



North Carolina Department of Public Safety
Prevent. Protect. Prepare.

Roy Cooper, Governor

Erik A. Hooks, Secretary

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chairs of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety

FROM: Erik A. Hooks, Secretary 
Timothy D. Moose, Chief Deputy Secretary 

RE: Prison Reform Report

DATE: May 1, 2020

Pursuant to Session Law 2019-223 Section 1.2 the Department of Public Safety (Department) shall report quarterly beginning November 1, 2019, and continuing quarterly until the end of the 2019-2021 fiscal biennium to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety on the Department's prison reform initiatives, including:

- (1) All modifications to Department rules, policies, and procedures related to disciplinary actions against correctional officers and other correctional staff.
- (2) All modifications to Department rules, policies, and procedures related to disciplinary actions against inmates.
- (3) The amount, content, quality, and frequency of staff training.
- (4) Modifications to inmate work assignments, including assessments of the appropriateness of particular work assignments based on inmate classification.
- (5) Facility infrastructure improvements made to emergency communication, location tracking capabilities, and installation of additional cameras.
- (6) Increased availability of staff personal safety equipment and institutional safety equipment.
- (7) Adequacy of staffing of prison facilities and actions taken to increase staffing levels.
- (8) Actions taken to increase retention efforts of staff.
- (9) Changes to the hiring and orientation processes and procedures for correctional officers.
- (10) Methods used to prevent delivery of contraband items of offenders, including illegal drugs and mobile phones, and an evaluation or summary of the effectiveness of the methods.
- (11) Modifications to housing capacity to meet prison staffing requirements.

OVERVIEW

The Department of Public Safety (DPS) continues its efforts to improve prison security and safety, which benefits agency employees, offenders, and the public. Corrections is a dynamic discipline and constant attention is required to stay abreast of best practices related to security enhancements, and effective offender programming.

Since being named to their respective positions Commissioner of Prisons Todd Ishee and Assistant Commissioner Brandeshawn Harris have been improving Prisons operations and organizational structure to help Prisons operate more efficiently and effectively.

Chief Deputy Secretary Moose, Commissioner Ishee, and Assistant Commissioner Harris continue to meet frequently with legislators and other stakeholders regarding Prison Reform efforts.

DPS leadership welcomes the opportunity to share its progress regarding prison reform from January 1, 2020 to March 31, 2020 in this report, and future quarterly reports. In response to the specific requirements outlined in S.L. 2019-223 Section 1.2 of the report, DPS provides the following:

(1) All modifications to Department rules, policies, and procedures related to disciplinary actions against correctional officers and other correctional staff.

Prisons continues to use the Employee Relations System (ERS), an automated centralized disciplinary/investigation system developed to track staff job performance and personal conduct issues in the workplace.

DPS continues to follow the Office of State Human Resources (OSHR) Disciplinary Action Policy, most recently revised effective Oct. 1, 2017.

(2) All modifications to Department rules, policies, and procedures related to disciplinary actions against inmates.

The Department previously reported on policy changes related to disciplinary actions against offenders who violate prison rules. As reported previously, offenders found guilty of an assault on staff resulting in serious injury will have visitation suspended for a minimum of 12 – 24 months. A review will be conducted after the initial 12 months to determine if restoration of the visitation privilege is warranted, based on the offender's behavior. Once visitation privileges are restored, only non-contact visits will be allowed for the remainder of the offender's period of incarceration. Offenders will also be placed in a Rehabilitative Diversion Unit (RDU) after serving a minimum of 12 months in restrictive housing for control purposes. Additionally, offenders will be considered for out-of-state housing, and will forfeit current and future good, earned, and merit time. As of March 31, 2020, heightened sanctions have been applied to five (5) offenders with two (2) of those offenders being transferred out of state to neighboring state's correctional agencies for long term restrictive housing.

The Department continues to review existing policies to determine if additional modifications may enhance the safety and security of facilities. Seventy-seven (77) policies have been reviewed, modified and re-issued since January 2018. This includes policy changes to the Prisons Policy and Procedure Manual, Security Manual and Health Services Manual. Policies are currently being reviewed for possible updates in preparation for American Correctional Association (ACA) accreditation.

(3) The amount, content, quality, and frequency of staff training.

Prison employees receive training on various topics throughout the year, beginning with New Employee Orientation during their first week of employment. All new correctional officers and case managers are required to attend a six-week, 220-hour Correctional Officer Basic Training (COBT) program, which is taught by Office of Staff Development and Training (OSDT) certified instructors. The COBT program was modified in 2018 and, after receiving provisional approval from the N.C. Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission (CJETS) in November 2018, OSDT began teaching the new six-week curriculum in January 2019.

