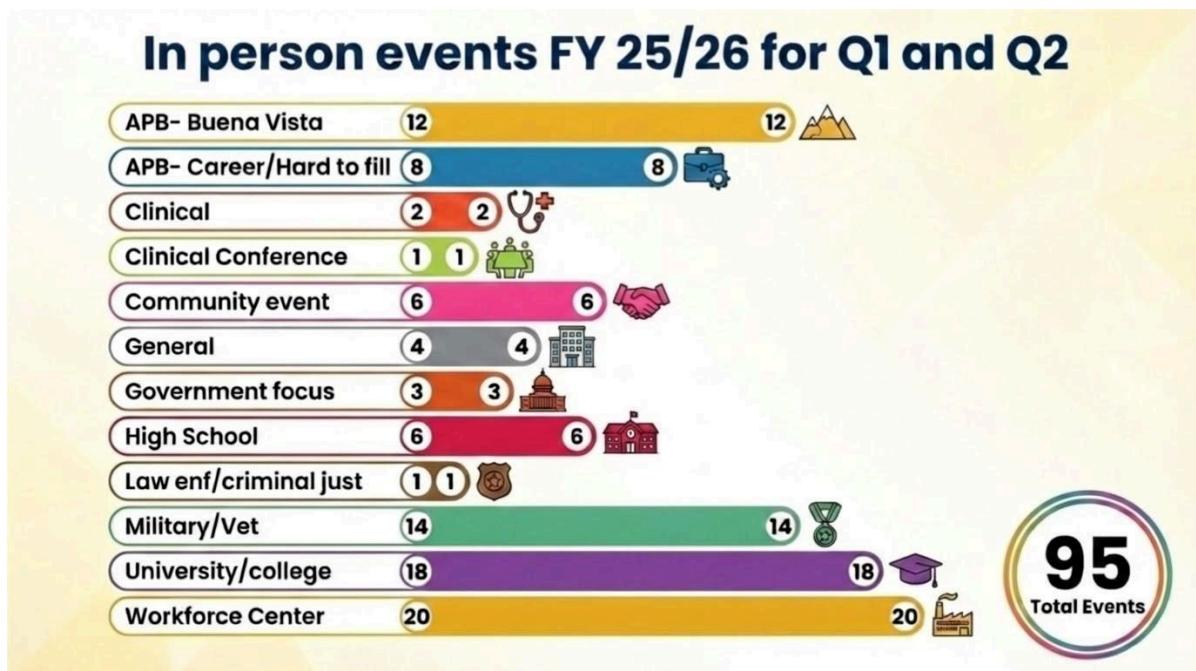
Recruitment Events and Partnerships:

- Indeed Hosted Career Events
- Application Hiring Blitzes
- Attendance at Job Fairs/Events
- Partnership with CDLE for event attendance and recruiting
- Higher Education Partnerships (Clinical or Criminal Justice Degree programs)
- High School Outreach: Speaking in high schools, particularly in smaller rural communities, for earlier recruitment

Physical Advertising:

- Performing Arts Venues
- Athletic/Sporting Event Arena Venue
- Local Radio Stations

Fiscal Year to date live events are included in the below graphic.



Correctional Industries (CI)

(Sen. Kirkmeyer) How much was spent in the last FY?

CDOC Response:

FY21	\$37,802,881
FY22	\$35,781,842
FY23	\$26,401,359
FY24	\$24,994,713
FY25	\$24,366,537

(Sen. Kirkmeyer) What was the total penalty interest we had to pay to the Treasury? Please provide for past years' as well.

CDOC Response:

FY19	\$16,793.09
FY20	\$59,421.33

FY21	\$61,918.00
FY22	\$67,824.00
FY23	\$174,748.00
FY24	\$220,854.00
FY25	\$93,814.00
Grand Total	\$695,372.42

CCI does not expect to pay any interest in FY26, as the cash balance is now positive.

(Sen. Amabile) What is the average amount of money offenders are leaving with that are in the CI retirement account program?

CDOC Response: The CCI release bonus program took effect on 12/15/25. Participating inmates are not eligible for the release bonus until after leaving community corrections. Due to the short amount of time that the program has been in place, and the lack of inmates currently meeting all release eligibility requirements, there have been no disbursements of release bonus funds at this time. Eligible inmates will receive \$100 for each year of service working for CCI, rounded up to the nearest year.

Gate Money

(Sen. Amabile) How many are leaving with the \$100 and what are the criteria to get the full \$100?

