

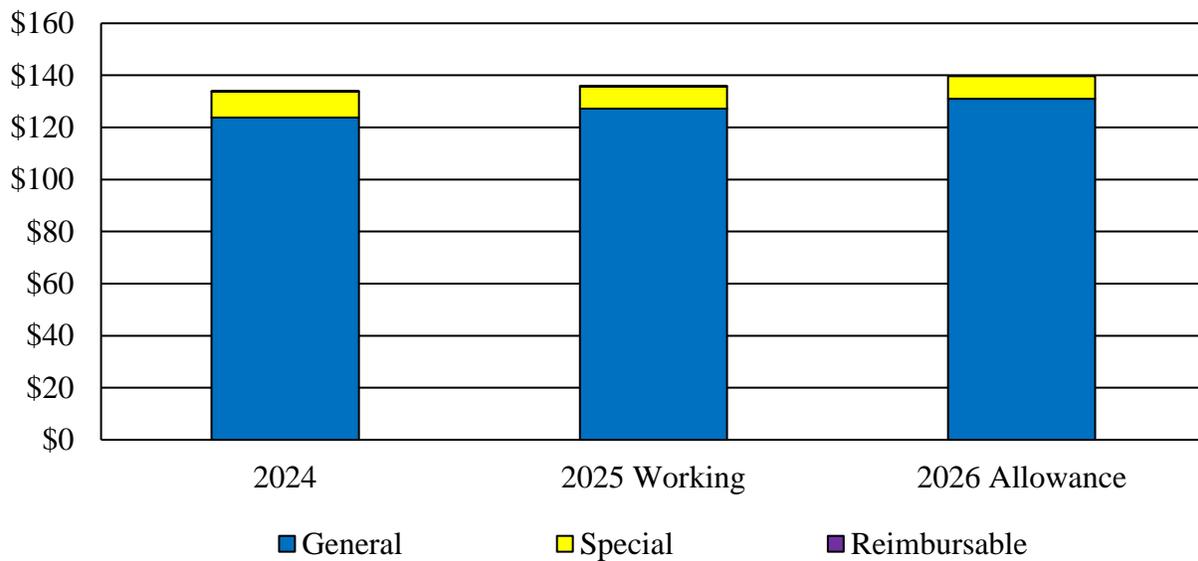
Q00C
Community Supervision
Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

Program Description

The Community Supervision function within the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) consists of the Maryland Parole Commission (MPC) and the Division of Parole and Probation (DPP). MPC hears cases for parole release and revocation and is authorized to parole inmates sentenced to a term of confinement of six months or more from any correctional institution in Maryland except the Patuxent Institution. DPP provides offender supervision and investigation services for probationers assigned by courts, parolees discharged from correctional facilities on mandatory release, parolees approved by MPC, and Drinking Driver Monitor Program (DDMP) participants. DPP agents also collect fees and restitution payments required of supervisees.

Operating Budget Summary

Fiscal 2026 Budget Increases \$3.8 Million, or 2.8%, to \$139.7 Million
(\$ in Millions)



Note: The fiscal 2025 working appropriation accounts for deficiencies. The fiscal 2025 impacts of statewide salary adjustments are centrally budgeted in the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), and adjustments are not reflected in this agency’s budget. The fiscal 2026 impacts of the fiscal 2025 statewide salary adjustments appear in this agency’s budget. The fiscal 2026 statewide salary adjustments are centrally budgeted in DBM and are not included in this agency’s budget.

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Fiscal 2025

Proposed Deficiencies

The fiscal 2026 budget contains two deficiency appropriations that increase the fiscal 2025 working appropriation by \$2.2 million in general funds. The deficiencies aim to strengthen security measures for community supervision agents and administrative employees through the following uses:

