



**STATE OF INDIANA
Department of Correction**

Indiana Government Center—South

Eric J. Holcomb
Governor

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Christina Reagle
Commissioner

December 9, 2022

Mr. Zachary Q. Jackson
Director, Indiana State Budget Agency
Indiana Statehouse, Room 212
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Re.: IDOC Overview – Budget Transmittal Letter
FY 24/25 Biennium

Dear Director Jackson,

As Commissioner of the Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC), I respectfully submit this overview in support of the IDOC's budget request for the biennium beginning July 1, 2023 and ending June 30, 2025. I have included: (1) A description of the overarching services provided by the IDOC, including how the Agency is structured and the agency's KPIs; (2) An explanation of the accomplishments made and the challenges faced by IDOC over the last biennium, with a summary of the programs that were changed or reduced; and (3) A description of the objectives for next biennium with a deeper discussion of the significant challenges IDOC expects to face, including recommendations on ways to address these challenges, and a summary of the budgetary changes the IDOC is requesting in order to best meet the needs of its mission, and to advance the priorities established by the Executive Branch.

The Department of Correction's Overarching Mission – To Protect the People of Indiana

It is the job of law enforcement to arrest those that cross the criminal lines established by the General Assembly. It is the court's responsibility to oversee due process hearings and impose appropriate judgment to those who are guilty beyond reasonable doubt. The worst of these criminals (e.g., those convicted of murder, rape, child molestation, armed robbery, drug dealing, and such as that) come to IDOC. It is our responsibility to see that these incarcerated individuals do not cause additional harm during their period of incarceration, and to reduce their chances of reoffending after they are released.

This overarching responsibility is reflected in the IDOC's revised mission and vision statements, which read:

Mission

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

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.

Our Mission and Vision are consistent with Indiana's Constitution, which reads:

Art.I, Section XVIII

The penal code shall be founded on the principles of reformation, and not vindictive justice.

To protect the citizens of Indiana and supervise and serve 23,000 incarcerated individuals and 300 adjudicated delinquents, over 5,700 state employees, 1,800 contractual staff, and hundreds of intermittent volunteers work 24 hours a day, seven days a week, all year long, holidays included. IDOC also operates Indiana's Parole Services, which supervises more than 4,900 parolees across the State.

In addition to operating Indiana's prison system, the IDOC also supports several county-based correctional services and sentencing alternatives. With guidance from the Justice Reinvestment Advisory Council ("JRAC"), each year the IDOC invests \$72.45 million in Indiana counties to support community correction programs. IDOC also pays counties more than \$33.5 million each year to manage low level F6 felons, using a new advance-pay formula approach. This is in addition to the \$4.15 million invested to help counties defray the cost of managing those convicted of misdemeanor crimes.

IDOC's Organizational Structure

The Department has four primary divisions: Operations (Custody), Reentry, Youth Services, and Administrative Supportive Services. Custody is the largest division in IDOC and utilizes a military style command structure starting with the correctional officer, then sergeant, lieutenant, captain and major. In addition to custody, the Operations Division includes IDOC's emergency response operations, offender classifications, parole services, jail inspections, Investigations and Correctional Police Officers, and staff development and training.

The Reentry Division uses a case management model to first assess the risks and needs of each incarcerated individual sent to prison, and then develops a plan that tracks their progress through various treatment services and rehabilitative programs offered by the IDOC to address their needs. The Division prepares incarcerated individuals for successful reentry back into the community. The Reentry

Division also oversees offender educational programs, faith-based services, community corrections, and victim services.

The Division of Youth Services includes custody, operational, reentry and programming aspects similar to the adult side, but is independent of the adult prisons and specially designed to meet the needs of male and female adjudicated delinquents sent to the IDOC.

Administrative Support Services include the Department's fiscal management, legal services, construction services, research division, policy management, media and public communications, IT support, legislative and procurement services.

IDOC's Key Performance Indicators

Working with the Performance Management Hub of the Office of Management and Budget, the Department formulated and continuously tracks seven high-level key performance indicators. These include:

- (1) The Average Hourly wage of those employed while on parole;
Current Status: Average = \$16.78 (exceeding established goal of \$15.00)
- (2) The number of people with jobs waiting for them before they leave prison;
Current Status: Exceeded target of 750 returning citizens
- (3) Substance Abuse Disorder program completion rates
Current Status: Exceeding 75% completion target
- (4) Facility custody staff vacancy rate;
Current Status: Not meeting target goal of 10%, Maximum security rates are highest, averaging over 40%.
- (5) The percentage of general fund appropriation spent FYTD, by month; and
Current Status: Met Spend Plan
- (6) The recidivism rate, measuring the percentage of incarcerated individuals that return to prison within three years of release
Current Status: record law rate for adults of 33.82%, exceeded reduction target of 35%. Juvenile rate is 24.8%, also exceeding its established target.

