
Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services Fiscal 2027 Budget Overview

**Department of Legislative Services
Office of Policy Analysis
Annapolis, Maryland**

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Analysis of the FY 2027 Maryland Executive Budget, 2026

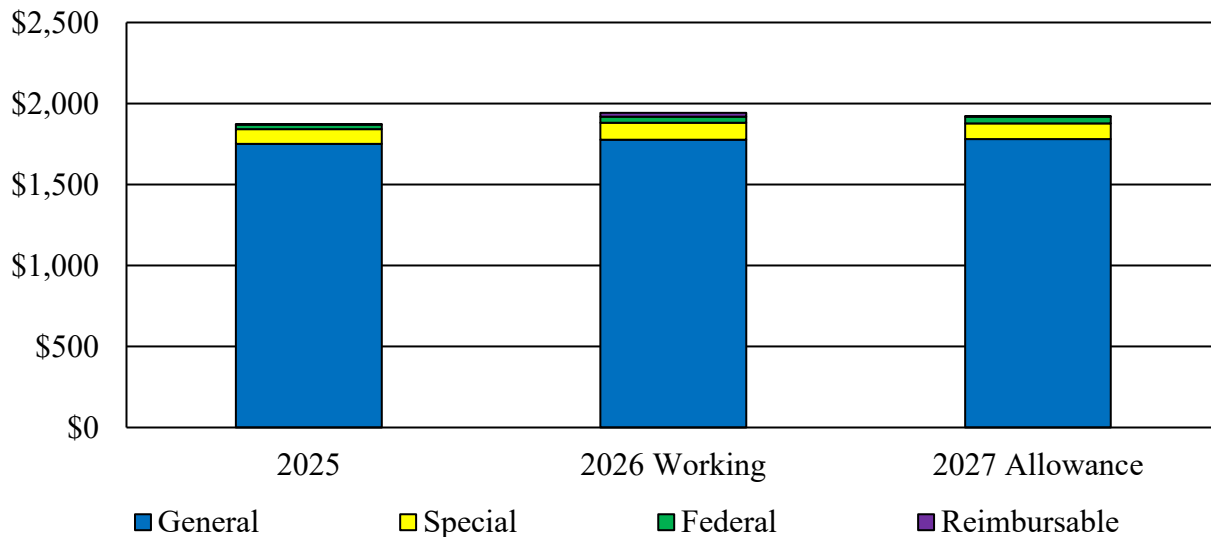
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Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services
Fiscal 2027 Budget Overview

Executive Summary

The Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) is a principal department of State government, responsible for operating 13 correctional facilities throughout the State and 5 detention facilities in Baltimore City, which have a combined fiscal 2025 average daily population (ADP) of over 18,000 offenders. In addition, in fiscal 2025, the department supervised 86,714 offenders on parole and probation. DPSCS has a fiscal 2027 allowance of just over \$1.9 billion (\$1.8 billion in general funds) and 9,199 authorized positions that account for approximately 6% of all general fund expenditures and 10.6% of the total State workforce.

Operating Budget Summary

Fiscal 2027 Budget Decreases \$20.9 Million, or 1.1%, to \$1.9 Billion
(\$ in Millions)



Note: The fiscal 2026 working appropriation accounts for deficiencies. The fiscal 2027 statewide salary adjustments are centrally budgeted in the Department of Budget and Management and are not included in this agency's budget.

- DPSCS's fiscal 2027 allowance decreases by \$20.9 million compared to the fiscal 2026 working appropriation after adjusting for proposed deficiencies, including deficiency appropriations totaling \$25.9 million to cover fiscal 2025 shortfalls for inmate medical care contract costs. When excluding prior year expenses from the fiscal 2026 budget, the fiscal 2027 allowance increases by \$5.0 million, or an increase of 0.3%.

Key Observations

- ***Correctional Officer (CO) Filled Positions Remain Level:*** DPSCS has made progress in hiring administrative and community supervision positions and reduced the number of vacancies across the department, partly through the abolition of authorized positions. However, the number of filled CO positions fell slightly from 4,768 in October 2024 to 4,751 in October 2025.
- ***Staffing Issues Remain with New Inmate Health Care Contract:*** In calendar 2024, the Board of Public Works (BPW) awarded contracts to Centurion of Maryland (Centurion) to provide medical and mental health care services in correctional facilities and pretrial detention centers. Staffing rates under the new health care contract have improved, but the vendor has not yet reached the staffing threshold required, and agency audits found that medical complaints were not responded to in a timely manner or at all in some cases.

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Operating Budget Analysis

Program Description

DPSCS helps keep Maryland communities safe and provides services to victims of crime. The department strives to ensure the safety, security, and wellbeing of defendants and offenders under its supervision and to provide criminal justice agencies with access to timely, accurate information about defendants and offenders. DPSCS is organized into the following five primary functional units.

Corrections

The Division of Correction (DOC), the Patuxent Institution, and Maryland Correctional Enterprises (MCE) comprise the State prison system in Maryland. Correctional units are responsible for the physical confinement and control of offenders incarcerated by Maryland's judicial system and operate 11 State prisons, including the Patuxent Institution for offenders with persistent behavioral and mental health conditions. The remaining State prison, the Baltimore City Correctional Center, falls under the authority of the Division of Pretrial Detention and Services (DPDS) due to its location in Baltimore City. Additionally, not all sentenced offenders are held in DOC facilities, as DPDS facilities hold most offenders sentenced from Baltimore City to short local or State sentences.

Division of Pretrial Detention and Services

DPDS is the second largest functional area and is responsible for all offenders arrested in Baltimore City as well as those held on warrants from Baltimore City. Federal prisoners held at the Chesapeake Detention Facility (CDF) are also under DPDS' purview. Facilities include CDF; the Baltimore Central Booking and Intake Center (BCBIC); the Youth Detention Center; the Metropolitan Transition Center; and the Maryland Reception, Diagnostic, and Classification Center. The Baltimore City Correctional Center, a State correctional facility, also falls under this budget. Additionally, the Pretrial Release Services Program (PRSP) operates under DPDS.

Administration and Offices

The third largest functional area consists of several oversight units and independent agencies. Capital and Facilities Management, General Administration, the Intelligence and Investigative Division, the Warrant Apprehension Unit, and the Information Technology and Communications Division are included within DPSCS headquarters as well as the consolidated Administrative Services Program consisting of Human Resources, Procurement, Finance, Regulation and Policy Coordination, and Grants/Statistical Analysis.

The Inmate Grievance Office and the Maryland Commission on Correctional Standards (MCCS) are independent agencies discussed in the Q00A – DPSCS – Administration analysis. The Inmate Grievance Office has jurisdiction over all inmate grievances against DPSCS, and MCCS develops and audits compliance with standards for all correctional and detention facilities in the State.

Community Supervision

This functional unit consists of the Maryland Parole Commission, the Division of Parole and Probation (DPP) headquarters, and the regional office units that conduct criminal supervision of offenders on parole or probation or who are assigned to the Drinking Driver Monitor Program (DDMP).

Police and Correctional Training Commission

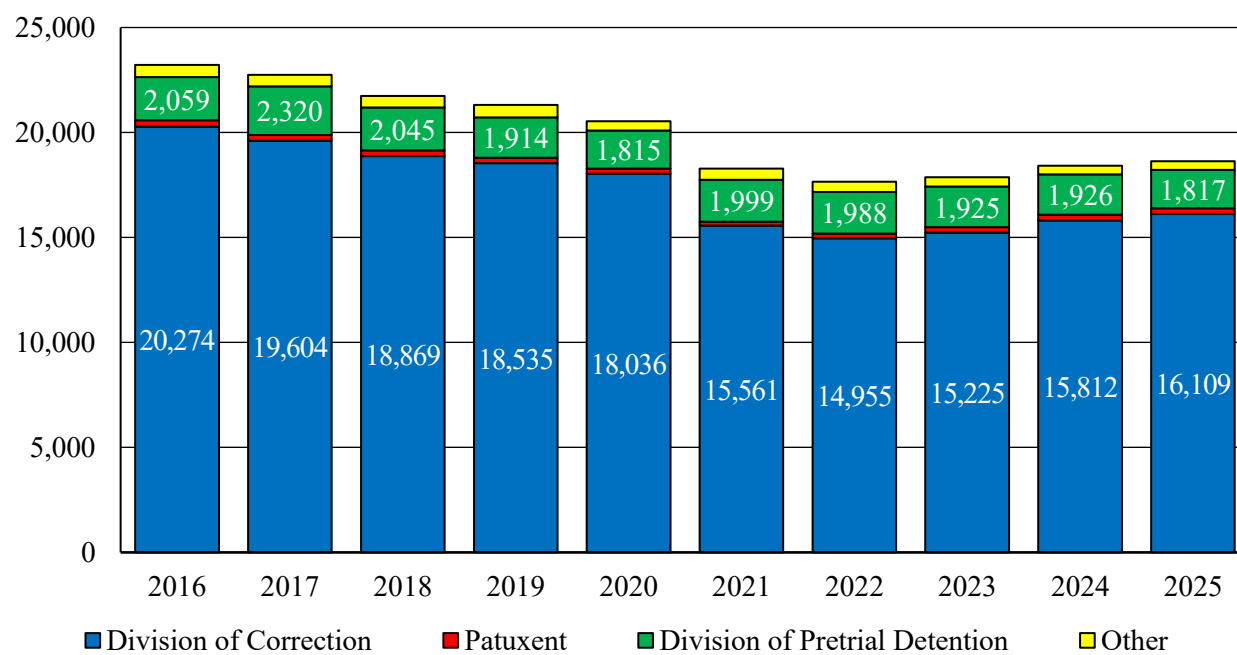
The Police and Correctional Training Commission (PCTC) supports the two independent commissions that develop the training standards for all law enforcement and COs in the State: (1) the Correctional Training Commission; and (2) the Maryland Police Training Standards Commission. PCTC operates the Public Safety Education and Training Center in Sykesville.