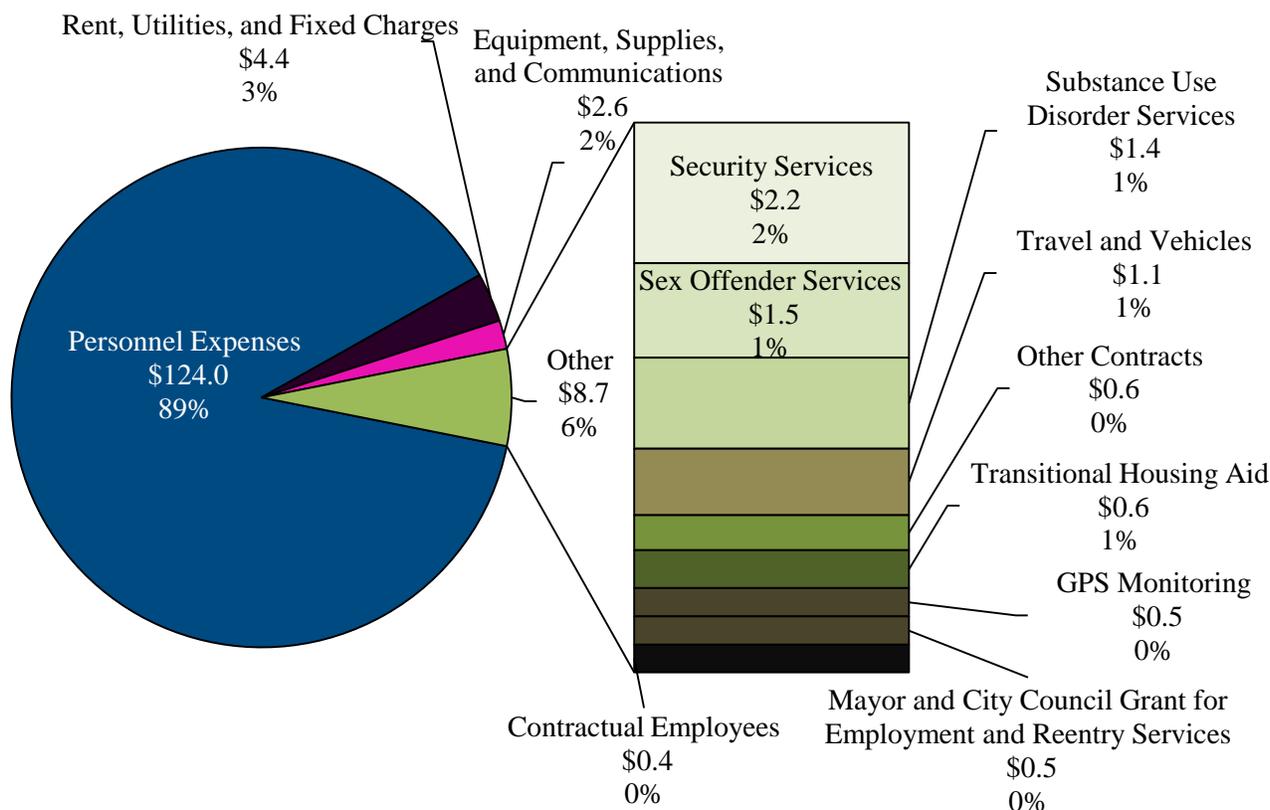
- \$1.5 million to place armed guards in DPP offices across the State; and
- \$743,246 to purchase ballistic and stab proof vests for DPP agents.

Further discussion of safety measures for DPP staff can be found in Key Observation 1 of this analysis.

Fiscal 2026 Overview of Agency Spending

The DPSCS Community Supervision fiscal 2026 allowance totals \$139.7 million, as shown in **Exhibit 1**. Personnel expenses for the 1,186 regular positions authorized in this unit total \$124.0 million, or 89%, of the allowance. Other major administrative expenses include rent and utilities for DPP regional offices (\$4.4 million) as well as equipment, supplies, and communications (\$2.6 million). A portion of the allowance (\$5.1 million) also supports contractual services, including security, sex offender monitoring, and substance use disorder treatment.

**Exhibit 1
Overview of Agency Spending
Fiscal 2026
(\$ in Millions)**



Note: The fiscal 2026 statewide salary adjustments are centrally budgeted in the Department of Budget and Management and are not included in this agency’s budget.

Source: Department of Budget and Management

Proposed Budget Change

The fiscal 2026 allowance increases by \$3.8 million from the fiscal 2025 working appropriation. Under regular personnel, there is an increase of \$8.8 million mainly for new salaries and fringe benefits, resulting from 17 contractual conversions and position transfers that provide a net increase of 17 positions in DPSCS – Community Supervision. Other increases in spending include \$217,000 for contractual sex offender monitoring services; \$236,000 for motor vehicle operations and related costs; and \$172,000 for various equipment, supplies, and materials due to inflation and a post-pandemic rise in the number of community supervision cases. Partially

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offsetting this spending growth, the greatest reductions were \$5.3 million in employee and retiree health insurance and \$859,000 for contractual personnel salaries and benefits due to the conversions. The detailed changes are listed in **Exhibit 2**.

