



Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

Office of the Secretary

6776 Reisterstown Road, Baltimore, Maryland 21215
410-585-3346 – TOLL FREE 877-379-8636 • www.dpscs.maryland.gov

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Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services
Overview - Q00
Fiscal Year 2024 Operating Budget
Response to Department of Legislative Services Analysis

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
Public Safety, Transportation and Environment Subcommittee
Senator Sarah K. Elfreth, Chair
January 27, 2023

Appropriations Committee
Public Safety and Administration Subcommittee
Delegate Tony Bridges, Chair
February 1, 2023

Vacancies/Hiring

Issue: DPSCS should brief the committees on hiring goals for fiscal 2024 and beyond to minimize or eliminate the need for mandatory overtime.

Response:

All Positions

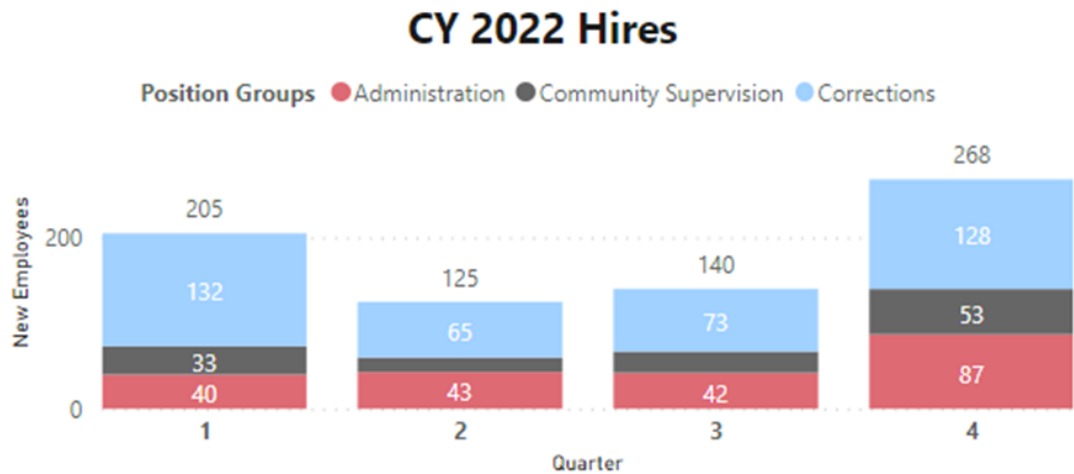
Between October 2022 and December 2022, the Department received 2,167 applications for all positions. Applications for Correctional Officer I positions¹ represented 30.4% of all applications received during this quarter. In this same period, the Recruitment Unit participated in 38 employment and outreach events across Maryland and neighboring states in an effort to expand its applicant pool. By leveraging social media recruitment through Indeed and other online job posting sites, the Department continues to expand its capacity to reach a broader applicant pool.

Through the incorporation of social media, including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, the Department is able to share recruitment information and messages from employees and leadership that highlight a wide range of career opportunities. The incorporation of technology into recruitment

¹ Total application metrics do not include freename candidates (Reinstatements, Transfers, DORS, etc.)

materials, such as QR codes, allows interested applicants to be linked directly to the job application portal, JobAps, or other candidate specific documents. An established Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with the Maryland State Ad Agency (MSAA) has expanded the Department’s capacity to reach a diverse workforce using multi-media platforms, such as radio, television, billboards, and printed advertisements. The Department is seeing significant interest in employment opportunities from job seekers who engage with HRSD through recruitments posted on Indeed, Glassdoor, and LinkedIn. MSAA continues to assist DPSCS with developing a strategic marketing plan to address current staffing challenges.

Following improvements in hiring for community supervision in the first quarter of Calendar Year (CY) 2022, the Department has continued its improvement of hiring for administrative positions and community supervision positions in the fourth quarter of CY 2022. From October to December 2022, the Department hired an additional 268 new employees across all employee types as illustrated in the below graph, the highest quarter performance in 2022.