CDOC Response: Our “gate money” process follows the requirements outlined in C.R.S. 17-22.5-202, “Ticket to leave, discharge, clothes, money, transportation - reentry services”. Offenders Eligible for Allowance: The following offenders will be provided \$100.00 upon departure:

1. All those paroled, except under circumstances cited in section B.
2. All offenders discharged at the completion of their maximum sentences, except as cited in section B.

B. Offenders Ineligible for Allowance: The following offenders will not be eligible for an allowance:

1. Any paroled offender who has been returned to the custody of a correctional facility before the completion of their parole period and has previously received such a sum of money.
2. Any offender released by a court order which vacates the sentence.
3. Any offender released upon the posting of a bond.
4. Any offender released by the court on a suspended sentence.
5. Any offender paroled from a community corrections center or the Intensive Supervision Program.
6. Any offender paroled or discharged to another felony charge.
7. Any offender released to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).
8. Any offender, who at the time of release or parole, has a mandatory savings account exceeding \$100.00, due to participation in a Correctional Industries Prison Industry

Enhancement (PIE) program. (Eligible offenders with a mandatory PIE savings account balance less than \$100.00 will receive an allowance equal to the difference between \$100.00 and their PIE savings.)

The release funds are entered into the Department's current system and coded as a "20" - Release Funds - Credit". This code is built into the system, so it is not subject to any mandatory withholding.

Male Prison Population and Prison Capacity

(Sen. Kirkmeyer) Do we know the capacity of local jails or are we just assuming?

CDOC Response: We are assuming and it is understandably difficult for counties to give us a hard number. County jails serve DOC JBL as well as local population,(individuals waiting on trial or serving short term county sentences). Because the local population takes priority for jail beds, the space available for the backlog is unstable. If local bookings spike, the jail's ability to provide space to the state disappears.

(Sen. Kirkmeyer) How much on a daily basis to house DOC inmates, housing 571 in county jails? Do they have the additional capacity?

CDOC Response: The average cost per day (CPD) for DOC inmates is shown below along with the CPD for the county jails and private prisons. . The actual costs for county jails vary across the state. County jails serve multiple populations. Because the local population takes priority for jail beds, the space available for the backlog is unstable. If local bookings spike, the jail's ability to provide space to the state disappears.

The county jail per-diem rate is \$77.16 per day. While counties have varying capacities and it is difficult to provide a fixed statewide number, county jails generally serve multiple populations, including individuals held on local charges, short-term county sentences, DOC jail-based placements, and a subset of parolees pending a revocation hearing.

A portion of the local jail population may include parolees held pending a parole board revocation hearing, when there is an open new criminal case or an alleged serious technical violation. Jail availability ultimately determines how many beds a county can make available for parole-related holds, including technical violators with open misdemeanor cases or individuals who have bonded on felony charges. When jail capacity is limited, those individuals may be released from custody and directed to appear by parole board summons, consistent with statutory authority and determined on a case-by-case basis.

Because local populations take priority for jail beds, the number of beds available to the Department can fluctuate. When local bookings increase, the capacity for counties to house state or parole-related populations correspondingly decreases.

Direct Facility Cost Per Day (CPD)

- DOC Facility Average \$133.25
- County Jails \$77.16
- Private Prisons \$66.52

Total CPD (includes PPMU, Clinical, Centralized, & Administrative Costs)

- DOC Facility Average \$196.01
- County Jails \$83.84
- Private Prisons \$76.38

(Sen. Amabile) What is the average cost? Is it a capacity issue or a reimbursement issue for jails?

CDOC Response: Small Counties often face capacity limitations, though the current per diem rates are typically adequate to cover their operational costs. Large Counties generally possess the necessary physical capacity, but report that the per diem is insufficient to cover the actual cost of housing offenders. Larimer County, for example, has explicitly stated that current rates do not meet their expenses. Currently, Pueblo, El Paso, and Weld Counties are utilizing the Bent County Jail to house offenders. While it is unclear if this is driven primarily by capacity constraints or cost-saving measures, the arrangement is mutually beneficial; the low overhead at the Bent County jail allows them to operate effectively within the current per diem structure.

(Sen. Amabile) Is the male vs female age difference due to sentencing or types of crime?

CDOC Response: The slight difference in average age can be explained by a longer average length of sentence for male inmates, as well as a significantly higher count of life sentences for male inmates. Male and female inmates have a similar average age at admission.

