



**STATE OF INDIANA
Department of Correction**

Indiana Government Center—South

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Eric J. Holcomb
Governor

Christina Reagle
Commissioner

December 2, 2024

Mr. Joseph M. Habig
Acting Director, Indiana State Budget Agency
Indiana Statehouse, Room 212
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Re.: Indiana Department of Correction Agency Overview
Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Biennium

Dear Director Habig,

The Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) is the State of Indiana's largest executive branch agency and is charged with accepting committed persons for custody, care, rehabilitation, and reintegration. IDOC supervises and serves a population of approximately 24,000 incarcerated adults and 350 juveniles, along with 6,700 individuals on parole. To carry out these responsibilities, it employs approximately 5,700 state employees and 1,300 contract employees in its Central Office, 21 facilities, and ten parole districts around the state.

Article 1, Section 18 of the Indiana Constitution requires that the state's penal code "shall be founded on the principles of reformation, and not of vindictive justice." To that end, Indiana has worked to remain a national leader in the delivery of correctional services, dating to its participation in the first meeting of the American Correctional Association (ACA) in 1870, an organization through which IDOC maintains accreditations for all its adult and juvenile facilities and parole districts, as well as its training institute and central office.

Agency Mission: We promote public safety by providing meaningful, effective opportunities for successful re-entry to the incarcerated individuals in our care.

Agency Vision: As the model of best correctional practices, we strive to return productive citizens to our communities and inspire a culture of accountability, integrity, and professionalism.

I. IDOC's Programs and Functions

To carry out its 24/7 operations, IDOC maintains a host of agency divisions that are organized into four operational areas, each overseen by a Deputy Commissioner: (A) Operations; (B) Re-entry and Youth Services; (C) Workforce Development and Strategic Equity; and (D) Strategic Alignment. In addition,

there are several administrative divisions reporting through the Chief of Staff, namely: Fiscal Services, including payroll and grants management; Legal Services, including contract compliance, sex and violent offender registry, and victim services; Health Services; and Policy and Accreditation, which manages the agency's full system accreditation status through the ACA.

A. Operations

Overseen by the agency's Deputy Commissioner of Operations, this operational area includes the divisions of Adult Operations, Classification, and Indiana Correctional Industries. Together, these divisions employ more than 4,500 of the agency's staff, providing services to the state's entire population of incarcerated and paroled individuals.

Adult Operations encompasses the agency's Adult Facility Operations team, which manages day-to-day operations in the agency's 18 adult facilities, and its Field Operations teams, which are Parole Services, Investigations and Intelligence, Jail Services, and Emergency Response Operations.

The Classification Division is responsible for managing the entire process of individual assignments within IDOC from intake to release. The division includes day-to-day management of sentence computation and release; interfacility and intrafacility movement; external movement and emergency placement; records; and assessment and management of classification, an intensive process that involves evaluating and assigning individuals to different custody levels, housing, programs, and facilities based on their individual needs and risks.

IDOC's correctional industries program was established by the Indiana General Assembly in 1917 and is now codified in IC 11-10-6. Known as Indiana Correctional Industries, this division provides the incarcerated population with unique training and employment opportunities that develop professional skills and experience to support successful re-entry.

B. Re-entry and Youth Services

Overseen by the Deputy Commissioner of Re-entry and Youth Services, this operational area of the agency includes the divisions of Youth Services, Re-entry Services, and Community Corrections. Together, these divisions employ or provide oversight to the work of more than 700 of the agency's staff and contractors.

IDOC's Division of Youth Services is responsible for management of the agency's three juvenile facilities, two male and one female, and oversees all aspects of IDOC's juvenile care services, including education, responsible community living, and post-confinement placement. The Division is also responsible for the coordination, management, and review of all Juvenile Community Corrections and Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative grants statewide; performing audits of Indiana's 17 youth detention centers under 210 IAC 8; and providing training and education in state standards and grants best practices to local entities.

Critical to the agency's mission, vision, and constitutional mandate, IDOC's Re-entry Services operations comprise Case Management, Programs, Education, Religious Services, Community Engagement, and Hoosier Initiative for Re-entry. The re-entry process begins at intake, when Unit Team staff begin building an individual case plan using a multi-disciplinary approach to reduce criminal thinking and behaviors, with the goal of providing each individual with the necessary skills to succeed in serving their sentence.

and returning to their community. To provide these services, the agency employs more than 300 staff and dozens of contractors, in addition to maintaining a contractual relationship with an educational provider for the administration of education services to the incarcerated population.

