

Table of Contents
Office of the Ombudsperson for Corrections

Agency Profile 1

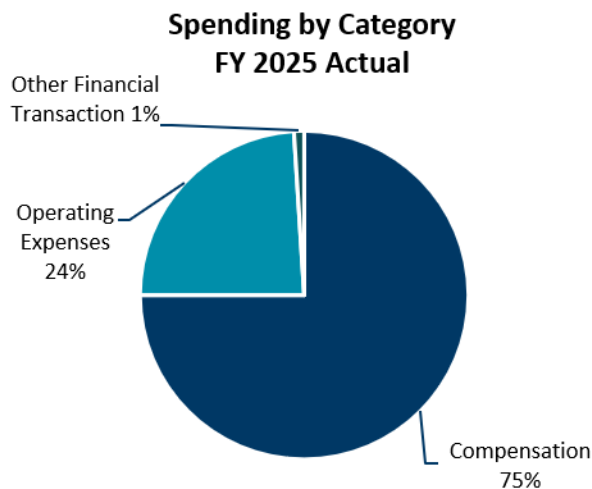
AT A GLANCE

- Eight full-time staff receive, investigate, and resolve individual and systemic complaints
- Jurisdiction over 11 state prisons and 150 local adult and juvenile facilities statewide
- Typical daily population of over 16,000 people¹ and nearly 210,000 intakes and releases per year²

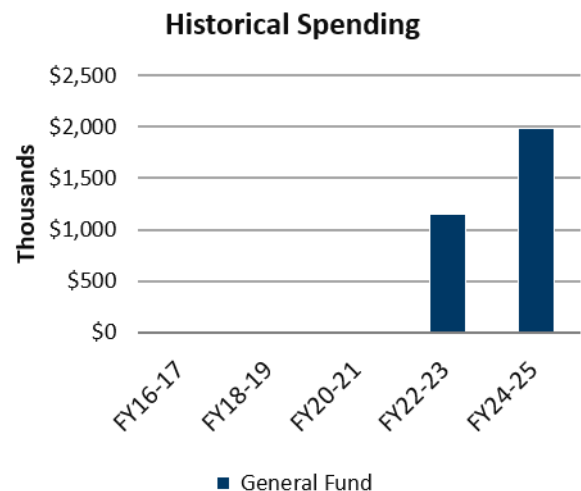
PURPOSE

The statutory purpose of the Office of the Ombudsperson (Ombuds) for Corrections is “to promote the highest attainable standards of competence, efficiency, and justice in the administration of corrections.” The Ombuds for Corrections has authority to take and investigate complaints from or about any Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC) facility or staff charged with the care and custody of incarcerated people and any regional or local correctional facility licensed by the DOC.

The Ombuds for Corrections is neutral, independent, and nonpartisan. The office investigates and resolves complaints, makes recommendations, and publishes reports. The office is concerned with systemic and policy issues and may also initiate investigations into systemic issues. The goal is to provide for a safer and more just corrections system for corrections staff, incarcerated people, and all Minnesotans.

BUDGET

Source: Budget Planning & Analysis System (BPAS)



Source: Consolidated Fund Statement

The Ombuds for Corrections was reestablished in 2019 and opened in 2020. The Ombuds for Corrections is neutral and independent, but the office was placed within the DOC budget when it was reestablished. The Governor's fiscal year (FY) 2022-23 budget separated the Ombuds for Corrections budget to ensure fiscal independence from the DOC.

¹ Minnesota Profile. Prison Policy Initiative. <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/profiles/MN.html>.

² Wang, Leah. Prison Policy Initiative. February 28, 2024. <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2024/02/28/releases-sex-state/>.

The Ombuds for Corrections has eight full-time staff who receive, investigate, and resolve complaints regarding 11 prisons and 150 local adult and juvenile facilities statewide. The office is funded exclusively by the general fund.

STRATEGIES

The Ombuds for Corrections promotes the highest standards of justice in corrections through the following strategies:

- **Review, Investigate, and Resolve Complaints:** Provide an impartial and unbiased process for incarcerated people, corrections staff, and community members to share concerns about the actions and policies of the DOC and local facilities. Facilitate resolutions and identify opportunities for systemic improvement.
- **Provide Oversight:** Conduct independent oversight of Minnesota's corrections system by examining policies and conditions in DOC and local correctional facilities. Increase transparency and accountability in a corrections system that sets and manages the conditions of confinement for thousands of adults and juveniles under the supervision of state employees with highly restricted access to the public.
- **Provide Information and Education:** Provide engagement, education, and information to incarcerated people, their loved ones, corrections staff, and the community regarding Minnesota's corrections system.
- **Promote Efficiency, Justice, and Fairness:** Identify trends and systemic issues, independently draw conclusions, examine existing policies and procedures, identify opportunities for raising overall standards, make recommendations, and produce reports that promote efficiency, justice, and fairness.
- **Advance Equity:** Address individual and systemic complaints and issues to provide greater accountability and transparency in addressing inequitable systems within and outside of corrections.
 - Increase Health and Safety: Promote safer and healthier conditions for incarcerated individuals, staff, and community members by providing:
 - Incarcerated people and staff an opportunity to address their complaints and concerns about unsafe or unhealthy situations and conditions;
 - A productive outlet for incarcerated people whose frustrations otherwise might lead to conflict; and
 - For systemic improvements that protect rights and ensure correctional programs promote rehabilitation, reduce recidivism, improve lives, and promote overall community safety.

RESULTS

The central focus of the Ombuds for Corrections is receiving, investigating, and resolving complaints from incarcerated people, corrections staff, and community members. Many inquiries or complaints can be resolved quickly, and the Ombuds for Corrections is able to provide resources and referral to the appropriate entity. The Ombuds for Corrections further investigates some complaints for more intensive review or to help inform future policy and systemic investigations.

As required by M.S. 241.95 <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/241.95>, at the end of each calendar year (CY), the Ombuds for Corrections reports on the functions of the office to the Governor and legislature.

Part A. Performance Data

Measure	Measure type	Measure data source	Historical trend	Most recent data
Early resolutions	Quantity	Complaints that were resolved within seven days or fewer.	749 from CY 2024	809 from CY 2025
Investigations	Quantity	Complaints that were investigated more deeply and typically resolved within a few weeks to several months.	118 from CY 2024	159 from CY 2025
Systemic Complaints	Quantity	Systemic concerns and investigations that are often ongoing. Systemic complaints are received from incarcerated people, corrections staff, community members, or are initiated by the Ombudsperson for Corrections.	43 from CY 2024	136 from CY 2025

Part B. Evidence of Effectiveness

The primary functions of the Ombuds for Corrections are to receive and investigate complaints, identify systemic issues, make recommendations, and promote accountability and transparency within Minnesota's corrections system. The office does not provide direct services that are typically evaluated using evidence-based practice framework though it does use established ombuds principles and data-informed practices to guide its work.

M.S. 241.90-95 <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/241.90> provides the legal authority for the Minnesota Office of the Ombudsperson for Corrections.