

Budget for One Minnesota



CORRECTIONS

Delivering effective correctional services that hold offenders accountable and result in changed offender behavior—while also addressing the needs of crime victims—requires a multifaceted approach.

Our **“SAFETY FIRST”** approach recognizes that being and feeling safe is a basic human need. In order to provide correctional services that meet the justice interests of victims and the needs of offenders, we must be concerned about the safety of all corrections staff, the safety of those residing in our correctional facilities, and those under correctional supervision.

The **effectiveness of our corrections system is a ‘Main Street’ issue** for all Minnesota communities. 95% of the women and men incarcerated in Minnesota’s prisons will one day return to communities and neighborhoods throughout Minnesota. Given this reality, it only makes sense that Minnesota’s Department of Corrections initiates rehabilitative intervention efforts. Effective service delivery to the correctional population requires thorough assessment of offender needs and risks followed by the use of evidence-based intervention strategies

When communities are more connected, they’re safer. We want Minnesota’s response to crime and wrongdoing to be fair, effective, and meaningful. It’s time to replace the failed “tough on crime” approach with a “smart on crime” approach. This approach provides for meaningful accountability while working to address the needs of those who have offended at the community level – reserving the costly use of Minnesota’s prisons for those who represent higher risk and have more significant intervention needs. The smart approach also demands that we ensure that offenders maintain pro-social connections with their family, friends, and faith or spiritual community during incarceration, as these will serve as needed support upon community reentry.

We help ensure people in Minnesota are safe. The Walz-Flanagan budget funds critical needs for corrections, including staffing, programming, healthcare, and victim notification.

EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION

Compensating employees at the Department of Corrections is one of the most critical parts of the agency’s budget. Necessary increases in employee compensation are not reflected in the DOC’s base budget. Each year costs rise—employer-paid health care contributions, FICA and Medicare, and other salary and compensation-related expenses.

It is critical for the DOC to provide continuity of service to ensure safe and secure prisons and effective community supervision. This includes maintaining our current recidivism rate and keeping staff, those incarcerated, and the public safe. DOC employees provide basic needs to incarcerated individuals, including treatment and programming needs, and supervise those who are released from prison in Minnesota communities.



Maintain Current Staffing Levels Critical to Current Operations

The Walz-Flanagan budget funds \$10.558 million in FY2020 and \$17.778 million in FY2021 to maintain the current level of service to keep our prisons and communities safe. It will maintain 162 FTEs in FY2020 and 300 FTEs in each subsequent year.

PRISON SAFETY AND SECURITY

The Department of Corrections is in critical need for additional correctional officers and programming staff, as well as security infrastructure and technology, to ensure the safety of our dedicated staff who put their lives on the line everyday working in our facilities. We must ensure the safety and security of our prisons, our staff, and those incarcerated to ensure the safety of all Minnesotans.



Funding for Additional Correctional Officers, Other Staff, and Security Enhancements

The Walz-Flanagan budget funds \$20.463 million in FY2020 and \$24.819 million in FY2021 to hire additional correctional officers, lieutenants and other critical staff, to replace or enhance infrastructure and information technology systems that are essential to prison security and safety, and to continue offender programming and operational changes that support the initiative for effective restrictive housing activities. This impacts the safety of all staff working in our prisons, those incarcerated, and keeps the public safe. It also provides opportunities for programming for those incarcerated.



Fund Additional Correctional Staff

The funding request, provides \$2.7 million in FY2020 and \$7.020 million in FY2021 to hire 120 correctional officers by the end of FY2021. Additionally, the request provides \$268,000 in FY2020 and \$625,000 in FY2021 to add 6 lieutenant by the end of FY2021.



Fund Prison Security Infrastructure and Technology Needs

This funding provides \$6 million in FY2020 and \$2 million in FY2021 and each subsequent year to add key security infrastructure upgrades including cameras, radios, body scanners, and other crucial security systems. This request also includes \$900,000 in FY2020 and \$2.1 million in FY2021 for MN.IT to dedicate 16 employees to the DOC to address current needs, phased in semi-annually over two years.

OFFENDER HEALTH CARE

The Department of Corrections is constitutionally mandated to provide health care to individuals who are incarcerated in our prisons. This requirement serves nearly 10,000 people with medical and mental health services. Those who are incarcerated are less healthy than the general population and often have complex medical and mental health issues.

Providing medical and mental health care to offenders is a public and community health issue. The budget request will fully fund contractual obligations for offender health care, expand 24-hour nursing to two additional prisons, and implement a critically important and long-overdue electronic health records system.