Performance Analysis: Managing for Results

1. Population Growth Slows at State Prisons

Compared to historical population trends, Maryland has substantially reduced the sentenced offender population. However, in recent years, State prison populations continue to increase from pandemic lows. **Exhibit 1** shows the annual ADP of incarcerated and detained individuals in DPSCS custody and/or jurisdiction from fiscal 2016 to 2025. In fiscal 2025, DPSCS was responsible for an average of 18,627 sentenced and pretrial offenders each day. This includes 183 State incarcerated individuals held in local facilities awaiting transfer to DPSCS. The 10-year decline in ADP was 4,592 offenders, or 19.8%. From fiscal 2024 to 2025, individuals in DPSCS jurisdiction or custody increased by 206, or 1.1%. This growth rate has slowed compared to the prior year, when individuals in DPSCS custody increased by 560, or 3.1%, from fiscal 2023 to 2024.

Exhibit 1
Incarcerated Offenders – Average Daily Population
Fiscal 2016-2025



Note: Other includes federal detainees held at the Chesapeake Detention Facility and sentenced offenders in local jails awaiting transfer to the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services.

Source: Governor’s Fiscal 2027 Budget Books; Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

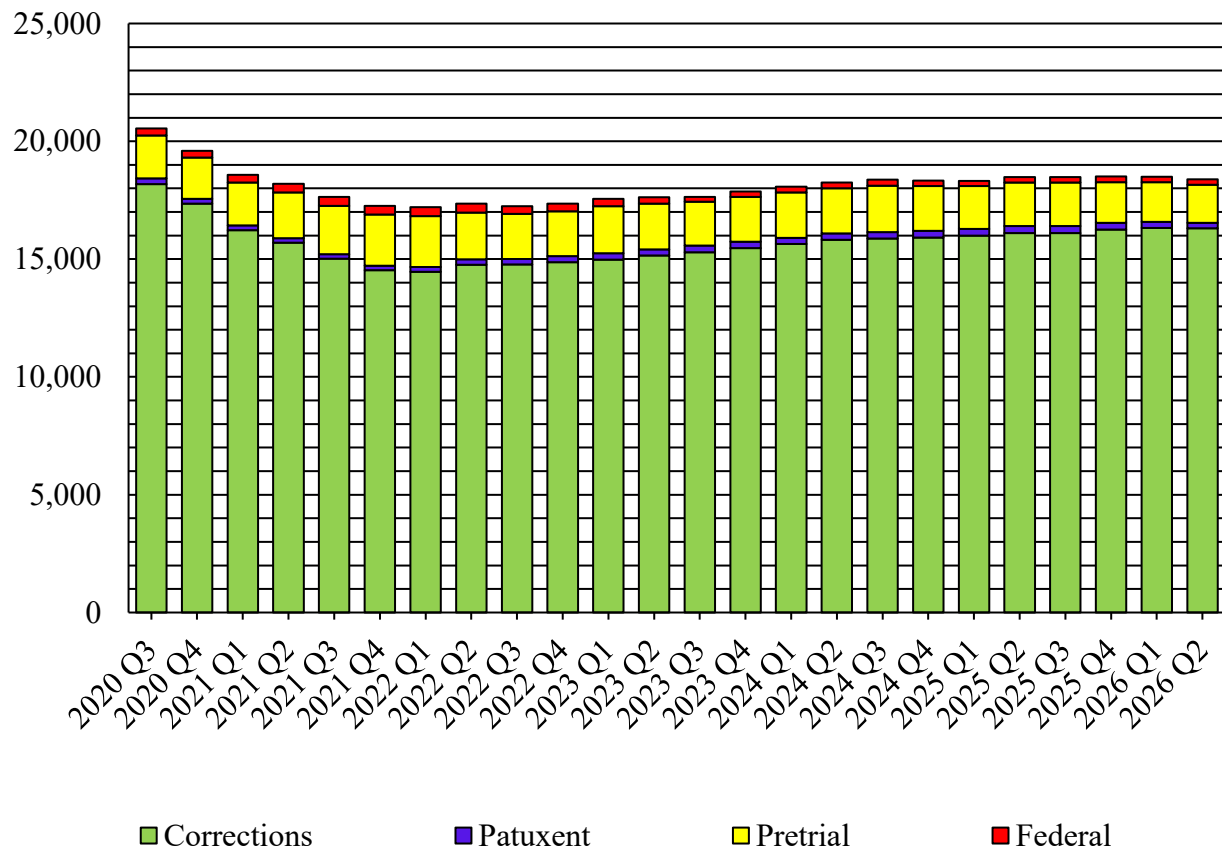
DPSCS Inmate Population Statistics, Fiscal 2025

- 16,109 State prisoners were sentenced and incarcerated in State facilities, and 183 were awaiting transfer to DPSCS.
- 1,817 local pretrial offenders were held at the Baltimore Pretrial Complex, and 230 federal detainees were held at CDF on behalf of the U.S. Marshals Service.
- Of all correctional facilities, the Eastern Correctional Institution (ECI) held the largest share of sentenced offenders at 3,011, or 18.7%.
- Of all pretrial facilities, BCBIC held the largest share of detainees at 958, or 52.7%.

Inmate Population Trends, Fiscal 2026

Exhibit 2 displays the quarterly average count of offenders under pretrial and sentenced custody (excluding the 183 State offenders currently being held in local jails, as that information is only reported in the annual Managing for Results data). In the second quarter of fiscal 2026, the total State-sentenced population decreased by 63 offenders, compared to the average fiscal 2025 ADP. The overall population in DPSCS custody stands at 18,385, a decline of 104 offenders from the first quarter of fiscal 2026, including slight decreases across each of Corrections, Pretrial, Patuxent, and federal detainees.

Exhibit 2
Quarterly Average Daily Population Trends
Fiscal 2020-2026

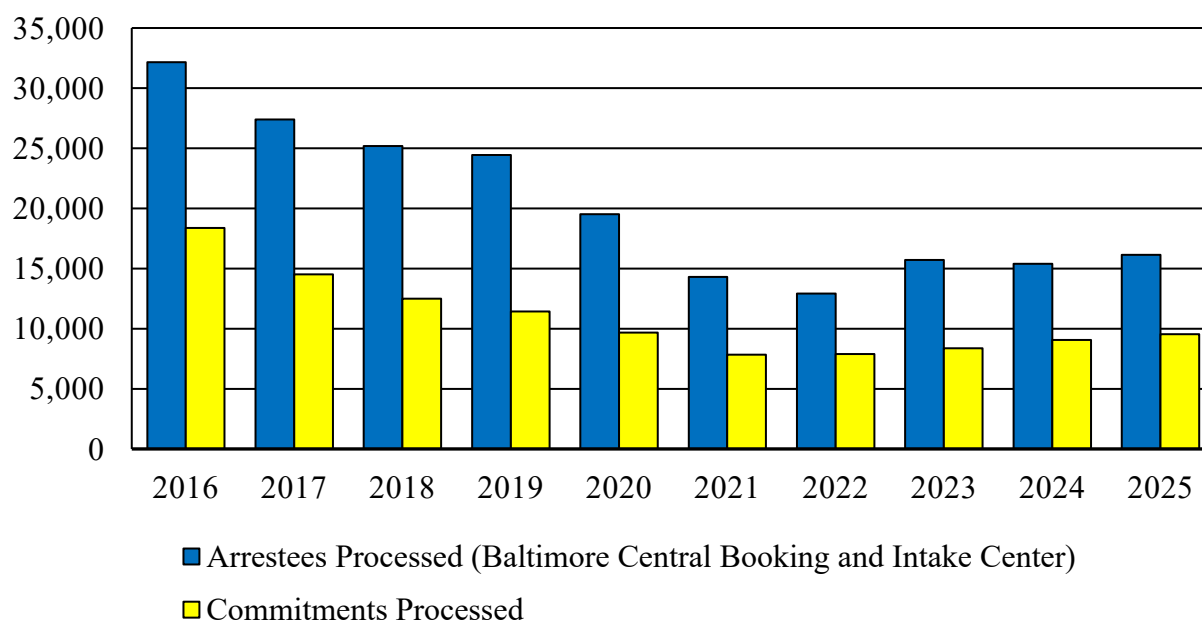


Source: Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

2. Baltimore City Arrests and Pretrial Detention Commitments Increase Slightly

Exhibit 3 shows the number of arrestees processed and the number of commitments to pretrial detention in Baltimore City from fiscal 2016 to 2025. The year-over-year change from fiscal 2024 to 2025 shows that arrests increased by 5%, with 16,149 arrests processed. Commitments to pretrial detention in fiscal 2025 saw a similar increase of 5.4% over the prior year, with 9,544 commitments. However, both measures show 10-year declines, specifically 50% for arrests (from 32,164 arrestees processed in fiscal 2016) and 48% for commitments (from 18,388 arrestees admitted to pretrial detention in fiscal 2016).