In addition to the more than doubling of the number of correctional positions filled compared to the prior quarter, the Department saw its best performance quarter of administrative hires in late 2022. This was the expected result of recruitment efforts and new job postings for administrative positions in the first two quarters of the year, followed by background and onboarding efforts in the third quarter.

Administrative Positions

The Human Resources Services Division (HRSD) identified several challenges that impact the Department’s ability to fill administrative positions, including but not limited to, low applicant response, minimally qualified candidates, the length of time to schedule selection interviews, and lack of applicant engagement. In 2021, the Department launched a Recruitment

Strategy intake to improve collaboration, develop a recruitment strategy prior to advertising the position, including a review of past recruitments for lessons learned. Through a more collaborative process with Hiring Managers, the HR Analyst has been able to develop a customized plan to attract the ideal candidate. This targeted approach is intended to increase the number of qualified candidates, particularly for hard to fill positions. As demonstrated in the CY 2022 Hires chart on page 2, the total number of Administrative positions hired in CY 2022 was 212, an increase of 51 from CY 2021.

Community Supervision

HRSD conducted recruitments for Parole and Probation Agent and Drinking Driver Monitor positions during 2022. Both recruitments have active candidates for each vacancy in the background investigation process.

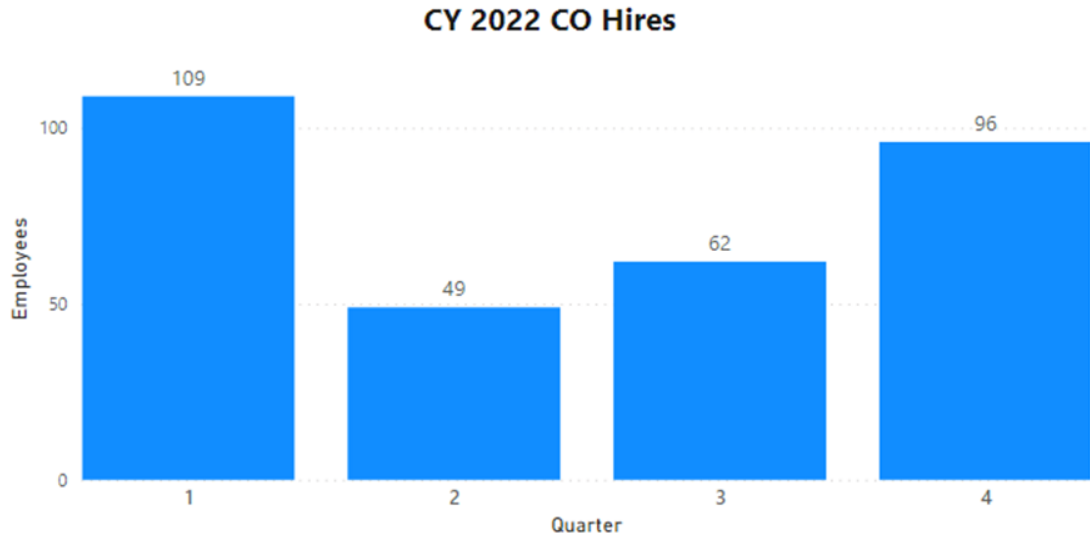
In CY 2022, there were four Parole and Probation Agent Academies with 78 new agents, an increase from 49 new agents that were hired in CY 2021. The Drinking Driving Monitor Academy also resulted in four new monitors graduating, an increase of 75% from CY 2021. A Parole and Probation Agent Academy is scheduled to start on February 1, 2023 and there are 30 Parole and Probation Agents scheduled.

Retirement Longevity Program Incentive (RLPI) for Community Supervision

On July 1, 2022, retirement eligible DPP employees in designated job classifications were able to enter the Retention and Longevity Pay Incentive (RLPI). The RLPI allows agents to enter into a 4-year continued employment agreement with DPSCS and receive three bonus payments totalling \$37,500. A total of 145 approved agents enrolled between July 1, 2022 and December 31, 2022.