In November 2019, Prisons started a revised hiring and expanded training program for newly hired certified staff. All certified staff are now required to attend and successfully complete a three-day, structured Pre-Basic Training curriculum in advance of attending COBT. During this time, these staff are engaged in various training activities that should improve their knowledge and better prepare them for their career with Prisons. Under the new program, new-hire certified staff attend COBT after completing the traditional New Employee Orientation (NEO) and the new mandatory Structured Pre-Basic Training.

For calendar year 2019, OSDT conducted 79 COBT classes with a capacity to train 2,038 new Correctional Officers. For classes scheduled to conclude December 31, 2019, 1,732 students attended COBT with 1,432 successfully completing the course.

From January 1, 2020 to March 30, 2020, OSDT began 12 classes with a capacity to train 614 students. During those three months, 28 classes graduated with a total of 477 students successfully completing basic training. In the first nine months of 2019, 973 students graduated basic training.

OSDT is preparing to deliver 40 hours of basic training to noncertified staff who have offender contact, to include medical, maintenance, and Correction Enterprises employees. The training will include topics such as situational awareness, control restraints and defensive techniques, gangs, and communication skills. This course was developed through the work of staff from across Adult Correction and is designed to increase staff safety and awareness when dealing with offenders in a correctional environment. As a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, implementation of this training has been delayed due to dedication of all available resources to COBT and Pre-Basic Training.

OSDT is currently partnering with five community colleges located near prison facilities with high vacancy rates. The goal of this partnership is to provide additional training slots for new correctional officers whose employment may otherwise be delayed pending enrollment into training in other OSDT classes. DPS Human Resources is targeting recruitment efforts near and around these facilities to help ensure enough new recruits are available to fill the newly added training slots. On an annual basis, both certified and non-certified employees complete 40 hours of in-service training on various topics such as firearms recertification, control restraints and defensive techniques, bloodborne pathogens, fire safety, and maintaining professional boundaries. In-service training for certified Prisons staff is provided by instructors at community colleges in geographic proximity to prison facilities through formal cooperative agreements. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in-service training was suspended as of March 16, 2020.

Supervisory training for front-line supervisors, mid-level managers, and prospective agency leaders is conducted by OSDT. First Steps for first-line supervisors and Peak Performance for mid-level managers are week-long courses. The Correctional Leadership Development Program (CLDP) is a year-long class designed to prepare staff for executive-level leadership in the agency, which culminates with a capstone group project. A new CLDP class began on Sept. 26, 2019 with 24 participants.

Expanding supervisory training continues to be a priority, with additional front-line supervisor and mid-level manager classes scheduled by OSDT. Seventeen (17) employees completed the pilot offering of Credible Leadership, a new online program developed in partnership with Wake Technical Community College and the International Academy of Public Safety. The course, hosted by Wake Tech, is offered at no cost for certified staff and is designed to be delivered in three phases. Ultimately, the course will help to reinforce and enhance the leadership lessons learned in traditional classroom environments. Nineteen (19) employees are enrolled in the current offering of the course.

Prisons developed and implemented a training titled “Prisons - New Managers Orientation.” This training is designed to connect new facility heads with support section contacts such as administrative services, offender classification and population management, human resources and the general counsel’s office. It is a 30-hour training conducted over four days. Since implementation in March of 2019, 18 newly promoted wardens have completed the orientation.

In addition to OSDT and Prisons management, DPS Human Resources conducts training on various topics including interviewing, mediation, and diversity. Appendix A provides a summary of training classes, hours, and number of students from January 1, 2020 to March 31, 2020.

(4) Modifications to inmate work assignments, including assessments of the appropriateness of particular work assignments based on inmate classification.

As noted in previous reports, a new policy regarding offender job assignment was approved in October 2018. The policy formalizes actions taken by the Secretary immediately following the tragedy at Pasquotank Correctional Institution, regarding assignment of offenders to Correction Enterprises and incorporates other changes.

Offenders who are qualified to fulfill the essential functions of a job and who are assigned a job may not refuse the assignment. An offender’s refusal may result in disciplinary action. The institution head may refuse an assignment to any offender based on Security Precaution Factors (SPF) or who, in the judgment of the institution head, constitutes a serious threat to the safe, secure and orderly operation of the facility.