The Hoosier Initiative for Re-Entry (HIRE) is a program designed to enable successful reintegration into society through the development of practical, workforce-readiness skills. HIRE staff focus on placing individuals who have completed certification training into employment that will provide them with a livable wage and career path for success. Since its establishment with DWD in 2012 and subsequent transfer to IDOC, HIRE has provided services to more than 15,000 releasing individuals.

C. Workforce Development and Strategic Equity

This operational area of the agency comprises the divisions of Workforce Engagement, Strategic Equity, and Veteran's Affairs. Collectively, these divisions are responsible for carrying out the training programs described in IC 11-8-2-8 and ensuring that IDOC's workforce is properly equipped to meet the needs of its diverse population, including those who served in the armed forces of the United States. The Division of Workforce Engagement operates the agency's Correctional Training Institute and is responsible for training all agency staff, performing in-house curriculum development, and conducting all agency leadership programming. In addition, the division employs a team of Correctional Retention Specialists dedicated to monitoring facility staffing levels and staff engagement, performing exit interviews, and meeting regularly with facility leadership to construct and drive facility-based retention initiatives.

D. Strategic Alignment

Overseen by the Deputy Commissioner of Strategic Alignment, this operational area of the agency comprises the divisions of Technology Services, Data Science and Analytics (DSA), Communications, and Construction Services. Divisional responsibilities of Technology Services and DSA include the distribution and management of offender technology platforms, facility technology development and maintenance, and management of the agency's program of research and statistics established under IC 11-8-2-9. IDOC's Communications Division oversees all internal and external agency communications, working closely with field-based public information officers, and its Construction Services team is responsible for the general maintenance of safe and healthful environments within each of the agency's facilities in accordance with IC 11-11-6.

II. Major Accomplishments and Challenges in FY 2024-2025

During the current biennium, IDOC has been hard at work pairing strong fiscal stewardship with achievement in the administration of correctional services. As IDOC Commissioner, it was a top priority to establish a strategic vision for the agency, designated the Four Keys to Success, which are: (1) Be Present, (2) Do the Basics Best, (3) Strengthen Our Team, and (4) Innovate with Inspiration. All agency projects are aligned with this vision, which has allowed the entire organization to operate more effectively as a single unit under a common set of core principles. Organizing this strategic vision also allowed the agency to more effectively define its major challenges and accomplishments in the current biennium, which it has organized into the following categories: (A) Workforce Improvement; (B) Agency Staffing – Recruitment and Retention; (C) Technology; (D) Staff Equipment; and (E) New Facility Construction and Transition Planning.

A. Workforce Improvement

Early in 2023, the agency identified inconsistencies in spans of control, a lack of consistent communication between Central Office and the field, and insufficient focus on the rounded development of a professional workforce. As staffing numbers dropped significantly amid a nationwide correctional workforce crisis, IDOC made several changes to improve on the challenges listed above.

1. Agency Restructuring

In the first half of FY 2024, IDOC restructured operations within the leadership ranks of each of the Deputy Commissioner's teams, reducing spans of control for each Deputy Commissioner to no more than seven direct reports, consolidating operations into better structured chains of command, and establishing clearly defined agency leadership teams. At the same time, the agency initiated regular, in-person meetings at rotating sites statewide between leadership in the field and in Central Office, allowing for better collaboration among high-ranking staff. These include Monthly Deputy Commissioner/Wardens Meetings, quarterly Deputy Commissioner/Parole District Supervisor meetings, and quarterly Senior Leadership Team/Wardens Meetings. The agency also maintains a semi-annual Leadership Symposium for facility, parole, and administrative leadership staff and restored its quarterly Central Office Staff Assembly.

2. Staff Professionalization and Development

The professionalization and development of newer agency staff and understanding the needs of a less experienced workforce were challenges entering FY 2024. In response, IDOC developed a new agency oath which is now administered to all agency employees at new employee graduation ceremonies attended by family members. It also added a new Executive Leadership Program (ELP), which is a week-long crash course on all agency operations that is offered on a competitive basis to ranking agency staff who are seeking to enter executive management roles. ELP is one of several leadership programs offered to IDOC staff by the Division of Workforce Engagement, many of which are also offered to staff of other state agencies. These programs include Experienced and Emerging Leaders, Leadership Academy, Influential Correctional Leadership, Peer Leadership, Women in Leadership, and Principles of Custody Supervision.

The agency also began a new survey-driven succession planning initiative, which is used to provide an unbiased assessment of staff readiness for advancement opportunities into facility and Central Office leadership roles. Finally, to ensure that Central Office exhibits its commitment to supporting the agency's field-based operations, agency leadership initiated a "reverse culture survey," soliciting direct feedback from facility and parole leadership regarding the effectiveness of Central Office operations, and it expanded its quarterly culture assessments to apply to Central Office as well as the field.