Exhibit 3
Arrestees and Commitments to Pretrial Detention in Baltimore City
Fiscal 2016-2025



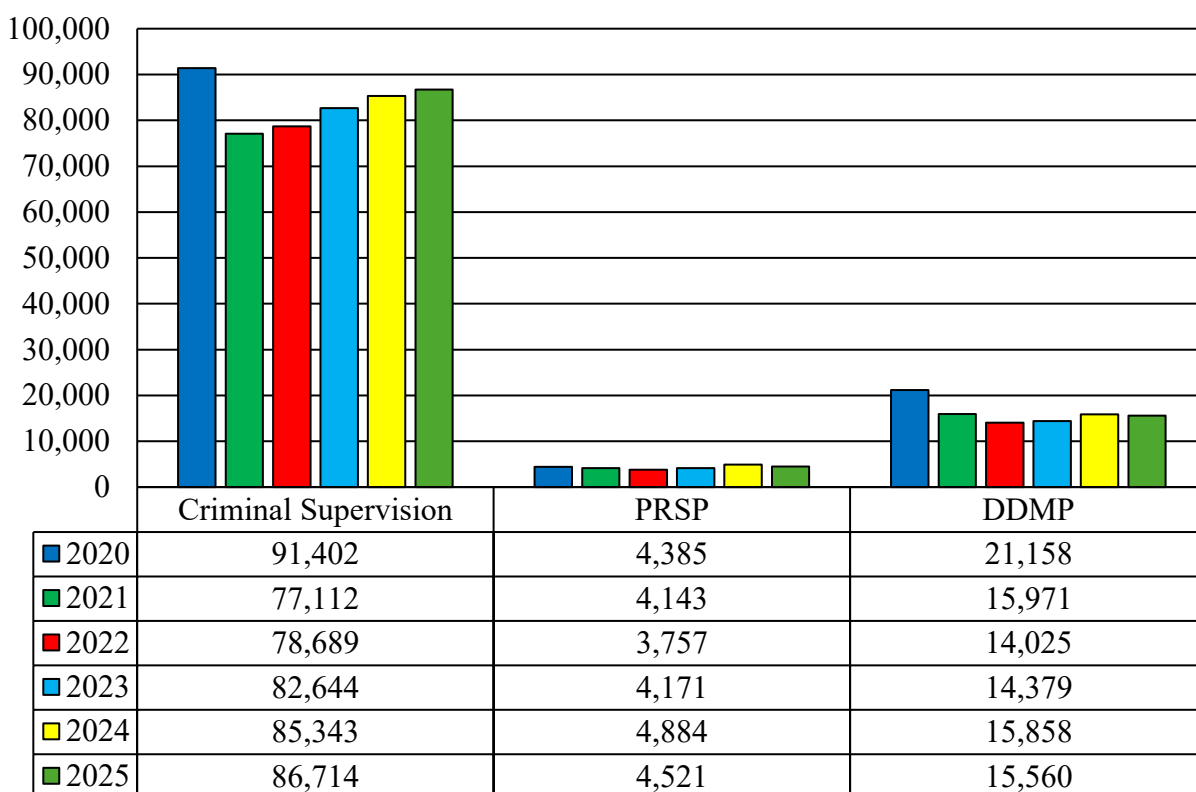
Source: Governor’s Fiscal 2027 Budget Books; Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

3. Overall Increase in Criminal Supervision Cases Driven by Probation

DPSCS oversees several community supervision programs, including the DPP criminal supervision program, the DPP DDMP, and the DPDS PRSP. **Exhibit 4** shows the total number of cases under community supervision for the past six years, with only PRSP cases rising above the level seen at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. From fiscal 2024 to 2025, within criminal

supervision, probation cases supervised by the department increased by 2.0% and mandatory releasees supervised increased by 3.2%, while parole cases decreased by 6.4%. The PRSP population also decreased in fiscal 2025 by 7.4% from the prior year. The probation population increased for similar reasons to the incarcerated population. As the courts make progress in processing criminal caseloads, there is a reasonable expectation that the population placed on probation will also grow, although it remains to be seen if this growth will reach the levels that DPP operated at the start of the pandemic.

Exhibit 4
Community Supervision Cases Per Year
Fiscal 2020-2025



Criminal Supervision: Parole, Probation, and Mandatory Release (Due to Sentence Credits)

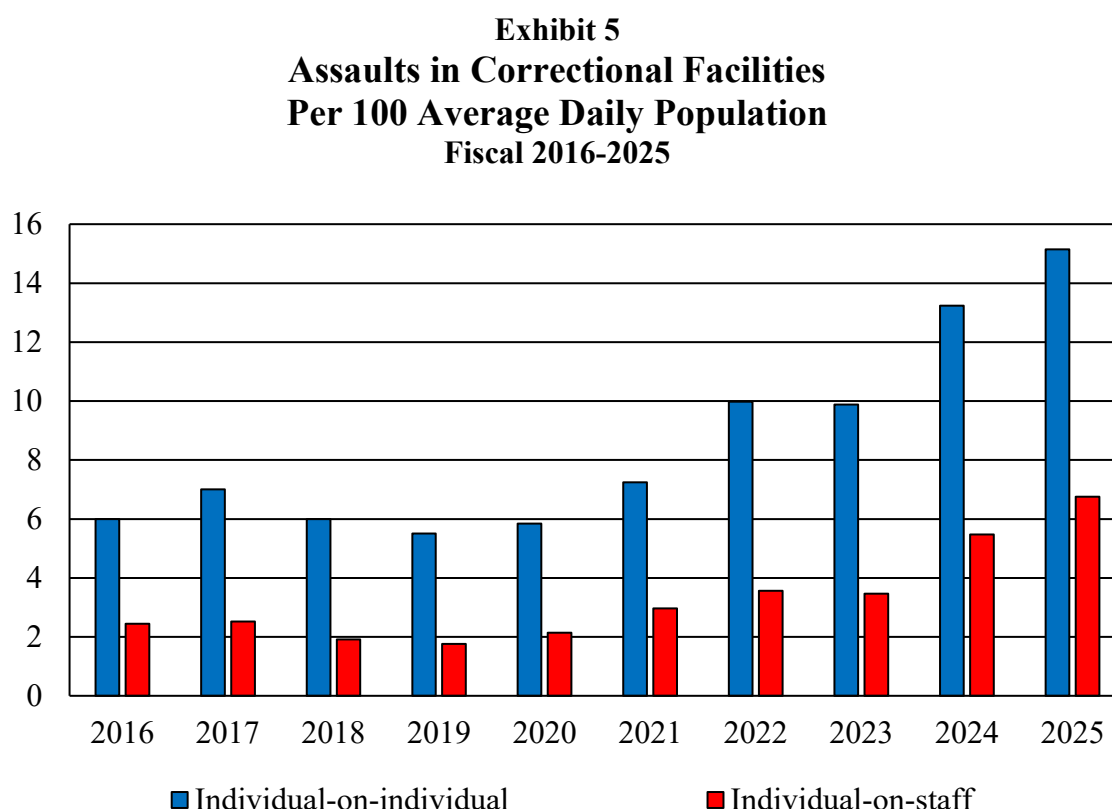
DDMP: Drinking Driver Monitor Program

PRSP: Pretrial Release Supervision Program

Source: Governor's Fiscal 2027 Budget Books; Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

4. Assaults and Homicides in Correctional Facilities Remain Elevated

Exhibit 5 shows current assault rates by target of assault for fiscal 2016 through 2025. From fiscal 2016 to 2021, individual-on-individual assaults fluctuated between 5.8 and 7.2 per 100 ADP. Over the same period, individual-on-staff assaults fluctuated between 1.8 and 3 per 100 ADP. In fiscal 2025, the individual-on-individual assault rate was 15.15 per 100 ADP, a 109% increase from fiscal 2021. The individual-on-staff assault rate was 6.76 per 100 ADP, a 127% increase from fiscal 2021.



Source: Governor's Fiscal 2027 Budget Books

Homicides in correctional facilities committed by an incarcerated individual on another incarcerated individual have also increased in recent years. DPSCS reported 7 homicides in fiscal 2025, an increase from 5 homicides in fiscal 2024 and 4 homicides in fiscal 2023. According to press releases from the Maryland State Police (MSP), as of January 29, 2026, MSP has reported 11 inmate deaths at DPSCS facilities in fiscal 2026 year-to-date. Investigations are ongoing. **DPSCS should discuss the reasons for the increase in assault and homicide rates in correctional facilities and describe efforts that it is taking to reduce violence on staff and incarcerated individuals.**

Fiscal 2026

Proposed Deficiency

The fiscal 2027 budget includes proposed deficiency appropriations that increase the department's fiscal 2026 appropriation by a net \$87.3 million (\$75.5 million in general funds) across the following uses:

- \$33.7 million to cover shortfalls related to lower-than-expected vacancy savings, driven by personnel costs at Maryland Correctional Institution – Jessup (MCI-J) and DOC Headquarters;
- \$25.9 million to cover fiscal 2025 shortfalls in inmate health costs, including \$8.5 million for pretrial facilities and \$17.4 million for DOC;
- \$17.5 million, including \$16.4 million in general funds, \$788,279 in special funds, and \$311,808 in federal funds, to bring budgeted turnover in line with fewer-than-expected vacancies across correctional and pretrial facilities;
- \$5.3 million in additional federal funds due to a new contract with the federal government to operate CDF. The net increase is the result of a \$10.6 million increase in federal funds that is partially offset by a decrease of \$5.3 million in general funds. The new seven-year contract with the U.S. Marshals Service took effect on November 1, 2025;
- \$2.9 million to fund a housing unit renovation at Patuxent Institution; and
- \$1.9 million to fund information technology (IT) service contracts related to hardware maintenance.