Correctional Officers

Correctional executives across the country have reported unprecedented staffing shortages since the onset of the COVID pandemic, forcing departments to implement several initiatives to improve hiring. Increased salaries, hiring bonuses, and other compensatory allowances, each implemented by DPSCS, have helped to improve correctional officer hiring. In 2022, the Department hired 305 new officers into the CO I position, an additional 5 officers from other local correctional entities into CO II positions and 6 CO II rehires.



The Department’s aggressive recruitment and retention strategies have been successful for both its priority vacancies and vacancies overall, and have remained successful even during the global pandemic. The Department continues to be a competitive employer, drawing more hires from other state agencies than it loses, and drawing 8% of its hires back into state service from the private sector. In 2019 the Department implemented a program to incentivize retirement eligible correctional officers to remain in their positions. Qualifying employees may receive up to \$37,500 for working four additional years. The Retirement Longevity Program Incentive (RLPI) was expanded in 2022 to include additional correctional classifications as well as parole and probation agents and managers. Since inception, the RPLI has paid over \$14.6M to over 1,000 line-level correctional officers who were retirement eligible, indicating this is a successful retention strategy that should continue to be funded.

Evaluation of Available Program and Service Date

Issue: The Department of Legislative Services (DLS) recommends that the budget committees seek additional information from DPSCS on program and service data with the goal of tracking and encouraging participation.

Response:

The Department welcomes the opportunity to provide subject matter expertise in developing meaningful data points on correctional operations. Like many other facets of population measurement, point in time activity measures are currently available on the facility level within the Department’s centralized case management system. Facility level program engagement

can be factored into annual Managing For Results (MFR) reporting, and estimated for prior periods after FY2016 to establish a suitable pre-pandemic baseline. Additionally the Department can provide the number of distinct employment/non-employment programs available in each facility at year end in MFR reporting to demonstrate the variety of programming available by facility. These figures are currently provided in the Division of Corrections' Annual report, and as such do not include DPDS facilities.

The Justice Reinvestment Act provided meaningful incentives to the incarcerated population to engage with evidence based programming, which awards additional diminution credits. Engagement in these programs has been reported in the aforementioned 2022 Joint Chairmen's Report. Additionally, the Department routinely reports re-entry programming outcomes to inform policy development, and correctional programming partners at the Maryland Department of Labor report correctional education outcomes, such as the number of incarcerated individuals who obtain GEDs in a given fiscal year.

Management of the incarcerated population is determined by many factors independent of staffing. As the analysis addresses, the overall size of the sentenced population has decreased significantly over the past 10 years. The Department has consistently addressed the impacts of this population crunch in its prior testimony, specifically the related impact on population acuity and classification ratios.

As Maryland's criminal justice policy has been more oriented toward carceral sanctions for violent and person-based offenses since the implementation of the Justice Reinvestment Act, an increasing proportion of the sentenced population has more significant criminal histories, greater acuity, and have been assessed for correspondingly higher security classifications, which limit the variety and scale of programs available to them. Program offerings vary across institutions and it is common for incarcerated persons to transfer facilities either specifically for programming, or reflecting a change in classification status that increases their eligibility for additional program opportunities. All facilities are audited on a three year cycle by the Maryland Commission on Correctional Standards.

Recommended Action:

DLS recommends committee narrative directing DPSCS to determine which program and service statistics could be feasibly translated into participation measures reported annually for each facility. The potential measures should include, but not be limited to, the categories and applicable activities inspected during M CCS audits. For technical

purposes, this recommendation appears in the DPSCS – Administration Operating Budget analysis.

The Department will defer responding to this recommended action until it appears in the Administration Budget analysis, as stated. The Department currently reports many facility-specific data points on facility security, inmate safety, inmate food services, housing and population sizes. The Department will consider available data points and comparable measures aligned with MCCS standards to provide feasible recommendations in its response to language within the Administration budget analysis. However, these measures do not need to and cannot necessarily strictly follow the same reporting elements as MCCS audits, which involve qualitative review of paper records and site visits that cannot be emulated by review of electronic records.