Overall Offender Health Care Request

The Walz-Flanagan budget provides funding of \$2.951 million in FY2020 and \$5.432 million in FY2021 to fund the medical and mental health needs for those who are incarcerated within the DOC.



Fund Offender Health Care Contract

The 2017 Legislature only provided for partial funding for FY2020 and each subsequent year. This budget proposal will fully fund contractual obligations.



Medical and Nursing Services

This request helps provide staffing levels and services that are adequate to meet the needs of our offender population. A recent staffing analysis (recommended by the Office of the Legislative Auditor) indicated the current number of health services staff is inadequate to meet the growing complex medical and mental health needs of the offender population.



Expand 24/7 Nursing

The DOC operates 24/7 nursing operations in three correctional facilities (Faribault, Oak Park Heights and Shakopee). This proposal would expand 24/7 nursing to two additional correctional facilities with an offender population of more than 1,000 offenders in each of those prisons.



Electronic Health Records System

The 2007 and 2008 Legislatures enacted laws mandating all hospitals and health care providers have an electronic health records system. The DOC is considered a health care provider. EHR systems improve continuity of care and provider efficiency, decrease grievances and result in better overall offender health care.

PRE-TRIAL ASSESSMENT AND SUPERVISION

The rates of detaining individuals awaiting trial is widely inconsistent across the state, with variations by race, gender, and very often socio-economic status. Pre-trial risk assessments and pre-trial services provide an evidence-based, equitable approach to release those awaiting trial back to their families and jobs, while at the same time reducing reliance on jail beds. These services reduce failure-to-appear and help provide for adequate supervision in the community based on risk. Without pre-trial services, individuals accused of a crime but without the means to pay required bail are more likely to remain in jail pending their court appearance.

Too often, we have seen a system where the poor remain in custody and the wealthy are released. This socioeconomic factor disproportionately impacts people of color and indigenous people and include consequences such as loss of employment, loss of housing, jail overcrowding, significant financial impacts to families or the defendant, and an increased probability of conviction as many choose to enter a guilty plea simply to be released from jail. The Department of Corrections will add agents to provide supervision of individuals who are deemed high-risk, those who fail to appear in court, and those who remain law abiding prior to sentencing. Implementing a pre-trial supervision unit within the DOC will directly contribute to safer communities throughout Minnesota. The DOC is not currently funded to provide pre-trial supervision - only post-sentencing supervision.



Create a Pre-trial Supervision Unit

The Walz-Flanagan budget requests \$2.725 million in FY2020 and \$5.45 million in FY2021 to create a pre-trial supervision unit with 17 FTEs (14 agents, 1 supervisor and 2 support staff). Funding includes a proportionate level of pass-through funds to CCA and CPO counties (\$1.75M in FY2020 and \$3.5M in FY2021 and each subsequent year).

REDUCING RECIDIVISM BY CONNECTING FAMILIES AND CULTURALLY SUPPORTIVE REENTRY PROGRAMS

Strengthening family connections for those who are incarcerated and supporting successful reentry for incarcerated American Indians contributes to the community health and public safety of all Minnesotans. Research shows that incarcerated individuals who receive visits from their children while in prison are less likely to become incarcerated again. This proposal will increase the number of in-person visits for higher-risk offenders by reducing or eliminating barriers associated with family visits.

Evidence shows that stronger parental and family bonds create healthier and more productive community members. This will have a great impact on creating stronger communities, which in turn helps create a stronger Minnesota.

Too often indigenous inmates do not find the culturally appropriate support they need to successfully reenter their communities and reconnect with their families. Funding for additional programming targeted at this need will help to bridge that gap.



Proposal Details

The Walz-Flanagan budget provides \$1 million in FY2020 and \$1 million in FY2021 and each subsequent year. It includes \$150,000 each year in grant funds for transportation services to children of incarcerated parents, \$425,000 each year to improve parenting skills, and \$425,000 each year in grant funds for culturally specific reintegration services for American Indian offenders.

INTENSIVE SUPERVISED RELEASE (ISR)

The Department of Corrections requires funding for additional supervision agents to ensure caseloads meet statutory requirements. Funding for additional ISR agents will help to ensure the safety of those agents and the communities they serve.

ISR supervision agents provide 24/7 supervision that includes random home visits conducted during the night, weekends, and holidays on the highest risk offenders released from prison. Home visits are often in high-crime neighborhoods or sparsely populated areas where law enforcement backup is not readily available. The funding will allow for agents to conduct their work in pairs and use the proper communications and transport technology to allow them to safely do their jobs.