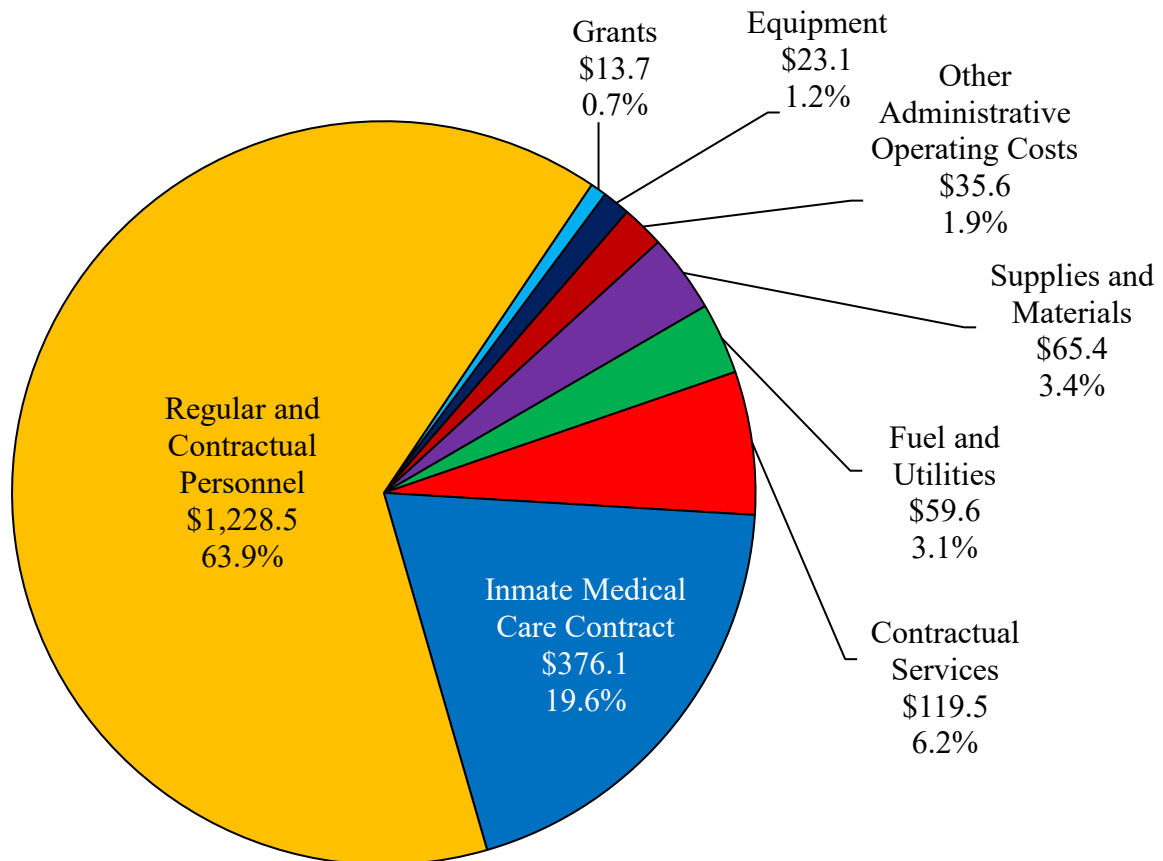
Additionally, the fiscal 2027 allowance includes a deficiency appropriation of \$30 million in general funds in the Dedicated Purpose Account to fund emergency facility maintenance projects across DPSCS facilities. The funding will be used to fund large projects to maintain existing facilities such as fire suppression systems, security fencing, and window and roof replacement. **DPSCS should discuss which facilities will receive emergency maintenance projects and how the funding will be prioritized.**

Fiscal 2027 Overview of Agency Spending

DPSCS' fiscal 2027 allowance totals approximately \$1.9 billion. **Exhibit 6** displays the fiscal 2027 allowance categorized by major spending area. The allowance is primarily used to pay personnel costs (\$1.2 billion), mainly for salaries and wages of COs. Of the department's regular personnel budget, 18.1%, or \$220.9 million, supports overtime costs related to the

persistent shortage of CO staff. Other areas that make up the department’s budget are inmate medical care (\$376.1 million), other contractual services (\$119.5 million, mainly related to food services and criminal justice technology), supplies and materials (\$65.4 million, mostly supported by MCE special funds), and fuel and utilities (\$59.6 million).

Exhibit 6
Overview of Agency Spending
Fiscal 2027 Allowance
(\$ in Millions)



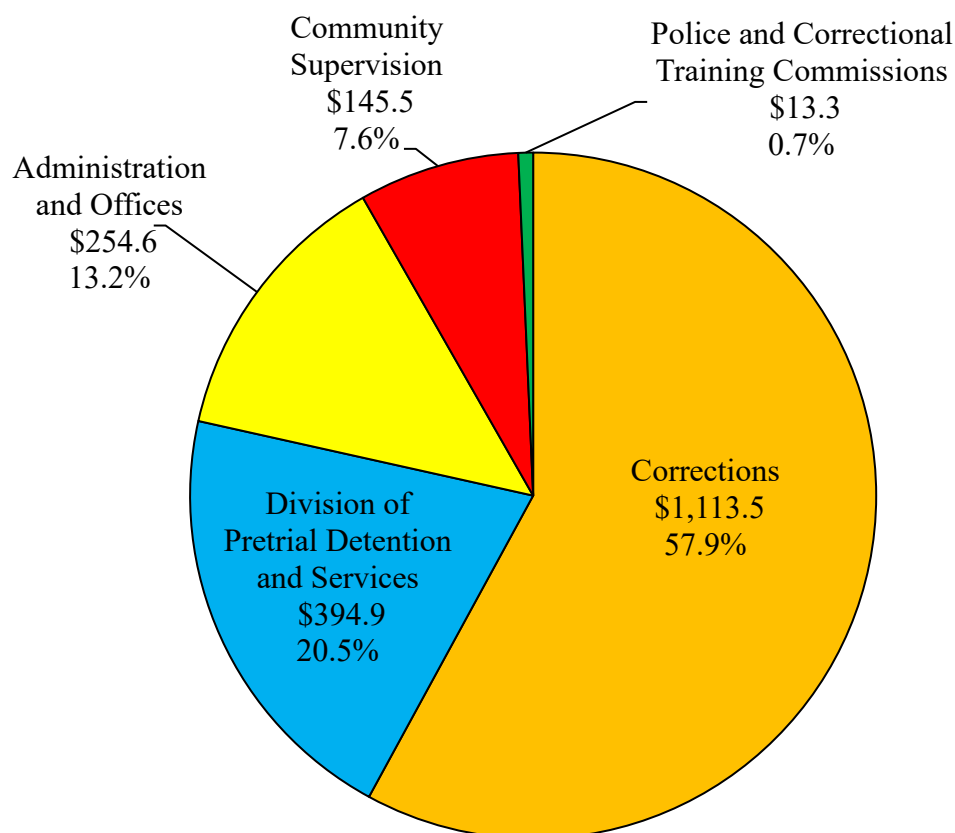
Note: The fiscal 2027 statewide salary adjustments are centrally budgeted in the Department of Budget and Management and are not included in this agency’s budget.

Source: Governor’s Fiscal 2027 Budget Books

Spending by Departmental Function

Exhibit 7 shows the allocation of the fiscal 2027 budget among the primary functional units of DPSCS. More than half (57.9%, or \$1.1 billion) of DPSCS’ total allowance is budgeted for Corrections. There are 4,923 authorized positions within Corrections, making up 53.5% of total DPSCS positions.

Exhibit 7
Overview of Agency Spending by Function
Fiscal 2027
(\$ in Millions)



Note: The fiscal 2027 statewide salary adjustments are centrally budgeted in the Department of Budget and Management and are not included in this agency’s budget.

Source: Governor’s Fiscal 2027 Budget Books; Department of Budget and Management

Proposed Budget Change

Overall DPSCS funding in fiscal 2027 decreases by \$20.9 million, or 1.1%, compared to the fiscal 2026 working appropriation after accounting for proposed deficiency appropriations. **Exhibit 8** provides details on the department's fiscal 2027 allowance and the changes to programs and spending initiatives.

Exhibit 8 Proposed Budget Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (\$ in Thousands)

How Much It Grows:	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Special Fund</u>	<u>Federal Fund</u>	<u>Reimb. Fund</u>	<u>Total</u>
Fiscal 2025 Actual	\$1,751,559	\$89,485	\$28,000	\$3,506	\$1,872,550
Fiscal 2026 Working Appropriation	1,776,188	104,279	38,438	23,712	1,942,617
Fiscal 2027 Allowance	1,780,611	97,178	40,323	3,647	1,921,759
Fiscal 2026-2027 \$ Change	\$4,422	-\$7,100	\$1,885	-\$20,065	-\$20,858
Fiscal 2026-2027 % Change	0.3%	-6.8%	4.9%	-84.6%	-1.1%

Where It Goes: **Change**

Personnel Expenses

Employee and retiree health insurance	\$47,704
Reclassifications	6,057
Turnover rate decreases from 10% to 9.4%.....	5,132
Reduction in projected overtime costs.....	-12,814
Salary adjustments	-23,497
Other fringe benefit adjustments.....	5,203

Correctional Facilities, including the Closure of MCI-J and Related Transfers

Cost of medical, mental health, dental, and pharmaceutical services.....	12,200
Improvements to land and facilities, primarily for Eastern Correctional Institution	1,105
Motor vehicles	513
Utilities and fuel.....	488
Office supplies and equipment, including postage and telephones	-198
Janitorial supplies	-247
Apparel, including employee uniforms and incarcerated individual clothing.....	-265
Building and road maintenance supplies and equipment.....	-1,053
Contracts related to education of incarcerated individuals	-1,517
Maryland Environmental Service Charges	-1,868
Food and related costs.....	-2,206

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Where It Goes:	<u>Change</u>
Pretrial Detention Facilities and related costs	
Cost of medical, mental health, dental and pharmaceutical services.....	-542
Other pretrial detention operating costs.....	835
Land improvements	-4,000
Supplies, Materials and Equipment	
Security related supplies, equipment and contractual services, driven by increases in Probation and Parole security equipment	731
Employee uniforms.....	-401
Vehicle purchases, maintenance, gas, oil, and other costs	-565
Supplies and materials supported with special funds from MCE (special funds)	-6,000
Contracts	
Automated fingerprint system project	2,815
Contracts related to education of incarcerated individuals.....	1,760
MCE installation services for customers, including installing panels, desks, and cubicles (special funds).....	1,073
Computer maintenance contracts, software licenses, system software maintenance.....	551
Consulting and technical support contracts for IT staff.....	436
Upgrading data lines and cabling to increase circuit speeds	336
Contractual prerelease services.....	232
Freight and delivery services (driven by \$180,5005 in special funds from MCE).	202
Interagency agreements	-267
Cost allocations.....	-2,391
Major IT development projects, including the Computerized Criminal History and Electronic Patient Health Record projects	-20,174
Other Charges	
Grants to local jurisdictions for incarcerated individuals housed at local facilities and statutorily required medical payments	-348
Rent payments.....	-572
Capital lease payments to the Treasurer	-690
Contractual personnel salaries and benefits, 32 FTE contractual positions	-2,062
Fiscal 2026 deficiency to cover fiscal 2025 shortfalls related to the inmate medical contract.....	-25,919
Other	-637
Total	-\$20,858

FTE: full-time equivalent
IT: information technology

MCE: Maryland Correctional Enterprises
MCI-J: Maryland Correctional Institution – Jessup

Note: Numbers may not sum to total due to rounding. The fiscal 2026 working appropriation accounts for deficiencies. The fiscal 2027 statewide salary adjustments are centrally budgeted in the Department of Budget and Management and are not included in this agency's budget.