**Exhibit 2
Proposed Budget
DPSCS – Community Supervision
(\$ in Thousands)**

How Much It Grows:	General Fund	Special Fund	Reimb. Fund	Total
Fiscal 2024 Actual	\$123,778	\$10,085	\$55	\$133,918
Fiscal 2025 Working Appropriation	127,246	8,587	109	135,942
Fiscal 2026 Allowance	<u>131,064</u>	<u>8,651</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>139,715</u>
Fiscal 2025-2026 Amount Change	\$3,818	\$64	-\$109	\$3,773
Fiscal 2025-2026 Percent Change	3.0%	0.7%	-100.0%	2.8%
Where It Goes:				<u>Change</u>
Personnel Expenses				
Salary increases and related fringe benefits including the fiscal 2025 COLA and increments, driven by a net increase of 17 positions transferred to this unit and 17 contractual conversions.....				\$8,773
Workers’ compensation premium assessment				8
Turnover decreases from 11.83% to 11.38%				500
Employee and retiree health insurance				-5,334
Security Expenses				
Contractual security services.....				1,495
Security equipment.....				867
Fiscal 2025 deficiency appropriation to replace DPP agents’ ballistic vests with multi-threat vests				-743
Fiscal 2025 deficiency appropriation to hire armed guards for DPP offices				-1,495
Contractual Services				
Sex offender monitoring				217
Janitorial and trash removal services				13
Photocopier rental				5
Telecommunications				-11
Fiscal 2026 completes funding for George Mason University study of violent crimes committed by DPP supervised offenders				-272

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Where It Goes:	<u>Change</u>
Supplies, Materials, and Equipment	
Miscellaneous supplies and replacement equipment	138
Employee uniforms	38
Office supplies	13
Drug testing supplies.....	-4
Other Changes	
Motor vehicles and associated costs	236
Rent and utilities	146
Communications	31
Utilities – electricity and natural gas/propane.....	
Routine in-state travel	8
Insurance coverage paid to STO and other fixed costs	3
Contractual employee payroll and benefits related to the conversion of 17 positions into regular personnel	-859
Other.....	1
Total	\$3,773

COLA: cost-of-living adjustments

DPP: Division of Parole and Probation

DPSCS: Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

STO: State Treasurer’s Office

Note: Numbers may not sum to total due to rounding. The fiscal 2025 working appropriation accounts for deficiencies. The fiscal 2025 impacts of statewide salary adjustments are centrally budgeted in the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), and adjustments are not reflected in this agency’s budget. The fiscal 2026 impacts of the fiscal 2025 statewide salary adjustments appear in this agency’s budget. The fiscal 2026 statewide salary adjustments are centrally budgeted in DBM and are not included in this agency’s budget.

Personnel Data

	<u>FY 24</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>FY 25</u> <u>Working</u>	<u>FY 26</u> <u>Allowance</u>	<u>FY 25-26</u> <u>Change</u>
Regular Positions	1,145.00	1,152.00	1,186.00	34.00
Contractual FTEs	<u>16.02</u>	<u>33.12</u>	<u>15.62</u>	<u>-17.50</u>
Total Personnel	1,161.02	1,185.12	1,201.62	16.50

Vacancy Data: Regular Positions

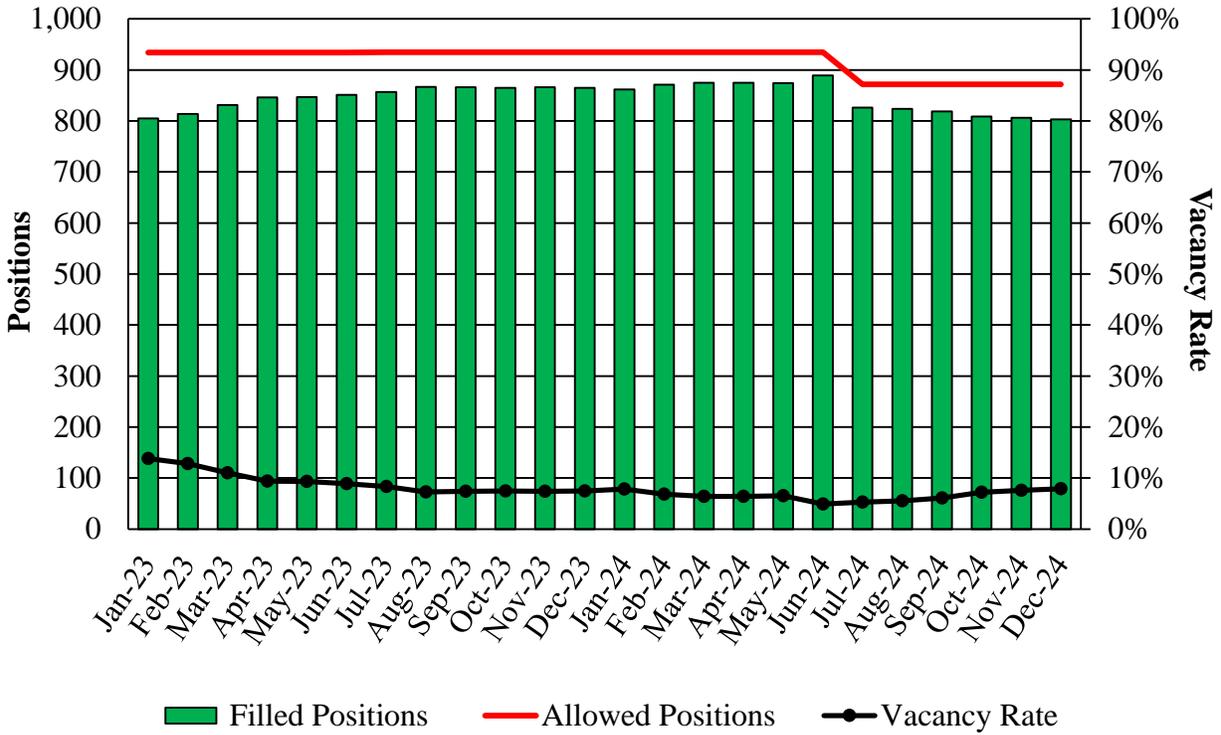
Turnover and Necessary Vacancies, Excluding

