



Internal Memo

Date: May 15, 2025

To: Friends and Family of MCF-Stillwater Incarcerated People

From: Paul Schnell, Commissioner

RE: Phased Closure of MCF-Stillwater

Today, the Minnesota Legislature announced a proposal for the phased closure of MCF-Stillwater over the next four years, as part of a broader effort to ensure long-term fiscal stability across state government. **This proposal requires full legislative approval and must be signed into law by the Governor before any closure plan moves forward.** At this stage, the Department of Corrections is engaged in planning and preparation — but no final decisions or actions will be taken until the legislation is enacted.

It has become increasingly clear that MCF-Stillwater — due to its age, deteriorating condition, and significant ongoing maintenance needs — is no longer sustainable as part of Minnesota’s correctional system. Continued investment in this facility would not meet the state’s standards for safety, efficiency, or responsible resource management.

We recognize the profound impact this proposal may have. For many incarcerated people, Stillwater has been home for years or even decades. They have built strong bonds—with each other, with staff, and with programs that have offered structure and hope. We understand that this news may be difficult to hear and will raise many questions.

We also acknowledge the uncertainty this brings to our dedicated Stillwater staff, whose professional lives are now in a period of transition. This process will affect everyone in this community, and we ask for mutual respect and patience as we navigate it together.

If the legislature approves the proposal and it becomes law, the closure will happen gradually, with incarcerated individuals transferred to other DOC facilities in phases. The DOC is committed to minimizing disruption and ensuring a safe, respectful, and orderly transition.

This is not an easy message to share, but transparency is critical. We will continue to communicate openly as the legislative process unfolds and will provide updates as more information becomes available.