Closure of the Maryland Correctional Institution – Jessup

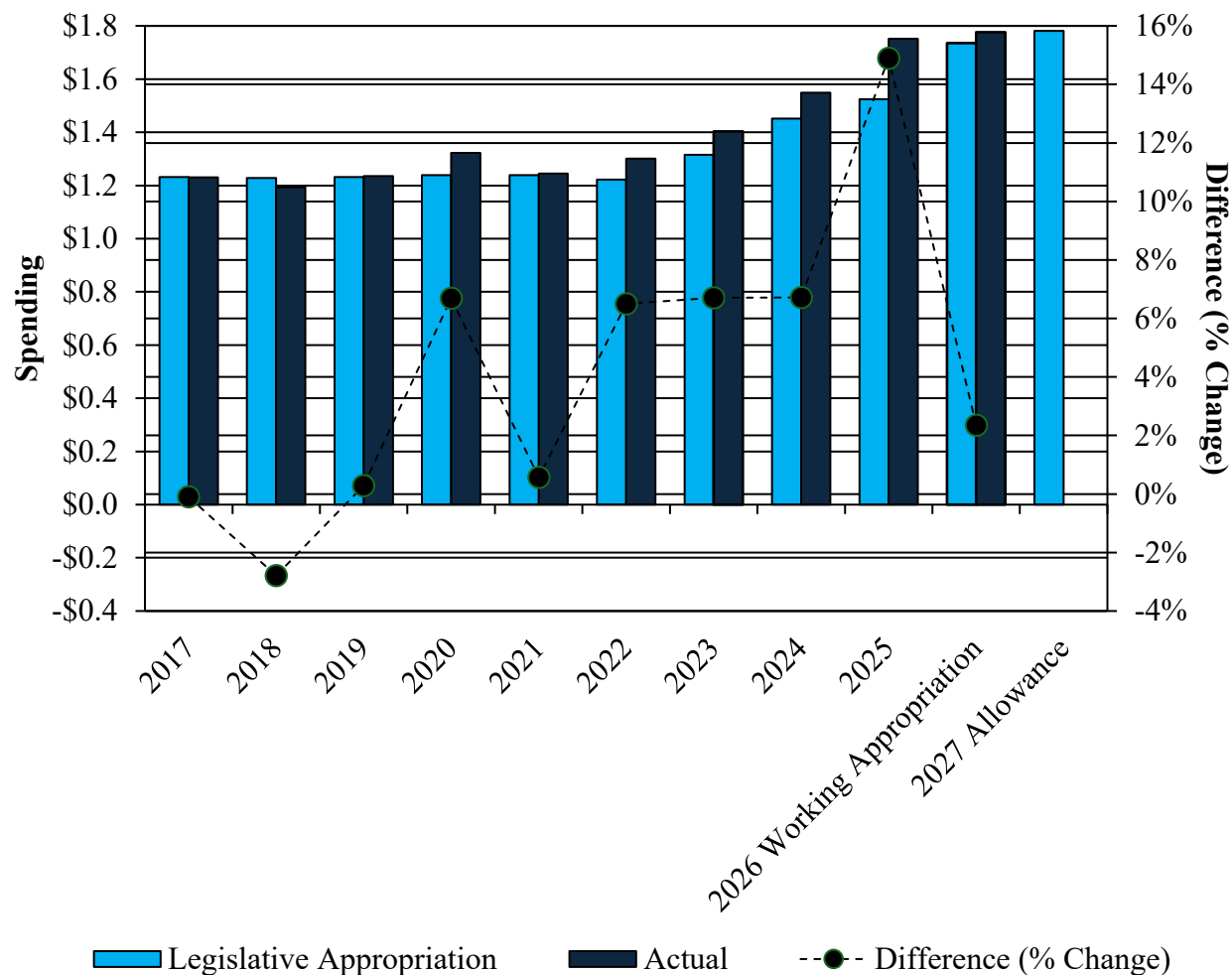
On September 29, 2025, the department announced the planned closure of MCI-J, a medium security facility built in 1981. In fiscal 2025, MCI-J had an ADP of 707 incarcerated individuals and 308 authorized positions. DPSCS described the reason for the closure as the degradation of the facility due to water penetration. The closure is expected to be completed by the end of fiscal 2026.

Incarcerated individuals will be transferred in phases to several facilities based on security classification. The fiscal 2027 allowance transfers all 305 authorized positions to Jessup Correctional Institution (JCI). Additionally, \$18.6 million in nonpersonnel operating expenses are transferred out of the MCI-J budget, including \$11.8 million in health care services; \$1.8 million in food and dietary equipment; and \$2.1 million in other supplies, equipment, utilities, maintenance, and fuel supporting fiscal 2026 operations. Remaining expenditures at the MCI-J facility in fiscal 2027 include \$496,000 in fuel and utilities and \$579,000 in Maryland Environmental Service charges. The department indicated that all non-personnel expenses from MCI-J are transferred to JCI, ECI, Maryland Correctional Institution – Hagerstown, and Maryland Correctional Training Center. When accounting for the funding realignment to other facilities and excluding fiscal 2025 expenses from the fiscal 2026 budget, the fiscal 2027 allowance for correctional facilities increases by a net total of just under \$7 million.

Fiscal 2027 General Fund Expenses Increase by 0.2%

Exhibit 9 shows DPSCS general fund actual spending compared to the respective legislative appropriation each year since fiscal 2017. In the COVID-19 pandemic years, particularly fiscal 2020 through 2022, large one-time federal and special fund swaps were beneficial for the department. During those years, salary costs that would have otherwise been covered by general funds were supported by other fund sources. Thus, the data is adjusted for those years to include the expenses that are covered by general funds before and after the COVID-19 pandemic. From fiscal 2022 onward, general fund spending accelerated due to salary increases, significant overtime expenses, inflationary pressures, and increased inmate medical and mental health care costs. Additionally, actual spending has exceeded the legislative appropriation in all years shown except fiscal 2017 and 2018. The fiscal 2026 working appropriation is higher than the legislative appropriation mainly due to several deficiencies covering lower than expected vacancy savings.

Exhibit 9
Appropriated Versus Actual Spending – General Funds
Fiscal 2017-2027 Allowance
(\$ in Billions)



Note: The fiscal 2023 amounts exclude the effect of a one-time fund swap of \$350 million in general funds for federal funds. The fiscal 2024 amounts exclude the effect of a one-time fund swap of \$20 million in general funds for special funds. The fiscal 2026 working appropriation accounts for deficiencies. The fiscal 2027 statewide salary adjustments are centrally budgeted in the Department of Budget and Management and are not included in this agency's budget.

Source: Governor's Budget Books, Fiscal 2017-2027

Personnel Data

	FY 25	FY 26	FY 27	FY 26-27
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Working</u>	<u>Allowance</u>	<u>Change</u>
Regular Positions	9,217.4	9,199.40	9,199.40	0.00
Contractual FTEs	<u>53.89</u>	<u>119.1</u>	<u>86.61</u>	<u>-32.49</u>
Total Personnel	9,271.29	9,318.5	9,286.01	-32.49

Vacancy Data: Regular Positions

Turnover and Necessary Vacancies, Excluding New Positions	864.74	9.40%
Positions and Percentage Vacant as of 12/31/2025	765.1	8.32%

Vacancies Below Turnover	99.64
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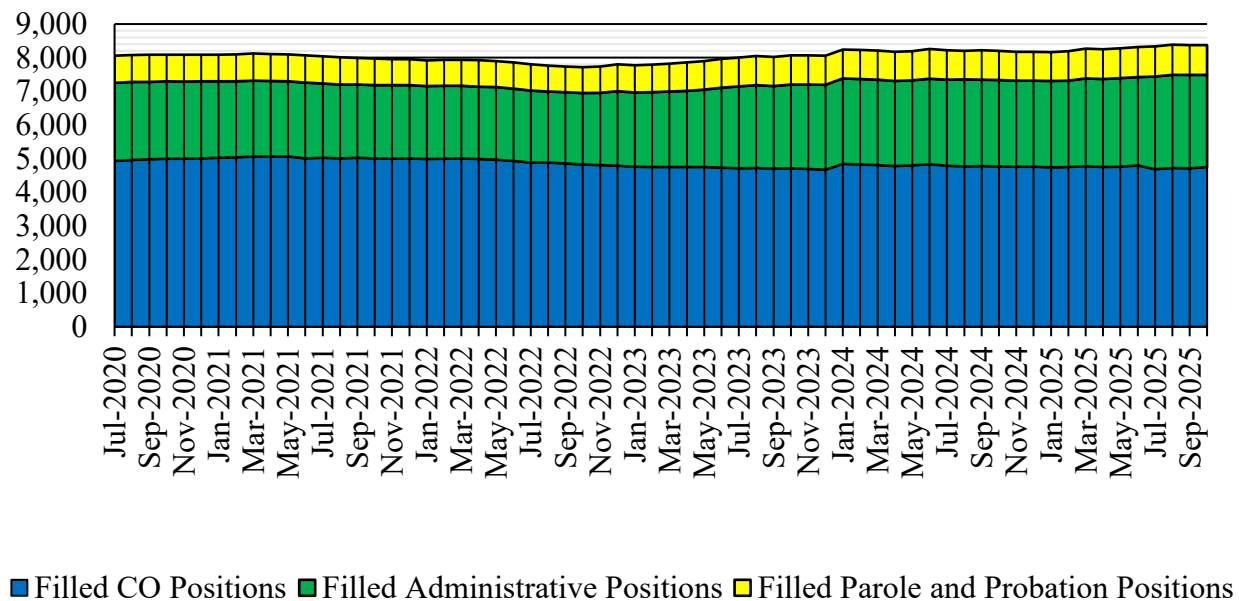
- In October 2025, BPW approved the abolition of 502.7 positions statewide, including 170.7 vacant positions and 332.0 positions associated with the Voluntary Separation Program (VSP). There were 35 positions abolished in DPSCS, all of which were due to the VSP.
- As of December 31, 2025, vacancy reports indicated that DPSCS had 765.1 vacant positions. However, this appears to be a data error as DPSCS reported 859.5 vacant positions in October 2025. Even at the October 2025 level of vacancies, DPSCS showed an improvement of 159.9 fewer vacancies compared to October 2024. As a result, the fiscal 2027 budget includes proposed deficiency appropriations totaling \$17.5 million to reduce the turnover expectancy in fiscal 2026 to account for lower-than-anticipated vacancies. Additionally, the budgeted turnover rate in the fiscal 2027 allowance decreases further to 9.4%. DPSCS's recent vacancy experience reported in October 2025 would be 5.24 vacant positions below the 864.74 necessary vacancies to meet budgeted turnover in the fiscal 2027 allowance.