New Positions	134.97	11.38%
Positions and Percentage Vacant as of 12/31/24	105.00	9.11%

Vacancies Below Turnover	29.97
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- Of the 34 new regular positions provided in fiscal 2026, 17 are the result of contractual conversions of DPP office support positions. The remaining 17 positions are a net increase of positions transferring mostly into DPP Support Services from elsewhere in DPSCS.
- DPSCS Community Supervision is operating with lower vacancy rates than budgeted in the fiscal 2025 working appropriation and fiscal 2026 allowance. While turnover is budgeted at 11.83% in fiscal 2025, and 11.38% in fiscal 2026, the actual vacancy rate is 9.11% as of December 31, 2024. This difference translates to an estimated shortfall of \$2.76 million in fiscal 2025, and \$2.53 million in fiscal 2026 using the average salary and turnover expectancy for all positions in the agency. However, funding may be realigned across DPSCS by budget amendment, and other divisions have reported significantly higher vacancy rates than budgeted that would provide net vacancy savings overall.
- When looking solely at community supervision agents, including DPP parole and probation agents and DDMP monitors, vacancy rates during calendar 2024 remained below 8% the entire year. In January 2024, 7.8% of positions were vacant. The lowest vacancy rate (4.9%) occurred in June 2024 shortly before the total number of allowed agents decreased from 935 to 872. As of December 2024, the agent vacancy rate was 7.9%. The number of filled positions and monthly vacancy rate for community supervision agents are shown in **Exhibit 3** for calendar 2023 and 2024.

**Exhibit 3
Community Supervision Agent Filled Positions and Vacancy Rate
January 2023 to December 2024**



Note: The total number of allowed positions decreased from 935 to 872 at the start of fiscal 2025.

Source: Department of Budget and Management; Department of Legislative Services

Key Observations

1. Murder of Parole Agent Prompts DPP Safety Efforts and Pause on Home Visits

On May 31, 2024, six-year parole agent Davis Martinez was murdered during a home visit in Montgomery County with registered sex offender Emanuel Sewell. At a joint hearing of the Senate Judicial Proceedings and Budget and Taxation committees and the House Judiciary and Appropriations committees on October 24, 2024, DPSCS described the equipment issued to agents in the field and the agency’s plan to improve agent safety. At the time of Agent Martinez’s death, agents were issued ballistic vests and pepper spray. DPSCS has since ordered multi-threat vests for DPP agents and placed armed guards in DPP offices across the State. These measures are funded in the fiscal 2026 budget using fiscal 2025 deficiency appropriations of \$743,246 for the vests and \$1.5 million for armed guards. Furthermore, DPP agents’ phones will be equipped with location tracking technology that informs supervisors of their location during work hours. The terms of use are currently being bargained with American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) representatives. The budget also contains \$428,790 for body-worn cameras contingent on the enactment of legislation allowing their use. According to DPSCS, conversations with the union about incorporating body-worn cameras and other equipment, including firearms, are still underway.

Agent Martinez’s murder also led DPSCS to suspend home visits by parole agents. At the time of writing this analysis, it has been approximately eight months since parole agents conducted home visits, including with registered sex offenders. Agents have been in contact with offenders through in-person office meetings and video calls. DPSCS stated that, since the suspension of home visits, critical need contacts and absconder home visits are being completed by DPSCS’s Warrant and Apprehension Unit, Intel and Investigation Division, and DPP safety support specialists. DPSCS also reported that it does not intend to resume home visits until it can re-equip and retrain agents. SB 197 and HB 123 are departmental bills that seek to expand the membership of the Correctional Training Commission, which is responsible for training correctional officers, to include the Director of Parole and Probation. This would allow DPP to expand its access to resources as it reexamines the training of community supervision agents.