Revisions to the Offender Assignment Manual are approved and made available to facility staff. The manual and associated forms were posted in the fall/winter of 2019. The training was scheduled for the first quarter of 2020, but has been delayed due to COVID-19. In addition, the offender custody classification instrument is being revalidated with training. Programming changes to the offender computer system are underway and an internal workgroup is developing training for staff. The training for new classification updates were planned for April 2020, but has now been delayed due COVID-19. The National Institute of Corrections provided technical assistance for the revalidation process.

(5) Facility infrastructure improvements made to emergency communication, location tracking capabilities, and installation of additional cameras.

The Department is working to upgrade its security infrastructure and technology on several fronts:

Man-Down Technology

DPS continues to work toward deployment of personal alarm “man-down” technology through Prisons’ existing radio network. The DPS Radio Communication team is upgrading Prisons’ radios to new Next Generation Digital Narrowband (NXDN) radios for a statewide trunking system to provide more secure and comprehensive coverage than the current system. A trunking radio system is a computer-controlled network that connects users to available channels.

DPS initially identified three facilities to pilot the personal alarm pinpoint “man-down” technology, and now has demonstration capability at one of those locations. Acknowledging ongoing challenges with prisons infrastructure at various facilities and the need to coordinate this effort with ongoing IT projects, the agency is shifting its focus to deployment of an emergency radio frequency communication feature by adding additional functionality to the existing radio network. There is currently physical infrastructure to support this functionality at 20 facilities.

When activated, this system will enable any radio user in a facility to trigger an emergency alarm that opens a communications channel to every other radio in the facility. As programmed, the alarm will also notify the central monitor in the Control Room of the name of the user initiating the alarm. This implementation stage does not include pinpoint location, or Asset Tracking, because that application requires Bluetooth or Wi-Fi infrastructure that is not currently available in the prison facilities. The system was slated to be operational on May 1, 2020. However, implementation has been delayed due to COVID-19.

The agency is currently testing a second model of location-based services through the use of Wi-Fi technology at one prison. Once a Wi-Fi solution is installed and demonstrated, Prison leadership will make a final determination regarding which technology and associated infrastructure best support a man-down system statewide.

Cameras

DPS Central Engineering and Prisons Facility Maintenance staff are coordinating efforts to design, purchase, and install additional high definition cameras to enhance camera surveillance within prisons. Since April 2017, nearly 2,400 cameras have been installed, including 375 between January 1, 2020 and March 31, 2020. DPS secured funding through a special \$1.5 million reallocation from the Office of State Budget and Management in January 2018, and over \$5 million in funds from the General Assembly to install more than 3,000 additional cameras. To date, approximately \$1,372,000 of the \$1.5 million allocation and \$2,980,000 of the \$5 million allocation has been spent on camera projects.

Construction began on camera projects at three sites in the first quarter of 2020. Once completed, these three sites will result in the addition of 573 cameras at a cost of \$880,000.00. An additional three projects are scheduled to begin in the second quarter of 2020 provided normal work operations resume in May 2020. These four three projects will result in the installation of 530 cameras at a cost of \$610,000.00. As reported previously, DPS is actively working on multiple strategies to install the funded cameras. DPS' installation strategy includes hiring temporary staff to work alongside maintenance staff as a force multiplier for the project. However, the state salary scale, and the demand for tradespeople in the community due to past economic growth and hurricane recovery have hampered DPS' ability to hire the needed workers.

(6) Increased availability of staff personal safety equipment and institutional safety equipment.

The agency continues to review and consider what personal and institutional safety equipment provides the greatest enhanced security to its staff.

Safety Package

Safety Package: Prisons instituted and distributed a consistent safety package including - batons, radios, and increased concentration OC pepper spray - for certified staff across all facility security levels. This includes custody staff and programs staff. Final distribution of items was completed in February 2019. Since Dec. 1, 2017, DPS have purchased more than 9,500 radios to replace old radios still in service and has ordered and additional 10,000 radios to distribute to staff. Non-certified staff such as maintenance, medical, and Correction Enterprises, was approved to carry OC pepper spray upon

completion of training. More than 4,000 non-certified staff were issued safety whistles as a method to alert other staff for assistance when no other means of communication, such as radio or telephone, is available.

Stab-resistant Vests

Prisons have provided stab resistant vests for its employees. Procurement of vests is underway and we have selected a new vest with sizing and ordering underway for replacement vests. Prisons have also provided polo style uniform shirts to custody staff at facilities that are 68% or more non-air conditioned. Staff has responded favorably to the polo style shirts which improve comfort when paired with the vest.