Fund Additional Agents

The Walz-Flanagan budget funding provides \$3.2 million in FY2020 and \$6.4 million in FY2021 to provide ISR supervision to offenders in the community. This request includes salaries, supplies and equipment for 24 FTEs (22 agents, 1 supervisor and 1 support staff). This recommendation includes pass through funds to CCA counties (\$2.033 million in FY2020, \$4.067 million in FY2021 and each subsequent year).

INTEGRATED CASE MANAGEMENT

Integrated case management services are proven to be effective in reducing recidivism for high- and very high-risk offenders. Minnesota must invest in programs that show such a strong return on investment.

With the additional support of coordinate case planning upon release, those who participate improve their chances for a successful transition from prison to the community and their families. Caseworkers are trained in integrated case management practices, which requires skills in assessment, motivational interviewing, case planning and the use of specific cognitive-based interventions.

Through this investment, fewer offenders are expected to return to prison. This proposal will ensure more individuals benefit from comprehensive case plans that improve their chances for success in the community upon their release from prison.



Increased ICM Services Provided

The Walz-Flanagan budget ensures that the DOC will provide integrated case management services to 840 additional high-risk offenders, while alleviating caseloads. The overall budget proposal is \$642,000 in FY2020 and \$1.662 million in FY2021 to hire 24 staff, including 21 caseworkers and 3 support staff.

VICTIM NOTIFICATION AND JUVENILE CORRECTIONAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

A victim notification system is necessary to appropriately communicate with victims and to help ensure the safety of victims of crime. It will securely and accurately provide victim notifications as required by state statute, be a source of information for victim and community safety, and empower victims. The Juvenile Correctional Management System is nearly obsolete, as it was created 20 years ago and needs to be updated to current electronic records standards.

Serving and supporting crime victims is a critical function provided by the Department of Corrections (DOC). The DOC's goal is to promote safety in the lives of victims and others who have been negatively impacted by crime and provide effective, supportive and informative advocacy.



Juvenile Correctional Management System

\$1.5 million over two years will be used to replace the current Juvenile Correctional Management System. The current system was created about 20 years ago and will be obsolete in the near future. It is a critical offender management system specific to juveniles.



Victim Notification System

The Walz-Flanagan budget provides \$800,000 over two years to complete the replacement of the DOC's victim notification system.

ELECTRONIC MONITORING AND TRANSITIONAL HOUSING FOR HIGH-RISK OFFENDERS

Electronic monitoring and transitional housing of high-risk individuals are critical services in maintaining public safety. In FY 2017, there was a 78 percent increase in the use of electronic monitoring, largely due to more offenders having their sentence restructured instead of being returned to prison.

Upon leaving a prison, offenders very often cannot find adequate housing. This is acutely true for Level 3 sex offenders, some of whom would otherwise be homeless, resulting in the supervision agent's inability to provide intensive supervised release (ISR) supervision. High-

risk offenders require higher levels of monitoring and impedes an agent's ability to conduct proper supervision.

Overall Budget Need

The Walz-Flanagan budget provides \$1.5 million in FY2020 and \$1.5 million in FY2021 and each subsequent year for electronic monitoring and transitional housing. These funds are needed to maintain the current level of service. Lack of funding may result in high-risk offenders being homeless, and/or being placed on supervision without electronic monitoring devices.

CAPITAL INVESTMENTS IN THE DOC

Maintaining and rehabilitating Minnesota's correctional facilities is vital in ensuring staff and workplaces are safe, offenders are held accountable, and opportunities are available to help change the behavior of those incarcerated.

Repairing, Replacing, and Renewing Facilities

Governor Walz's capital budget recommendation of \$20 million for asset preservation will allow the Department of Corrections to continue addressing a \$600 million deferred maintenance backlog. Projects may include correcting safety hazards and code compliance issues, preserving building exteriors and interiors, and major mechanical and electrical system upgrades.

Preserving Life, Health, and Public Safety

Governor Walz recommends \$7.5 million to renovate existing space to better serve offenders in Lino Lakes who suffer from serious mental illness, \$2.7 million for secure interior fencing in St. Cloud, \$4.2 million for fire suppression systems in St. Cloud and Stillwater, \$2.6 million for a new sewage treatment facility in Togo, and \$1.8 million for improved accessibility for visitors and staff in Red Wing.