Carolyn J. Scruggs, Secretary of Public Safety and Correctional Services, has discussed how the agency is in the process of strengthening DPP risk assessment tools and safety protocols, including the possibility of having armed police officers accompany agents on home visits. Current DPP policy is for agents and their supervisors to decide when to engage with law enforcement on a case-by-case basis. DPSCS also stated that it is working toward establishing a memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement agencies. A 90-day pilot program with the Montgomery County Police Department will begin in February 2025.

Should a police escort policy go into effect, the amount of time to conduct a home visit will likely increase, potentially leading to additional caseload challenges. This policy would also require significant coordination with law enforcement agencies and could face obstacles related to

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personnel, scheduling, and other resources for both DPP and local law enforcement. The specific scale and types of resources required to successfully implement a police escort policy have not been determined, but the fiscal 2026 allowance includes a combined increase of 8.0 positions in DPP's West and Central regions due to transfers. Two positions are transferred out of the East region, resulting in a net increase of 6 community supervision positions. Caseloads and vacancies among DPP agents and management are discussed in Key Observation 2 of this analysis.

An internal investigation by DPSCS published in June 2024 concluded that there was no evidence Agent Martinez violated any DPP policies or general orders with regard to him executing a home visit on Emanuel Sewell on May 31, 2024, and DPSCS found no definitive answer regarding how the death of Agent Martinez could have been prevented. DPSCS subsequently agreed to an independent investigation after AFSCME representatives and committee members expressed concerns about the validity of the internal investigation.

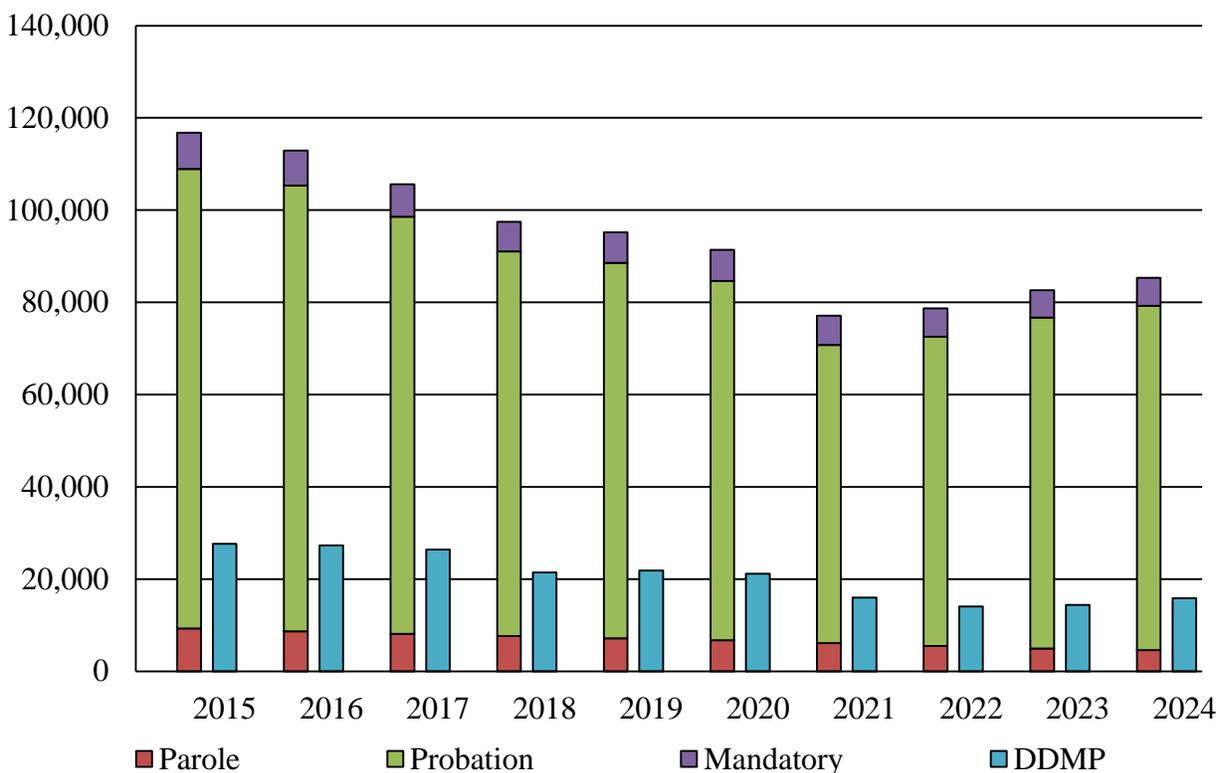
The Department of Legislative Services (DLS) recommends restricting \$150,000 in general funds pending a report on DPSCS's strategy to improve the safety of community supervision agents. The report should include the following:

- **a description of the safety equipment provided to agents, including an analysis comparing equipment provided to DPP agents to the equipment provided by other states with similar community supervision populations;**
- **a detailed explanation of the protocols and procedures developed to improve safety and supervision when an agent is visiting a client's home, including an update on the implementation of a policy escort policy and the associated costs; and**
- **a strategy to safely resume home visits, including an explanation of any budgetary impacts associated with the extended suspension of home monitoring.**

2. Community Supervision Caseloads Increase Overall

DPP operates 37 offices with at least 1 in every local jurisdiction. **Exhibit 4** shows the total number of cases supervised in each category (probation, parole, and mandatory release) during fiscal 2015 to 2024. DDMP monitors are responsible for DDMP cases, while DPP parole and probation agents are responsible for criminal supervision cases. During the COVID-19 pandemic, criminal supervision cases were down as court closures took effect. Since fiscal 2022, however, total cases are on the rise. The total number of cases supervised during fiscal 2024 was 85,343, an increase of 2,699 cases, or 3%, from fiscal 2023. The increase is driven by a rise in the number of individuals on probation from 71,734 to 74,701. Of the 85,343 cases, approximately 33,988 were actively monitored by agents. Parole continued to decline in fiscal 2024; however, mandatory release and probation saw respective increases of 2.0% and 4.1%.

**Exhibit 4
Community Supervision Cases Supervised During Year
Fiscal 2015-2024**

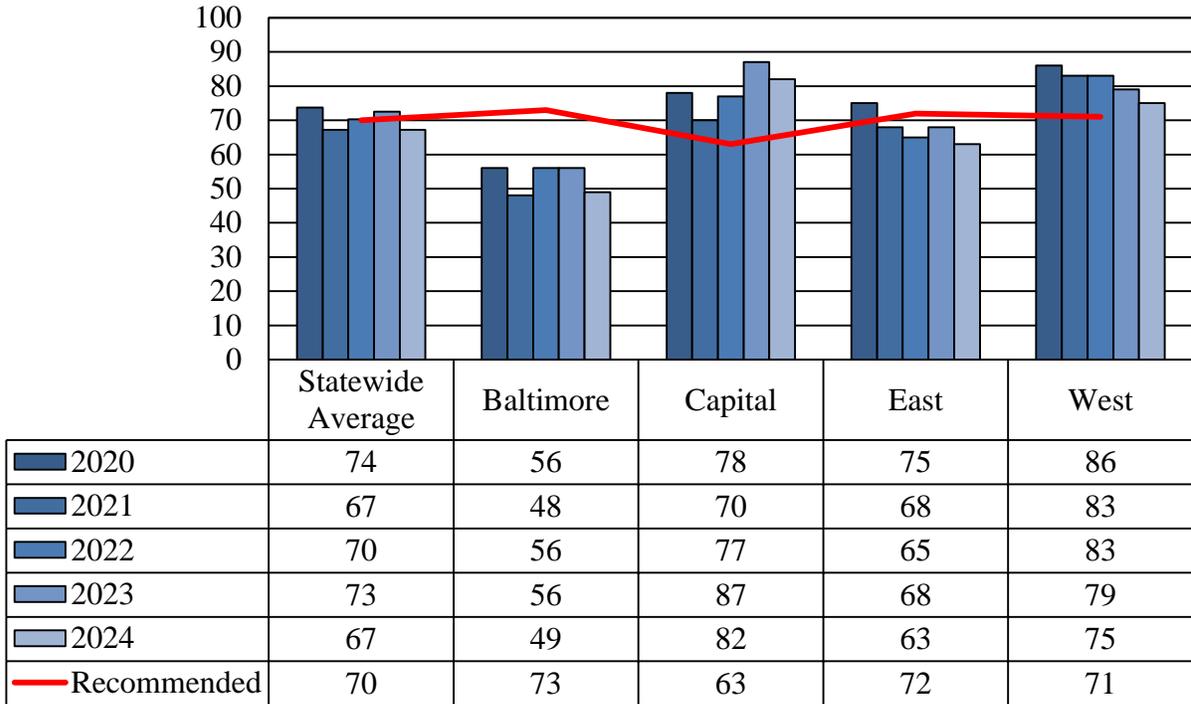


DDMP: Drinking Driver Monitor Program

Source: Department of Budget and Management; Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

The rise in supervision cases combined with a decline in the total number of agents has contributed to high agent caseloads. The American Parole and Probation Association (APPA) recommends that active case-to-agent ratios not exceed 20:1 for intensive supervision clients, 50:1 for moderate/high supervision clients, or 200:1 for low-risk supervision clients. Lower caseload ratios are associated with improved outcomes particularly for high and moderate-risk clients. DLS calculated that the recommended caseload ratio for Maryland community supervision agents is approximately 70 cases per agent using the APPA metrics. **Exhibit 5** compares the average cases per agent by region to a calculation of the recommended caseload per APPA guidelines.