3. Wellness, Health, and Opportunities for Learning and Engagement (WHOLE)

Following the introduction of Governor Holcomb's WHOLE employee policy, IDOC implemented several new initiatives targeting staff health and wellness and overall engagement. Through a new partnership with The Carden Group, IDOC launched Leading from Within (LFW), an employee engagement experience aimed at enhancing the agency's overall culture and cultivating stronger working relationships and environments for all agency staff. To date, more than 1,200 agency supervisors have attended one or more LFW Foundation Sessions.

As a further commitment to its staff, IDOC has also partnered with FSSA-DDRS to install staff-focused micro markets in agency facilities statewide, and it procured basic resources for staff such as new chairs, water bottle filling stations, and fans to improve workplace conditions. The micro markets, which are unmanned retail spaces where staff can purchase healthier food and beverage options than those offered in traditional vending machines, have been installed at six IDOC facilities, with three more installations planned for early CY 2025.

B. Agency Staffing – Recruitment and Retention

The largest challenge facing the agency in 2021, improving the overall staffing rate, remains its largest challenge today. In January 2021, the agency averaged 5,905 filled positions. In the two years that followed, that number decreased dramatically, to an average of 5,212 filled positions for the month of July 2022, substantially interfering with the administration of core agency operations, requiring partial closure of some agency facilities, and impacting the safety and security of staff and the incarcerated population. In FY 2022, nine of twelve months saw the agency lose more staff than it added, with a net reduction of 331 staff.

Since 2022, the initiatives outlined above, along with several others, have slowly begun to turn the tide on this extreme staffing shortage. During July 2024, the average total of filled positions was 5,428. In FY 2024, the agency was net positive in hiring in eight of twelve months, reversing the trend from the prior biennium and resulting in a net gain of 90 staff agencywide.

At the beginning of FY 2025, IDOC partnered with INSPD and SBA to implement a series of Retention-based Compensation Initiatives (RBCI) targeting the retention of new and longer-term agency staff. These initiatives included: (1) A Correctional Officer Retention Step Plan that provides for a guaranteed hourly rate increase after each year of a new Correctional Officer's hire date; (2) Differential pay for custody staff working at certain IDOC facilities where staffing shortages, environmental conditions, and other factors have created unique challenges in hiring and retaining quality correctional staff; and (3) Compensation compression alleviation for long-term custody and parole staff. Together, these initiatives impacted approximately 3,500 current agency staff, and the agency is carefully monitoring further impact to its hiring rates. Since release of the RBCI in early August, the agency's net overall churn rate is over +270, nearly tripling the rate from the preceding 12 months.

In addition to these initiatives, the agency also designated "Hiring Champions" for each facility and equipped them with centralized recruitment resources in concert with the Communications team. These Hiring Champions are also now supported by a dedicated Talent Acquisition Strategic Business Consultant embedded within IDOC by agreement with INSPD and assisted by a new system for agencywide application sharing to allow facilities with lower vacancy rates to share candidates with other facilities that are in greater need.

Collectively, the agency expects that its renewed focus on workforce development in the current and upcoming biennia will improve not only the conditions for those working for the agency, but the conditions of confinement for the incarcerated population. Appropriate staffing levels will allow IDOC to restore to full capacity agency programming and re-entry initiatives that have suffered as a result of the recent critical staffing shortages.

C. New Technology

Several years ago, IDOC identified the need to replace more than a dozen disparate, outmoded software applications that it was using to manage the incarcerated population. After an initial setback in development, the agency restarted with new vendors in 2021. After only two years of development and without use of general fund appropriation, IDOC launched its new offender management system, DELTA, in May 2023. Implementation of a project this size was not without challenges, but the agency has continued to develop the system based on substantial feedback from agency staff. Today, DELTA represents a major agency accomplishment that will improve the efficiency of agency operations, reduce its future technology costs, and provide a stronger overall security environment.

As the agency's technology improves, so does the technology being deployed against it by criminal enterprises. The agency is constantly being challenged to innovate the tools being used to combat illegal activity taking place within its facilities, and to deploy cutting edge technology to aid in that effort. Contraband cell phones trafficked into agency facilities and drones being flown into facilities by members of the public are two of the most significant challenges facing the agency, both of which are used to traffic drugs and other contraband, carry out acts of violence among the incarcerated population, and threaten the safety of staff. In response, the agency has (1) enhanced its Correctional Threat Analysis Center (CTAC) operations, (2) joined several other states in leading conversations with the FTC and federal lawmakers on advancing federal regulation of drone activity over state correctional facilities, (3) adopted state legislation to combat drone activity, and (4) contracted with private entities to allow agency staff to detect and disable contraband cell phones. These challenges will continue into the foreseeable future, and the agency will be relying on additional state resources to aid its operations and improve public safety outcomes for all stakeholders.

