



North Carolina Department of Public Safety

Prisons

Roy Cooper, Governor
Eddie M. Buffaloe, Jr., Secretary

Timothy D. Moose, Chief Deputy Secretary
Todd E. Ishee, Commissioner
Brandeshawn Harris, Assistant Commissioner

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chairs of Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety
Chairs of House Appropriations Committee on Justice and Public Safety
Chairs of Senate Appropriations Committee on Justice and Public Safety

FROM: Eddie M Buffaloe, Jr., Secretary 
Timothy D Moose, Chief Deputy Secretary 
Todd E. Ishee, Commissioner of Prisons 

RE: Reimburse Counties for Housing and Extraordinary Medical Costs for Offenders, Parolees, and Post-Release Supervisees Awaiting Transfer to State Prison System

DATE: February 7, 2022

Session Law 2021-180, Section 19C.7.

REIMBURSE COUNTIES FOR HOUSING AND EXTRAORDINARY MEDICAL EXPENSES

SECTION 19C.7. Notwithstanding G.S. 143C-6-9, the Department of Public Safety may use funds available to the Department for the 2021-2023 fiscal biennium to reimburse counties for the cost of housing convicted inmates, parolees, and post-release supervisees awaiting transfer to the State prison system, as provided in G.S. 148-29. The reimbursement may not exceed forty dollars (\$40.00) per day per prisoner awaiting transfer. Beginning October 1, 2021, the Department shall report quarterly to the chairs of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety and the chairs of the House of Representatives Appropriations Committee on Justice and Public Safety and the Senate Appropriations Committee on Justice and Public Safety on the expenditure of funds to reimburse counties for prisoners awaiting transfer.

Due to staffing shortages, and to enhance safety with the resulting shortages, Prisons in June 2018 began backlogging offenders sentenced to serve terms of incarceration in the state prison system in county jails as a means of population control. Staffing had been an issue for many years, going back to the early 2000's, and the Department of Public Safety worked tirelessly for several years with various partners to increase efforts to recruit and retain staff. Multiple changes have been made to the hiring process during the past five years, as well as the addition

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of several salary adjustments, supplemental pay increases for impacted facilities, and reclassification of position levels to improve retention have all had positive impacts.

In addition, during this time, the work environment has been enhanced by improving facility security through other means such as deployment of new equipment and technology, and modification to policies to promote operational efficiencies and security, all of which were aimed at improving staffing levels. There have also been several adjustments to staff training, adjusting basic curriculums to better prepare staff for the offender environment, and adjusting training delivery locations and methods to address employee needs. Excellent gains have been made allowing the jail backlog to be steadily and significantly decreased and even completely eliminated some months during the past fiscal year.

The continued effect of the COVID-19 pandemic and recent impact of new variants have impacted the operational ability to safely transfer offenders from county jails over the course of calendar year 2021 in order to end the jail backlog. Prisons has worked closely with the North Carolina Sheriffs Association on the backlog, taking measured steps to safely transport offenders from jails while accounting for COVID testing, outbreaks, and jail facilities placed on red status due to COVID positive cases. As vaccines became available for the facility populations in 2021, Prisons has continued to work with the Sheriffs Association to reduce the backlog with a goal of eliminating it in a safe manner.

For fourth quarter calendar year 2021, the department incurred jail backlog costs of almost \$1.9 million as detailed in the table below.

CALENDAR YEAR	MONTH	DAYS INVOICED	AMOUNT INVOICED FROM COUNTY JAIL TO DOP	BALANCE DOP TO PAY TO COUNTY JAIL	ACTUAL AMOUNT PAID BY DOP TO COUNTY JAIL
2021	October	19,595	\$783,800.00	\$306,880.00	\$476,920.00
2021	November	14,377	\$575,080.00	\$243,040.00	\$332,040.00
2021	December	12,605	\$504,200.00	\$504,200.00	\$0.00
	TOTALS:	46,577	\$1,863,080.00	\$1,054,120.00	\$808,960.00

Questions about this report should be directed to Trish Deal, Prisons Director for Administrative Services, at 984-255-6002.