**Exhibit 5
Average Cases Per DPP Agent by Region
Fiscal 2020-2024**



DPP: Division of Parole and Probation

Note: The recommended caseload was calculated by the Department of Legislative Services using American Parole and Probation Association’s recommendations for case-to-agent ratios based on client risk.

Source: Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services; Department of Legislative Services

All regions saw a decline in cases per agent in fiscal 2024, mainly driven by an increase in the number of agents. However, only two of the four regions met the APPA-recommended ratio in fiscal 2024, which differs by region. The Capital region’s caseload ratio of 82 in fiscal 2024 is approximately 19 cases higher than the recommended number of cases per agent (63). Similarly, the West region is slightly above the recommended caseload of 71 with a ratio of 75 cases per agent.

DLS recommends adopting committee narrative requesting that the annual report on DPP caseloads for parole and probation agents be submitted by September 15, 2025.

3. Transition to New Risk Assessment Tool Delayed

DPP is required by statute to utilize an evidence-based risk and needs assessment tool to assess and classify individuals who are brought under DPP supervision. The agents working for DPP have used two tools in the past: the Initial Risk Screener (IRS) and the Level of Service Inventory – Revised (LSI-R).

In fiscal 2021 to 2024, DPSCS contracted two independent Risk Assessment Revalidation Studies to assess which of DPP’s risk assessment tools effectively predict recidivism and which may need replacing or updating. The contractors recommended the following:

- DPP risk assessment tools should be updated and/or replaced to provide more accurate risk classification and needs assessment results;
- the IRS is an effective predictor of recidivism and should act as the primary risk assessment tool while DPP selects a new tool;
- the LSI-R should no longer be used as a risk assessment tool but rather as a case planning tool;
- DPP should abandon its DDMP risk assessment and commission the development of a new instrument for the program; and
- DPP should expend more time and resources on training staff to accurately administer and score risk assessments.

Starting in fiscal 2023, DPP has incorporated the recommendations related to the usage of existing assessment tools and had initially planned to select a new tool by the end of fiscal 2024. However, personnel changes contributed to delays and as of November 2024, DPP had not implemented any new tools. Furthermore, DPP stated it will not select a new screening tool until it can complete a comprehensive review of the findings and recommendations in the studies. No timeline to select a new tool has been reported.

Meanwhile, DPP has continued to utilize the IRS as the primary tool for determining supervision levels for all general supervision and drinking driver monitor cases. Furthermore, effective January 1, 2025, DPP mandated 40 hours of annual community supervision training, including training on the administration and completion of risk assessments.

DLS recommends adopting committee narrative requesting that the annual report on the implementation of new DPP risk assessment tools be submitted by September 1, 2025.

Operating Budget Recommended Actions

1. Add the following language to the general fund appropriation:

, provided that \$150,000 of this appropriation made for the purpose of general administration may not be expended until the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services submits a report to the budget committees on its strategy to improve the safety of community supervision agents. The report shall include:

- (1) a description of the equipment provided to parole and probation agents as well as a comparative analysis of equipment provided by other states with similar community supervision populations;
- (2) a detailed explanation of the protocols developed to improve safety and supervision when an agent is on a home visit, including an update on the implementation of a police escort policy and the associated costs; and
- (3) an action plan for safely resuming home visits, including an explanation of any budgetary impacts associated with the extended suspension of home monitoring.

The report shall be submitted by October 15, 2025, and the budget committees shall have 45 days from the date of the receipt of the report to review and comment. Funds restricted pending the receipt of the report may not be transferred by budget amendment or otherwise to any other purpose and shall revert to the General Fund if the report is not submitted to the budget committees.

Explanation: This language restricts funds from the Division of Parole and Probation (DPP) within the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services until the agency submits a report to the budget committees detailing safety equipment purchased, personnel transferred and added to DPP, and other efforts to promote agents' safety following the death of Agent Davis Martinez during a home visit.

Information Request	Author	Due Date
Report on parole and probation agent safety efforts	DPP	October 15, 2025

2. Adopt the following narrative:

Division of Parole and Probation (DPP) Caseload Report: In recent fiscal years, DPP has been working to reduce supervision caseloads to a manageable level for its parole and

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probation agents. Caseload ratios overall are decreasing but remain high in some regions. The committees request a report due by September 15, 2025, from DPP on the following:

- the exact breakdown of support staff and general supervision caseloads by office into DPP supervision levels for fiscal 2024;
- the exact breakdown of case closures by reason, region, and office; and
- a description of strategies that DPP is using to reduce caseload ratios and prevent agents from taking on too many cases.