In addition to these dashboard KPIs, IDOC has developed performance measures in every funded service area including, but certainly not limited to:

- The number of certifications awarded to incarcerated individuals for successful completion of vocation programs, broken down by those that attain certification in high-demand jobs areas
- Changes in Department and facility per diem rates
- Case management report cards
- Parole Services report cards, broken down by district
- Educational services report cards
- Facility internal and external audit reports (for compliance with American Correctional Association standards)

- Contractual services surveys and audit reports
- Jail inspection reports
- The number and locations of incarcerated individual assaults
- Random incarcerated individual drug testing results by facility

Along with tracking outcomes of the various services areas, the Department's Executive team conducts on-site facility reviews that look at every aspect of each prison and parole district's fiscal accounts, human resource management, operations, treatment and rehabilitative programming, physical plant, and community involvement.

Starting in 2021, returned citizens released from each institution were invited to participate in facility specific reviews to explain how their transition from prison to the community went, to identify what is working, and what parts of the reentry process needs improving.

IDOC Accomplishments, Changes, and Challenges

The Bigger Accomplishments

Neutralizing C-19

Our coordinated response to the COVID-19 pandemic may have been the greatest unified effort in the history of the Agency, by staff and incarcerated individuals alike. The goal of this response was to limit COVID-19 deaths. Of the 57,500 staff and incarcerated individuals to spend time in our facilities since the start of the pandemic, sadly, 62 passed away from COVID-19, or from other diseases complicated by COVID. These deaths are tragic. However, the rate of death inside Indiana's prisons proved to be lower than many United States communities, and far lower than the research predicted for closed environments like prisons. Now all of Indiana's prisons are once again at full operation with the complete array of activities and programming, including volunteers and family visits.

Lowest Adult Recidivism Rate

Indiana determines a person released from prison to be a "recidivist" if they return to prison within three years of their release, whether for a new crime or a parole or probation violation. IDOC has been tracking the overall rate of recidivism this way for over 25-years and established a goal to get this rate below 35%. IDOC met this goal last year, with an overall rate of 33.82%, the lowest overall rate ever recorded by IDOC.

Highest Parolee Salary

Research consistently shows that people who attain meaningful employment upon release from prison are less likely to return to prison. That is why IDOC has taken measures to skill-up incarcerated individuals, and help these returning citizens find meaningful employment before, or upon release. Over 80% of qualified parolees attain employment within five months of their release. The IDOC also

tracks the average rate of pay of those on parole. Just a few years ago the average was \$12.82. Today the average rate of pay for those on parole is a record \$16.60/hour.

Curative Treatment for Hepatitis C

IDOC provides universal treatment, using relatively new anti-viral medications, to thousands of incarcerated individuals that contracted hepatitis C before coming to prison. This treatment is effective, but costly. To stretch the impact of the appropriation received for this current biennium, the Department negotiated competitive rates for these expensive antiviral medications. As of the time of this writing the IDOC in partnership with its healthcare provider, effectively cured more than 1,600 incarcerated individuals of Hepatitis C.

Improving Prison Culture

The Agency is in the process of incorporating the term “Incarcerated Individuals” to replace the once customary term “Offenders.” This new term is factual, and shifts the focus away from their criminal past, towards phrasing that is more respectful and conducive of treatment and rehabilitation. This new phrasing will be incorporated into all IDOC policies and protocols, and eventually day-to-day conversation.

The Department added a C-level Deputy Commissioner of Diversity and Development to help transition all agency environments to one that welcomes diversity and promotes inclusions and belonging among staff and the incarcerated population. This person will help lead the campaign to actively protect all vulnerable individuals within IDOC’s ranks and Indiana’s prison population.

As part of its cultural improvement the Agency conducted a friendly competition among staff to identify its new motto. The winning entry came from Branchville Correctional Facility staff. At IDOC we are “Changing lives from the inside out.”

Staff are listening to the returning citizens. Formerly incarcerated individuals are being invited to sit on a panel at IDOC’s Leadership Symposia, are invited to tell their story to executive staff at facility reviews, and a few even sat with the Indiana Pacers to tell their story. By listening to those who are incarcerated, and those who have transitioned from prison back to their community, IDOC administrators can better identify problems in the process that need fixing, and best practices that need replicating.

Protecting the protectors

This biennium the IDOC instituted several changes designed to better protect those who work inside our prisons.

- (1) IDOC purchased armor plates that rest within carriers specifically designed and made by IDOC’s own prison industries, to form ballistic stab vests. These protective vests are made available to staff who work directly with medium and high-security incarcerated individuals.

- (2) Replaced and improved surveillance efforts with digital camera technologies, drones, and other new forms of detective equipment.
- (3) Increased the number of correctional police officers and expanded their involvement in protecting the community in new ways such as assisting with parole sweeps, compliance checks, parolee arrests, and providing greater oversight to incarcerated individual work crews.
- (4) Created a “Violence Reduction Team”, specifically trained, and detailed to sweep prisons for controlled substances and prohibited property.

Preparing the Incarcerated for their Return Home

IDOC has worked to improve the process for assisting incarcerated individuals with acquiring birth certificates and social security cards prior to release. The Agency strengthened its partnership with BMV to provide more state ID's and operator's licenses to incarcerated individuals before they leave prison, to ensure they have proper job credentials. Because of this partnership, the person's community address is placed on these ID's rather than the address of their last residence (i.e., the correctional facility).