MEASURE	MALES	FEMALES
Distinct count of inmates	16,081	1,367
Avg. AGE	40.92	38.50
Avg. AGE AT ADMISSION	35.53	35.35
Avg. Non-Life Sentence Gov Min Sent (Years)	18.70	11.06
Avg. Non-Life Sentence Gov Max Sent (Years)	20.77	11.33
Distinct count of inmates w/Life Sentence	2,834	82

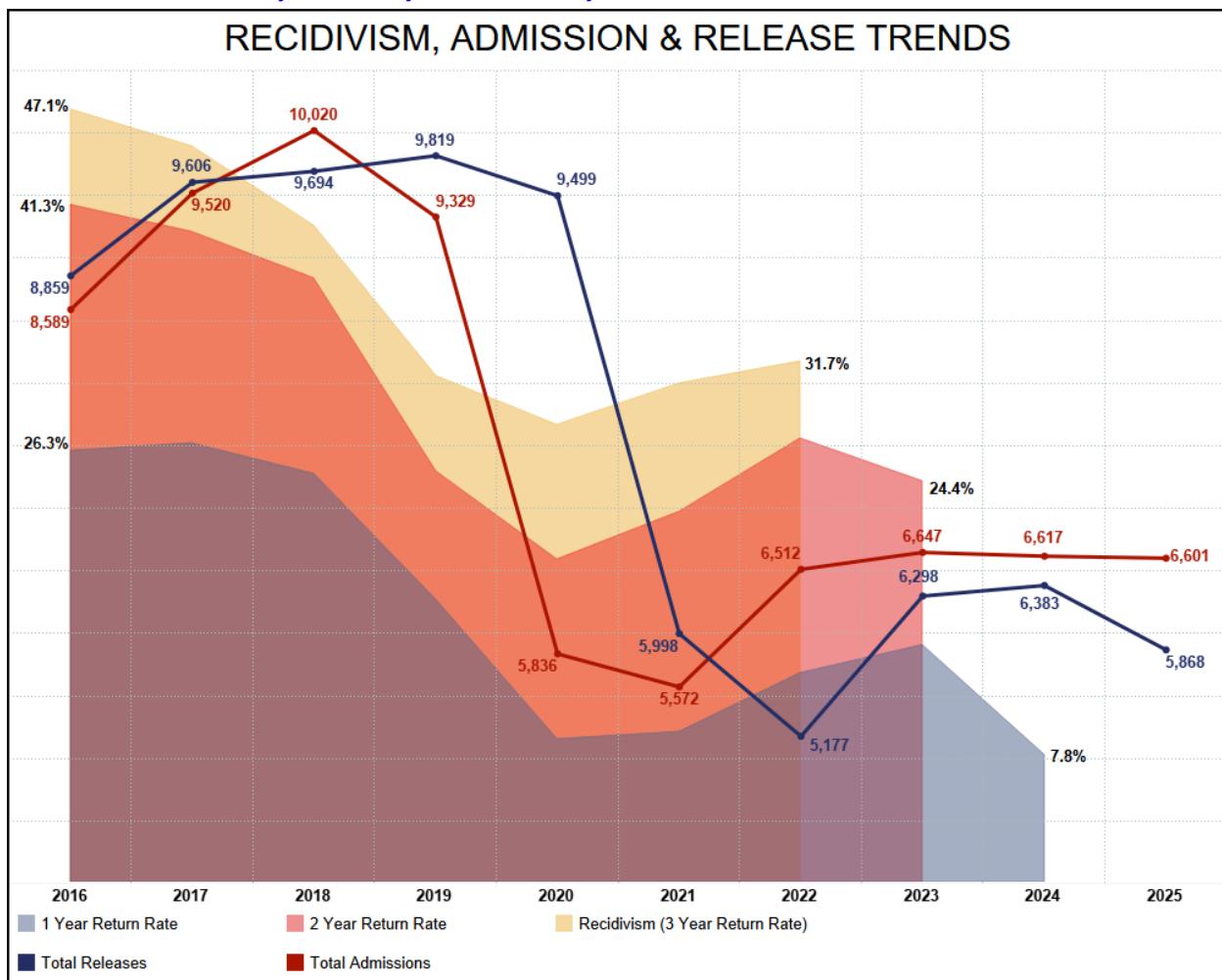
* Data for FY24-25 as of June 30, 2025

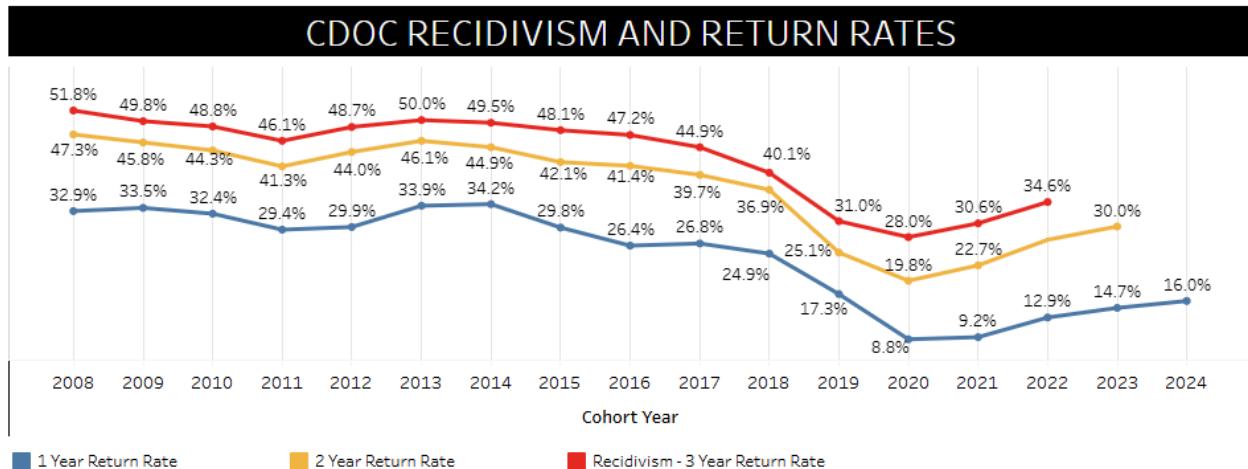
Parole

(Sen. Amabile) How is recidivism different than return rates?

CDOC Response: Recidivism is officially measured at the three-year mark following release, whereas the return rate is measured at intervals prior to that three-year point. Return rates serve as a status check on a cohort leading up to the official recidivism measurement.

For example, an individual who returns to prison within one or two years is included in the return rate data, but the true recidivism rate accounts for the full three-year period. Essentially, the cumulative data from year one, year two, and year three constitutes the final recidivism rate.





YOS Food Service

(Sen. Brown) How do we meet individual needs for caloric intake?

CDOC Response: CDOC follows nutritional guidelines, and then for those who may require more specialized approaches, a Medical and Religious Diet is established. Any individual who requires additional calories for medical reasons is assessed by our medical providers and Registered Dietitians and provided with supplemental food as needed.

- Offenders under the age of 18: Any individual under 18 years of age automatically receives a supplemental snack to support adequate caloric intake.
- Medical Needs: If an offender has a medical need for additional calories, they will receive supplemental snacks to meet those needs.
- Process for Concerns: A clear process is in place for nutritional concerns.