D. Staff Equipment

Equipping staff is critical to strengthening the IDOC team, and recent deployment of body-worn cameras and protective vests to staff have brought immediate improvement to the safety, security, and transparency of agency operations.

1. Body-worn Cameras

Early in 2023, IDOC initiated a new pilot program for the deployment of body-worn cameras at Miami Correctional Facility. Based on the early success of its pilot program, the agency then applied for federal grant funding through the BJA FY23 Body-worn Camera Policy and Implementation Program to Support Law Enforcement Agencies. IDOC was one of five state entities awarded funding, and the only one awarded the full \$2M award maximum.

As the agency moves towards expanding its body-worn camera program to all facilities and parole districts, the results of the Miami Correctional Facility pilot program are encouraging. Since the program started in 2023, use of force incidents dropped by more than 20%, assaults against staff leveled off instead of increasing as they had for three years prior, and agency leadership has been able to watch incidents in detail, learning more about what staff are facing in emergency situations and how better to support them through training and post-incident diagnostic referrals.

2. Protective Vests

To provide additional protection to staff beyond the deterrent effect of body-worn cameras, IDOC invested in staff safety by deploying ballistic and stab-resistant protective vests to all agency staff working in facilities and parole. These vests were purchased using federal funding made available to states through the American Recovery Plan Act, and Indiana Correctional Industries is manufacturing the carriers into which the vests' protective panels are installed. Since deployment of the vests, multiple staff members have been protected against life-threatening attacks, particularly in IDOC's maximum security facilities.

E. New Facility Construction and Transition Planning

In 2023, the Indiana General Assembly authorized the funding and construction of a new state-of-the-art correctional facility in northwest Indiana, adjacent to Westville Correctional Facility. In preparation for the new facility's opening, the agency has established a full-time transition director position, assembled committees composed of key stakeholders to provide subject matter expertise, and formed a new initiative termed Mission Alliance which serves to successfully integrate two distinct staff cultures from the Indiana State Prison and Westville Correctional Facility.

III. Funding Priorities for FY 2026-2027

IDOC's funding priorities for FY 2026-2027 are: (1) personnel administration, (2) utilities and technology, (3) successful re-entry outcomes, and (4) food, medical, and educational services. Each of these funding priorities is aimed at maintaining core agency operations that connect directly to the challenges and accomplishments outlined above. The agency ensures successful outcomes of these funding priorities through key performance indicators including the average hourly wage of individuals on parole, the recidivism rate, which measures the percentage of incarcerated individuals that return to IDOC custody within three years of release, and the number of successful job placements upon release. To measure these KPIs and other areas of performance, IDOC relies on its DSA team and INSPD resources including Tableau and talent acquisition data.

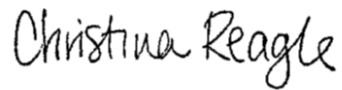
IV. A New Challenge – Federal Communications Commission Rate Caps

On July 18, 2024, the Federal Communications Commission voted to establish rate caps for phone and video call rates charged to the incarcerated population nationwide. These rate caps will substantially reduce the reasonable costs imposed by IDOC for use of its offender technology systems for making audio and video calls, which are provided under a revenue-generating agreement with a private entity. As part of that agreement, IDOC receives commission-based funding that it uses to fund facility offender recreation funds and its Correctional Facilities Calling System Fund (CFCSF). Pursuant to IC 5-22-23-7, money deposited into the CFCSF may be used only "for the purposes of improving, repairing, rehabilitating, and equipping department of correction facilities." For years, IDOC has relied on this funding for a variety of technological initiatives designed to improve the conditions of confinement for the incarcerated population, including the distribution of tablets containing substantial learning management tools and providing access to media and communications with family and friends. In addition, IDOC has received the benefit of personnel and technology resources through its contract, upon which it relies for intelligence gathering used to combat the occurrence of criminal activity within its facilities.

As a result of the FCC's decision and the rulemaking process, IDOC is expecting to experience a substantial reduction to this critical revenue stream by January 2026. Among its change package proposals is a request to offset these losses through the appropriation of general funds that will allow the agency to maintain its technology and security offerings throughout the upcoming biennium.

On behalf of the entire Indiana Department of Correction, thank you for your partnership and your support of the agency's personnel and operations.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christina Reagle". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name and last name clearly distinguishable.

Christina Reagle, Commissioner
Indiana Department of Correction