Issues

1. Filled CO Positions Plateaus

In line with the recent decrease in vacant positions, DPSCS reported improvements in the overall number of filled positions in calendar 2025 year to date, though notably the number of filled CO positions remained largely flat. **Exhibit 10** shows the number of departmentwide filled positions from July 2020 to October 2025. Community supervision agents (also known as parole and probation agents) saw modest increases in filled positions. In October 2025, the department employed 887 community supervision agents, which is an increase of 27 community supervision agents from October 2024 and an increase of 21 agents from October 2023. Additionally, there have been improvements in the number of administrative positions filled. There was a total of 2,736.9 administrative staff in October 2025, which is an increase of 166.9 over October 2024, and a 241.6 increase over October 2023. Administrative staff refers to any position other than CO or community supervision agent and consists of a broad range of roles such as dietary officers, case management staff, psychologists, social workers, detectives and IT specialists.

Exhibit 10
DPSCS Filled Positions by Employee Classification
July 2020 to October 2025



CO: correctional officer

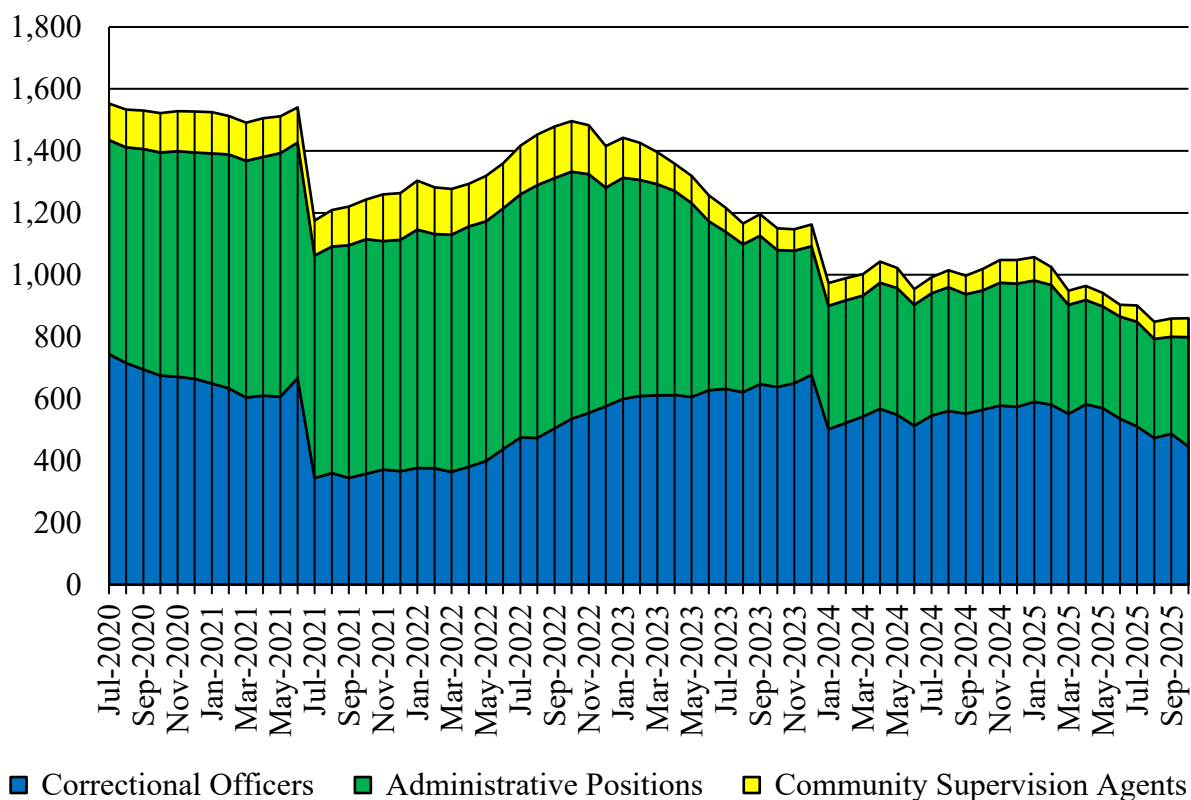
DPSCS: Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

Source: Department of Budget and Management

Vacancies and Abolishments

Exhibit 11 shows DPSCS vacancies since July 2020. It should be noted that changes in the number of authorized positions can make it difficult to compare vacancies across fiscal years. From fiscal 2021 to 2026, the number of authorized CO positions was reduced by 170, while the total number of authorized positions in the department grew by 18. Much of the CO reduction and transfers were related to the inability of the department to fill those positions. The abolished positions brought the budget closer in line with actual staffing levels, as increasing vacancies in the past led to large savings that were transferred to other areas of the department instead of being used to hire employees. Vacancies, as of October 16, 2025, stand at 446 for COs (8.6%), 352.5 for administrative positions (11.5%), and 61 for community supervision agents (6.4%).

Exhibit 11
Departmentwide Vacant Positions by Employee Classification
July 2020 to October 2025

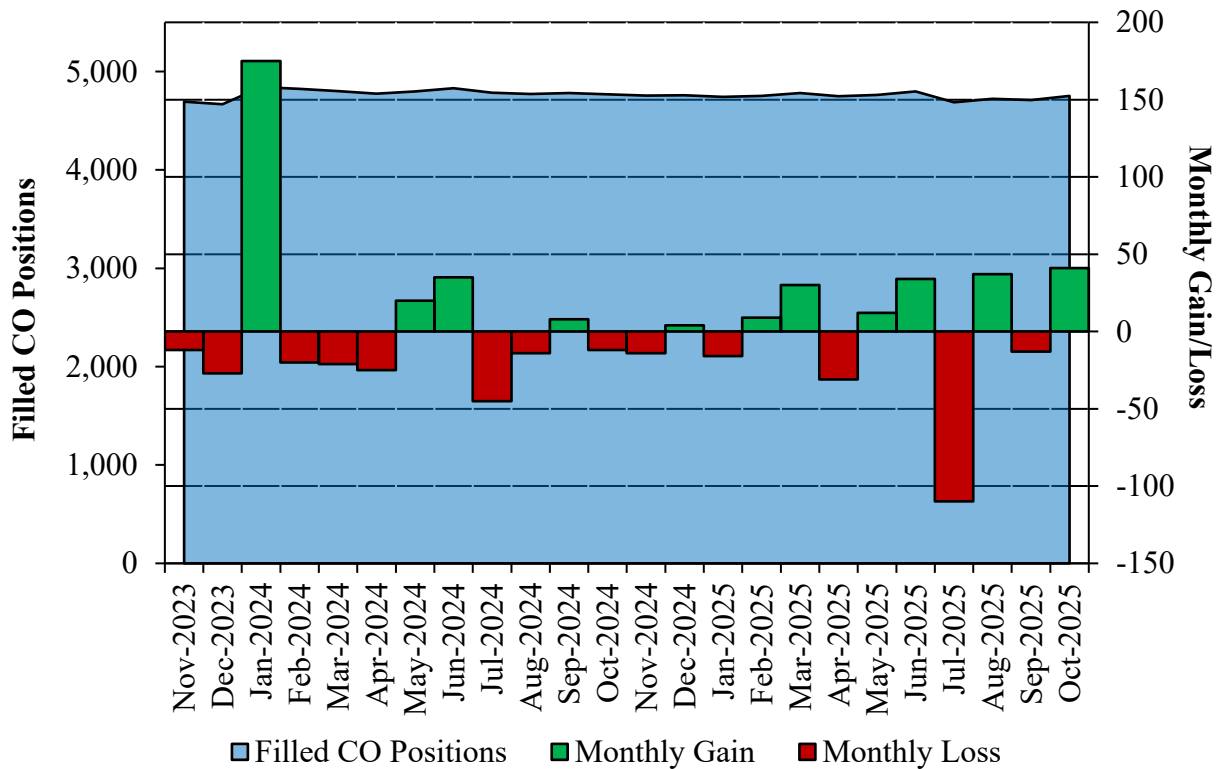


Source: Department of Budget and Management

Filled CO Positions

Exhibit 12 shows filled CO positions and the monthly gain or loss in positions based on vacancy data provided by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM). In October 2025, DPSCS employed 4,751 COs, which is 17 fewer than in October 2024 and 45 more than in October 2023. Since November 2023, the department has seen net gains of COs in 11 out of 24 months. Staffing levels for COs are critical for the operations and safety of the department because it directly supervises incarcerated individuals. Insufficient CO staffing can limit programming for incarcerated individuals, increase security concerns, and reduce the emphasis on rehabilitation.