 - An offender can contact medical, and medical then contacts the Registered Dietitians.
 - DOC Providers can also contact Registered Dietitians directly to evaluate an offender for individual medical nutritional needs

Inmate Phone Calls

(Sen. Amabile) What was the original fiscal note on the bill for 100%? Have we been planning for this since the passing of the bill?

CDOC Response: The LCS Fiscal Note for H.B. 23-1133 (Cost of Phone Calls for Persons in Custody) assumed a 200% increase in utilization, or 10.4 minutes per day per inmate, at full implementation. The fiscal note appropriated \$1.1 million at 100% cost sharing. The fiscal note submitted to LCS from DOC assumed a 375% increase in utilization, or 30.5 minutes per day (based on an initial usage of 8.14 minutes), and \$2.1 million at 100% cost sharing.

The true average minutes per day before implementation of the bill was 17.89 minutes. Since then, utilization has gradually increased, to 18.74 minutes per day at 25% cost sharing, 29.38 minutes per day at 35% cost sharing, and 32.23 minutes per day at 75% cost sharing (based on FY 2025-26 billings to date). In addition to increases in utilization, the base population has also increased, from 15,755 in July 2023 when the original bill passed, to 16,452 in December 2025.

The Department has been closely monitoring the utilization and billing for inmate phone calls since the passage of H.B. 23-1133. Since the bill passed, the Department has submitted three budget requests to keep pace with costs (FY 2023-24 S-08/BA-07 Inmate Phone Calls, FY 2024-25 S-06/BA-04 Contain Inmate Call Cost Growth, and FY 2026-27 R-09 Inmate Phone Calls Cost Cap). The Department also incorporated inmate phone call costs into the ongoing operating request as part of its January 9 supplemental S-01, BA-01 Prison Caseload request.