Seizing an opportunity

Through an agreement negotiated with the Mayor of Gary, IDOC was able to purchase Indiana's most northwestern parole office for \$1, in exchange for improving the building and providing felt security to the surrounding neighborhood.

The Biggest Challenges

Attracting and Retaining Correctional Professionals

The biggest challenge faced by IDOC at this time is attracting and retaining sufficient qualified custody staff to meet the needs of Indiana's highest security prisons. National standards tell us that a 10% vacancy rate is acceptable, but higher than that can bring risk. Some IDOC facilities are currently at 30% vacancy rates and growing. For years Indiana's relatively low unemployment has created a highly competitive atmosphere. Many law enforcement and correctional service providers are competing for the same limited number of qualified applicants. In addition, our facilities' distance from Indiana's larger metropolitan areas proves to be a recruiting challenge.

Despite these challenges, IDOC has made significant efforts to strategically recruit in a competitive environment. In addition to expanding advertising, increasing the footprint of job fairs, and increasing our presence on employment sites, the Department has hired a team of recruitment and retention specialists. We have also formed a blue-ribbon committee that has helped implement dozens of recommendations on ways to improve the work environments and instill an even stronger *esprit de corps* among IDOC's ranks. IDOC will continue to look for innovative ways to meet this challenge.

Building to accommodate today's prison population

Indiana's prison population shows lessening growth. However, the composition of those being sentenced to prison is changing and now includes greater rates of more serious individuals. For example, the percentage of incarcerated individuals requiring maximum-security confinement or close supervision has grown from 34.3% in 2018, to 38% today. Fundamental correctional practices require this level of dangerous individual to be housed within prison cells as opposed to less controlled dormitory-style prison environments. IDOC requires more celled beds to house this growing and dangerous sector of its prison population.

Westville Correctional Facility provides an opportunity to meet this need. Built 75-years ago, not as a hardened prison but as a hospital for the mentally ill, the compound has become increasingly unsuited to operate as a medium-security prison. IDOC hopes to improve this facility by leveraging all suitable existing assets and replacing those otherwise with a larger, more appropriate institution. We have worked diligently to approve a design and estimate the costs of such an endeavor, and all are excited to see what the next biennium brings for the facility.

Next Biennium Objectives and Requests

In line with the Governor's priorities of improving governmental services, and to meet the challenges described above, the following budget changes are requested to support IDOC's major objectives for next biennium.

Change Packages:

Delivering Great Government Service:

To support a continued strong partnership with the Department of State Personnel and Office of Information Technologies, IDOC partially reimburses operational costs for the services they render.

	Fiscal Year 2024	Fiscal Year 2025
IOT Services	1,306,081	1,408,947
SPD Services	395,006	616,426
GSA Impact	3,121,343	3,121,343
Salary Study Impact	34,839,692	34,839,692

Utility Increases

Although IDOC is continually working to create utility efficiencies, the utility rate increases over the last several years have significantly impacted the Agency's budget. Many districts that serve our facilities have received approval for rate increases from IURC and rates are expected to increase an additional 7% this year. This request is to cover rate increases in 2020 – 2022, and DOC will work to absorb the upcoming increases until we can determine the overall impact.

	Fiscal Year 2024	Fiscal Year 2025
Utilities	1,916,484	2,177,219

Contractual Obligations

IDOC has ongoing contractual agreements for the provision of services for the incarcerated population. The biggest of these is for medical care, education, and food service for the entire incarcerated population. In partnership with IDOA, the contract for comprehensive medical services underwent a competitive procurement process leading to selection of a new contract provider in July 2021. The payment basis for these contractual agreements is directly and proportionately related to the offender population size and inflation. This change package request will help meet contractual obligations to adjust per diems based on the Consumer Price Index.

	Fiscal Year 2024	Fiscal Year 2025
Correctional Services	59,165,932	64,904,476
Private Prisons	1,751,785	3,249,527

Budget Reductions

IDOC closed the Indianapolis Re-entry Education Facility in 2017 but continued to maintain an appropriation to cover general upkeep of the property. Last year, this was transferred to IDOA, and the appropriation is no longer needed.

We are also reaching the end of repayment on two energy savings contracts financed through the Indiana Finance Authority. The 2012 contract's final payment is July 2023 and the 2013 contract's final

payment is July 2024. We have submitted a change package to reduce the appropriation used to fund these payments.

	Fiscal Year 2024	Fiscal Year 2025
Facility Closure	700,000	700,000
IFA Payments	1,000,000	2,630,000

Capital Budget

IDOC's biennium capital budget request contains multiple projects across many facilities. These projects focus on taking care of existing infrastructure and include repairs and replacements for roofs, boilers, steam lines, windows, fire alarm systems, elevators, and masonry. Our top capital funding priority remains completing the Westville Correctional Facility, which was partially funded in the 2021 budget.