Exhibit 12
Correctional Officer Filled Positions
November 2023 through October 2025



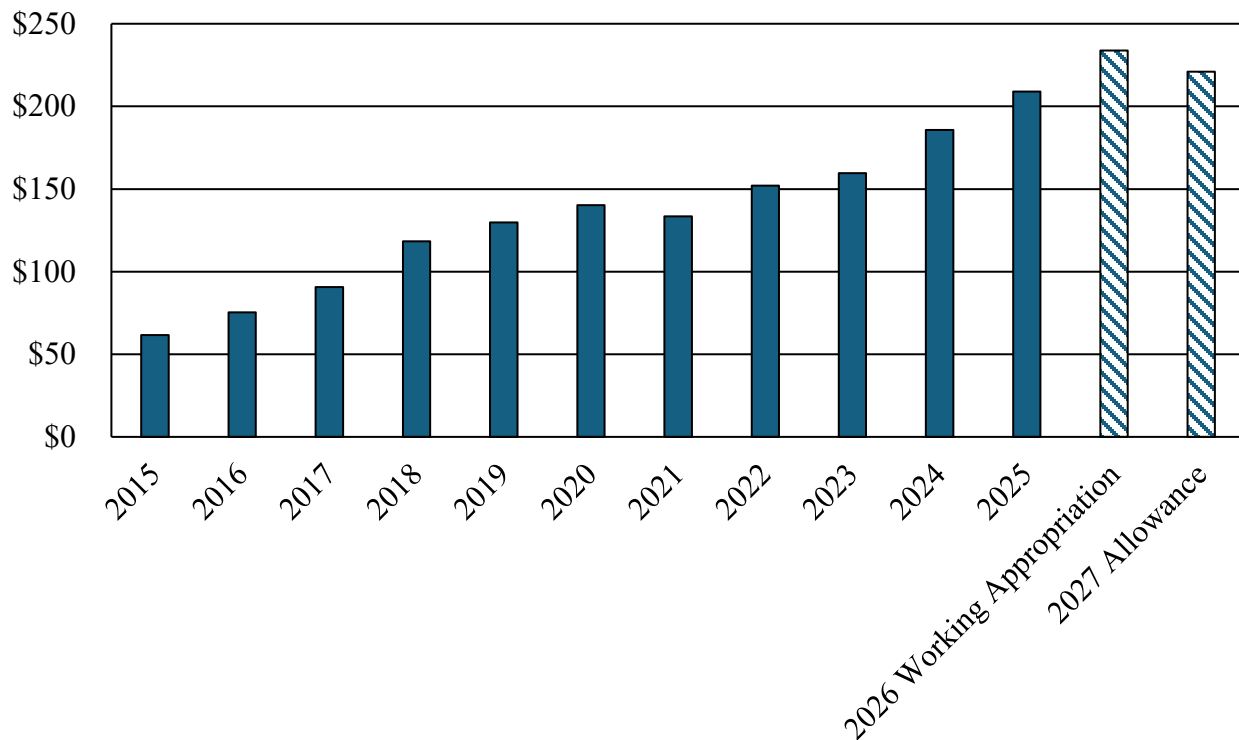
CO: correctional officer

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

Impacts of Vacancies on Overtime

Language in the fiscal 2026 Budget Bill withheld \$500,000 in general funds until DPSCS submitted a report with data on total and mandatory CO overtime hours worked and a plan to eliminate the use of mandatory overtime, which was submitted on October 29, 2025. **Exhibit 13** shows that the cost of overtime has maintained an upward trajectory since fiscal 2021 as vacancies, especially among COs, have remained high. In fiscal 2025, DPSCS had a total of \$217.4 million in overtime expenses, an increase of more than 50% since fiscal 2021. According to data from a report submitted by DBM on statewide overtime use, in fiscal 2025, the department had a total of 4.4 million overtime hours worked, representing 60.4% of the State’s total overtime costs. In fiscal 2025, CO II and CO sergeant positions accounted for \$191.8 million, or 53.2% of the State’s total overtime costs.

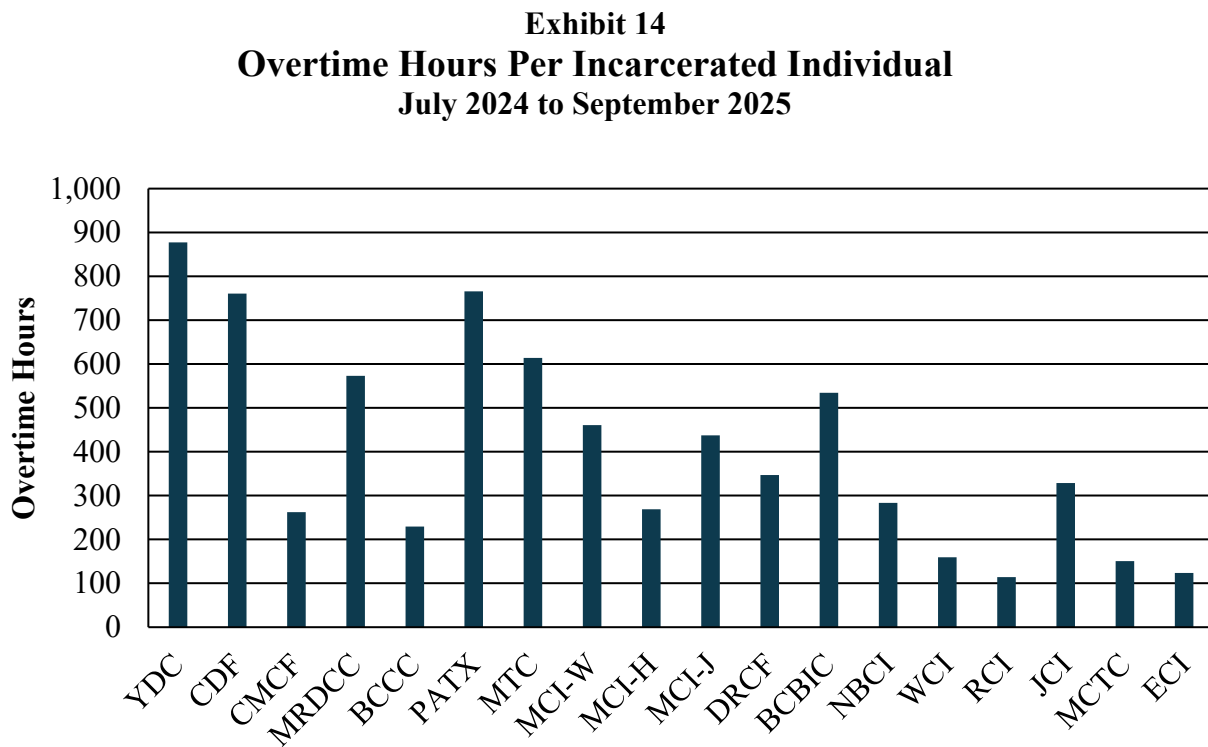
Exhibit 13
Overtime Funding
Fiscal 2015-2027 Allowance
(\$ in Millions)



Source: Governor’s Fiscal 2027 Budget Books

Overtime Spending by Facility

Exhibit 14 shows a breakdown of overtime hours per incarcerated individual for each facility from July 2024 to September 2025. The facilities are shown in order from lowest to highest ADP in fiscal 2025. Similarly sized correctional facilities have varying amounts of overtime used. For example, two of the largest facilities are JCI, which had an ADP of 1,922 incarcerated individuals in fiscal 2025, and ECI, which had 3,011 ADP. However, from July 2024 to September 2025, JCI used 632,151 hours of overtime, and ECI used 372,930 hours of overtime.



BCBIC: Baltimore Central Booking and Intake Center
 BCCC: Baltimore City Correctional Center
 CDF: Chesapeake Detention Facility
 CMCF: Central Maryland Correctional Facility
 DRCF: Dorsey Run Correctional Facility
 ECI: Eastern Correctional Institution
 JCI: Jessup Correctional Institution
 MCTC: Maryland Correctional Training Center
 MCI-H: Maryland Correctional Institution – Hagerstown

MCI-J: Maryland Correctional Institution – Jessup
 MCI-W: Maryland Correctional Institution for Women
 MRDCC: Maryland Reception, Diagnostic and Classification Center
 MTC: Metropolitan Transition Center
 NBCI: North Branch Correctional Institution
 PATX: Patuxent Institution
 RCI: Roxbury Correctional Institution
 WCI: Western Correctional Institution
 YDC: Youth Detention Center

Note: Per capita estimate based on fiscal 2025 average daily population (ADP). Facilities are shown in order of the lowest ADP to the highest ADP.

Source: Governor’s Fiscal 2027 Budget Books; Department of Budget and Management

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Mandatory overtime hours represent 3.5% of the overall overtime the department uses. From July 2024 to September 2025, DPSCS used 182,764 hours of mandatory overtime, totaling approximately \$8.2 million. North Branch Correctional Institution used the most mandatory overtime of any facility, accounting for nearly 25% of the department's total mandatory overtime hours followed, by Western Correctional Institution and BCBIC, each accounting for approximately 13%.

In the department's plan for closure of the MCI-J facility, it stated that the positions employed at MCI-J would be transferred to other facilities, partially alleviating the need to use overtime across the Jessup region. Although the fiscal 2027 allowance transfers all 305 positions at the MCI-J facility to JCI, overtime costs at JCI increase by \$3.1 million (9.2%). According to the department's MCI-J closure plan, JCI will be able to eliminate mandatory overtime; however, it anticipates the facility will need to add posts to support programming, leading to higher voluntary overtime levels. In fiscal 2027, DPSCS plans to realign vacancies so that the Dorsey Run Correctional Facility and the Maryland Correctional Institution for Women can reduce nearly all of their overtime spending (for a combined savings of \$8 million). Overall, the fiscal 2027 allowance projects that overtime expenditures decrease by \$12.8 million (or 5.8%), after accounting for deficiencies.

A biennial staffing study is required by § 3-207.1 of the Correctional Services Article. DPSCS is working with Creative Corrections to conduct a staffing analysis to identify the staffing levels at each facility needed to minimize reliance on overtime. DPSCS expected to receive the report by November 30, 2025, but did not indicate when it would be made public. The most recent staffing report was submitted in October 2022 by the Moss Group. The study suggested that approximately 2,500 more CO positions would need to be funded in order to reduce the extreme use of overtime and meet the recommended staffing levels according to the National Institute of Corrections. However, at the time, the Department of Legislative Services (DLS) raised several methodological issues with how the analysis estimated the number of COs required.

DLS determined the overtime report to be in compliance with the budget language and recommends the release of \$500,000 in general funds restricted in fiscal 2026 and will process a letter to this effect if no objections are raised by the committees during the hearings.

Additionally, DLS recommends adding budget bill language restricting \$250,000 in general funds pending a report on DPSCS's efforts to minimize the reliance on overtime, including overtime data for fiscal 2026 and 2027 year to date. The recommendation will appear in the Q00A – DPSCS – Administration analysis.