Information Request	Author	Due Date
DPP caseload report	DPP	September 15, 2025

3. Adopt the following narrative:

Report on Assessment Tools: The Division of Parole and Probation (DPP) has delayed the replacement of the assessment tools used to classify offenders placed on community supervision and the role of these tools in case management. This issue is of particular concern with regard to maintaining proper caseloads for agents as well as providing agents with a reliable framework for addressing the individual needs of each offender. The committees request that DPP submit a report, due September 1, 2025, on the transition to new screening tools used in community supervision. The report should include the following:

- a description of the new tools and process;
- improvements made to previous assessment processes;
- the transition timeline;
- challenges to implementation;
- alternatives considered, including the reasons for deciding against alternatives;
- a progress update on training initiatives to improve the accuracy of risk assessment administration and scoring; and
- an analysis of the reliability of the new screening tools to predict recidivism and security risk and/or compliance with conditions of supervision.

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Information Request	Author	Due Date
Report on assessment tools	DPP	September 1, 2025

Appendix 1
2024 Joint Chairmen’s Report Responses from Agency

The 2024 *Joint Chairmen’s Report* (JCR) requested that DPSCS prepare two reports. Electronic copies of the full JCR responses can be found on the DLS Library website.

- ***DPP Caseload Report:*** DPP provided caseload, outcomes, and support staff data by office and region. Caseload ratios decreased in fiscal 2024 but remained over recommended levels in multiple regions. DPP expressed its commitment to working toward APPA-recommended caseloads but acknowledged that staffing limitations significantly impede those efforts. Further discussion of this data can be found in Key Observation 2 of this analysis.
- ***Report on Assessment Tools:*** DPP explained that the transition to new screening tools used in community supervision has been stalled until the Director of Parole and Probation can review the findings of the revalidation studies conducted from fiscal 2021 to 2024. In the meantime, DPP has incorporated feedback about its existing tools and has improved staff training. Further discussion of this report can be found in Key Observation 3 of this analysis.

Appendix 2
Object/Fund Difference Report
Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services – Community Supervision

<u>Object/Fund</u>	<u>FY 24</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>FY 25</u> <u>Working</u> <u>Appropriation</u>	<u>FY 26</u> <u>Allowance</u>	<u>FY 25 - FY 26</u> <u>Amount Change</u>	<u>Percent</u> <u>Change</u>
Positions					
01 Regular	1,145.00	1,152.00	1,186.00	34.00	3.0%
02 Contractual	16.02	33.12	15.62	-17.50	-52.8%
Total Positions	1,161.02	1,185.12	1,201.62	16.50	1.4%
Objects					
01 Salaries and Wages	\$ 120,576,027	\$ 120,016,486	\$ 123,962,241	\$ 3,945,755	3.3%
02 Technical and Special Fees	838,399	1,297,060	437,840	-859,220	-66.2%
03 Communication	1,150,894	1,242,087	1,272,711	30,624	2.5%
04 Travel	76,705	70,300	77,800	7,500	10.7%
06 Fuel and Utilities	227,386	197,900	229,000	31,100	15.7%
07 Motor Vehicles	775,411	740,462	976,504	236,042	31.9%
08 Contractual Services	5,567,603	5,342,493	6,790,951	1,448,458	27.1%
09 Supplies and Materials	190,870	151,000	204,000	53,000	35.1%
10 Equipment – Replacement	315,967	92,590	225,000	132,410	143.0%
11 Equipment – Additional	878	15,000	881,780	866,780	5778.5%
12 Grants, Subsidies, and Contributions	334,436	450,000	450,000	0	0%
13 Fixed Charges	3,863,299	4,088,485	4,206,918	118,433	2.9%
Total Objects	\$ 133,917,875	\$ 133,703,863	\$ 139,714,745	\$ 6,010,882	4.5%
Funds					
01 General Fund	\$ 123,777,519	\$ 125,008,089	\$ 131,063,948	\$ 6,055,859	4.8%
03 Special Fund	10,085,328	8,587,033	8,650,797	63,764	0.7%
09 Reimbursable Fund	55,028	108,741	0	-108,741	-100.0%
Total Funds	\$ 133,917,875	\$ 133,703,863	\$ 139,714,745	\$ 6,010,882	4.5%

Note: The fiscal 2025 appropriation does not include deficiencies. The fiscal 2026 allowance does not include statewide salary adjustments budgeted within the Department of Budget and Management.