2. Staffing Shortages Persist with New Inmate Health Care Contract

On May 15, 2024, and June 5, 2024, BPW awarded contracts to Centurion to provide medical and mental health care services to correctional facilities and pretrial detention centers. The medical health care contract totals \$1.2 billion, and the mental health care contract totals \$490 million. Both contracts are for five-year terms with the option to renew for two additional

years. The expected total spending for the contracts in fiscal 2027 is approximately \$376.1 million, which is an increase of \$11.7 million, or 3.2%, from the fiscal 2026 working appropriation, after accounting for a \$25.9 million fiscal 2026 deficiency to cover fiscal 2025 shortfalls.

The previous vendor, YesCare (previously known as Corizon), received criticism for inadequate staffing, service issues, and failure to pay bills. The Office of Legislative Audits (OLA) issued a fiscal compliance audit in November 2024 that contained nine findings related to DPSCS medical and mental health contracts with YesCare during the period of April 2018 to December 2023. The audit was issued after the most recent contracts with Centurion were awarded, and there remain concerns as to whether the audit findings have been addressed in the new contracts.

Minimum Staffing Levels

OLA raised concerns about YesCare's inability to meet the contracts' minimum staffing requirements. The current contracts require Centurion to provide 909.1 full-time employees to DOC facilities and 395.3 full-time employees to DPDS. The minimum contract staffing threshold for both divisions' facilities is 90%. As of June 2025, the contractor reported that 81% of positions at DOC facilities were filled and 87% of positions at DPDS facilities were filled. Since the contracts started in August 2024, position fill rates have improved from 60% at DOC facilities and 65% at DPDS facilities; however, they remain below the required staffing threshold after approximately 10 months. The department has not specified a timeline for staffing levels to reach 90%. Furthermore, the department has stated that Centurion has been unable to produce auditable staffing reports every month, indicating that DPSCS has been unable to verify the staffing levels that Centurion reports.

Further, OLA's findings raised concerns about the previous contractor paying below-market rates to medical professionals, noting the impact of noncompetitive pay on recruitment and retention efforts. DPSCS reported that it is utilizing a U.S. Department of Labor index to ensure the contractor's salaries are at the seventy-fifth percentile. Additionally, the DPSCS Office of Clinical Services has held weekly meetings on recruitment efforts with Centurion, including the use of temporary medical professionals to meet the staffing needs.

The department has assessed the contractor liquidated damages for failing to meet the thresholds laid out in the contract, primarily due to being unable to meet staffing levels. From February to June 2025, the department collected \$11.8 million in liquidated damages from Centurion's invoice payments. Over that time period, liquidated damages decreased each month as staffing rates improved. Of the total liquidated damages, just under \$11.7 million was related to staffing levels.

Medical Examinations

OLA found that the department did not adequately oversee the previous health care contractor to ensure medical-related complaints filed by incarcerated individuals were resolved in a timely manner. The department audited Centurion's response to grievances and Administrative

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Remedy Procedures (ARP) complaints filed by incarcerated individuals to determine if they were responded to promptly or at all. ARP is a formal process that allows incarcerated individuals to issue complaints regarding the conditions of their confinement. From February to August 2025, the department reviewed 1,257 grievances, and ARP and found that 34.8% were not responded to in a timely manner or no response was provided at all (a total of 438 grievances and ARP). DPSCS assessed Centurion \$109,150 in liquidated damages for the complaints that did not receive a timely response. The department reported that it has dedicated personnel to perform audits of grievances from incarcerated individuals.

DPSCS policy requires that individuals brought into custody undergo a medical intake exam within two hours and receive medical and mental health exams within a week. OLA noted that DPSCS failed to ensure that its previous contractor completed the exams within the required timeframes and noted that hundreds of exams were not completed at all. DPSCS responded to OLA that, as of April 2022, it was conducting monthly audits of medical intake exams, physical exams, and mental health intake exams to ensure that the contractor is in compliance with contract requirements.

DLS recommends adding budget bill language restricting \$250,000 in general funds pending a report on DPSCS’s oversight of the inmate health care contract, including its results from audits of staffing, pay rates, and medical examinations. The recommendation will appear in the Q00A – DPSCS – Administration analysis.

Updates

1. Justice Reinvestment Act Implementation Update

The Justice Reinvestment Act (JRA) of 2016 (Chapter 515) is one of the State’s primary statutes addressing criminal justice reform. The JRA includes policy changes designed to reduce prison populations and correctional spending and reinvest the savings in programs that reduce recidivism. The JRA took effect October 1, 2017, and as a result, has produced seven years of data as well as significant changes in sentencing, parole, and treatment options for offenders. **Exhibit 15** displays each of the major JRA provisions, definitions, and results.

Exhibit 15
Justice Reinvestment Act – Status Updates
October 2017 to October 2025

	<u>Results</u>	<u>Average 2018-2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>Total (All Years)</u>
Administrative Release: Allows inmates convicted of certain nonviolent offenses to be released on parole after serving one-fourth of their sentence. Victims are notified of the early release and can request a regular parole hearing.	Screened	474	155	23	3,023
	Ineligible	364	21	17	2,221
	Eligible	104	42	16	682
Geriatric Parole: Offenders age 60 and up who were sentenced under § 14-101 of the Criminal Law Article (and convicted of more than one violent crime and have served at least 15 years) can petition for geriatric parole.	Screened	7	0	0	41
	Ineligible	7	0	0	40
	Eligible	<1	0	0	1
Medical Parole: Inmates or their advocates can petition to be released if they are chronically debilitated or incapacitated and are physically incapable of presenting a danger to society. The Governor has 180 days to deny any approved request.	Screened	95	45	27	570
	Eligible	24	16	15	156
	Deceased	4	3	2	28
	Denied	67	29	12	414

	<u>Results</u>	<u>Average 2018-2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>Total (All Years)</u>
Division of Parole and Probation (DPP) Graduated Sanctions: DPP supervision agents use a matrix to determine the proper sanction against an offender who has violated parole. Noncustodial (nonjail) sanctions are considered. Revocation caps limit the length of incarceration time imposed for violations of parole or probation to 15, 30, or 45 days, respectively, for the first, second, and third violation. Technical violations do not involve arrest, summons, or willfully evading parole/probation supervision.	Received Sanctions	1,134	931	756	8,488
Diminution Credits: Expands offender eligibility to earn diminution credits, how many credits can be earned, and for what reasons.	Received Credits	438	538	555	3,723
Earned Compliance Credits: The Justice Reinvestment Act allows individuals on probation and parole to earn credits to reduce their supervision and now requires DPP to automatically transfer nonviolent offenders (who have earned enough credits to satisfy their supervision term) to unsupervised probation or parole where they will not be required to report regularly or pay supervision fees.	Received Credits	44,316	46,131	46,009	358,038
Certificates of Rehabilitation: Allows nonviolent offenders to apply for a certificate of completion to restore their rights to obtain certain professional certifications.	Applied	11	1	5	69
	Denied	4	1	0	24
	Approved	7	0	3	42

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

Estimated Justice Reinvestment Act Total Cost Avoidance: \$6.1 Million

Estimating the impact of the JRA on the DPSCS budget and operations is difficult and has been stated as such in the past by the department as well as in other states and jurisdictions where similar legislation was enacted. However, because the JRA is designed to further reduce inmate populations and apply those savings (from fewer inmates), estimated cost savings can be quantified in terms of cost avoidance. In other words, as specific inmates have reduced sentence time due to JRA provisions, administrators can determine exactly how many fewer days inmates are serving and calculate the savings to the State.

In this context, variable costs are those specific costs to DPSCS that are impacted the most by a change in inmate population such as food, laundry/uniform expenses, etc. Medical care is no longer included in this calculation because the current inmate medical contract does not change with the population, causing JRA savings estimates to fall below their potential. The fiscal 2025 inmate variable cost was \$4,021 per offender per year, or \$11.02 per offender per day. Overall, DPSCS and DLS determined the following for the seventh year of JRA implementation, October 1, 2024, through September 30, 2025.

- ***Administrative Release:*** Resulted in 5,791 fewer days served by inmates.
- ***Diminution Credits:*** 20,020 fewer days served.
- ***Medical Parole:*** 25,603 fewer days served.
- ***Total Days Avoided:*** 51,414 fewer days served.
- ***ADP Avoidance:*** 141 fewer inmates in custody on an average day.
- ***Fiscal 2025 JRA Direct Cost Avoidance:*** \$566,401

The fiscal 2027 allowance for the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy includes \$11.8 million in grant funding through the Performance Incentive Grant Fund. This fund supports State, local, and nonprofit projects that reduce Maryland's State and local incarcerated population through appropriate diversion, deflection, service provision, and recidivism reduction resources. The office calculates the amount budgeted each year by multiplying the total cumulative reduction in the State correctional population since October 2017 by the variable inmate cost.

Appendix 1

2025 Joint Chairmen’s Report Responses from Agency

The 2025 *Joint Chairmen’s Report* (JCR) requested that DPSCS prepare three reports. Electronic copies of the full JCR responses can be found on the DLS Library website.

- ***Overtime Strategic Plan Report:*** DPSCS’s overtime spending continues to increase and makes up a large share of statewide overtime. The report provides data on and reasoning for the use of mandatory overtime. Additionally, the report includes the amount and cost of overtime by correctional facility. From July 2024 to September 2025, the department reported a total of 5.2 million hours of overtime. Further discussion can be found in Issue 1 of this overview.
- ***Health Care Contract Structure and Oversight:*** Language in the fiscal 2026 Budget Bill restricted \$500,000 in general funds pending the submission of a report on the structure and oversight of the inmate medical contract. The department indicated that it is enforcing its new health care contract through monthly audits, invoice reviews, and liquidated damages. DPSCS reported on the staffing fill rate, which has improved but is still below the threshold provided in the contract. Further discussion can be found in Issue 2 of this overview. The withheld general funds were released on December 18, 2025.
- ***JRA Report:*** DPSCS provided an update on the implementation of the JRA, including the number of offenders petitioning and approved for JRA provisions and the annual JRA cost avoidance estimate. In fiscal 2025, the JRA resulted in 141 fewer inmate years served and resulted in \$566,401 in direct cost avoidance. Further information regarding the JRA can be found in the Updates section of this overview.