Tasers

A program is underway for the use of Tasers, when warranted, by custody supervisors at four close custody facilities - Maury, Scotland, Marion, and Pasquotank. Policy regarding appropriate use of Tasers is in place, and staff approved and trained to carry Tasers is equipped with this additional security tool at all four pilot locations. Prisons management has purchased and deployed 268 additional Tasers at Bertie CI, Alexander CI and Tabor CI. Tasers have been received for Southern CI, Eastern CI, Central Prison, Foothills CI, and Polk CI. Training has delayed issuance, due to COVID-19 safety precautions.

Institutional Safety Equipment

Portable towers that span 14 feet were ordered for nine (9) close and medium security facilities. The towers will improve safety and security on facility offender recreation yards and other areas as needed through an elevated, unobstructed aerial view of the area. Towers have been delivered and training is complete. The DPS Safety Office has issued safety protocols for the towers' use. Appropriate policies and trainings are under development to address the safety requirements. In May 2019, Prisons provided Naloxone (Narcan) to all 55 facilities for use by custody staff. A corresponding policy and training module were implemented to provide procedural guidelines and training related to the proper use of the medication during emergent overdose, or exposure events.

See section 5 for discussion on installation of man-down technology and additional cameras.

(7) Adequacy of staffing of prison facilities and actions taken to increase staffing.

Recruiting and retaining staff across multiple disciplines continues to present challenges for Prisons, as well as other sections within DPS and state government. The statewide vacancy rate for correctional officers was 16.0% at the end of March 2020 which is a 0.6% decrease when compared to the last quarter (October – December -16.6%) and a 3.5% decrease from the previous quarter (July – September – 19.5%). A total of 3332 Correctional Officer applications have been received during this reporting period as compared to 2995 for the same reporting period in 2019. This represents an 11% increase, despite a slight drop in the anticipated number of applications expected in March due to the Pandemic.

As explained in previous reports, employees at 13 facilities (now 12 since Tyrrell has been temporarily closed) identified as high-need facilities based on criteria set by the General Assembly, began receiving monthly salary supplements of \$208, \$416 or \$625 a month. Recruitment activities have also been increased for these facilities including a hiring event held at Polk in November. Since the start of this increased focus, the overall average vacancy rate has dropped from 30.7% in July, 2019 to 17.9% as of March 31, 2020 – a decrease of 12.8%. The most significant vacancy rate decreases have been seen at Franklin (24.1%), Polk (21.7%) and Swannanoa (19.4%).

One of the most important ways the agency tries to ensure adequate levels of staff in prisons is the daily review of offender population in relation to the number of staff at each facility. Dynamic population

management techniques are critical to identify where offender populations can be shifted to promote higher staff to offender ratios.

See section 11 for a more detailed description of offender population management strategies related to staffing levels.

Recruitment

As reported previously, a recruitment team within the DPS Human Resources office was established in March 2018 to increase recruitment of correctional officers, and to build on previous recruitment initiatives. The unit has added one additional recruiter who will focus primarily on the recruitment of currently serving military members, veterans and their family members. This is in addition to the eight full-time recruiters already deployed across the state. Recruiters have participated in more than 1270 events during the 2019 calendar. In the first quarter of 2020, (January 1 – March 31st) recruiters have participated in 423 informational, career or hiring events, however this number has been negatively impacted by the current COVID-19 pandemic which has made a significant impact on Recruiters' abilities to meet face-to-face with potential applicants. During the month of March, 55 events were cancelled or postponed for this reason. In response to these obstacles recruiters are beginning to utilize alternative recruitment methods such as: virtual career fairs, WebEx events as well as placing greater reliance on social media and other electronic platforms. A DPS-wide career fair which was scheduled to be held at Wesleyan College on March 18th was also postponed due to the pandemic. It's anticipated this event will be rescheduled for the Fall of 2020.

Recruiters have reached out to nearly 17,700 potential applicants during this reporting period to provide information on DPS job opportunities, and to assist them with the application and hiring process.

The current pandemic has led to a significant number of temporary furloughs and in some cases employee layoffs in the private sector. In response to this, the Recruitment Unit is in the process of partnering with Communications to implement a new advertising campaign to inform the public of the many career opportunities with the Department of Public Safety. A significant portion of this advertising will focus on the many Correctional Officer career opportunities. The campaign will utilize social media as well as other electronic platforms such as YouTube.

Recruiters working in conjunction with Regional Employment Office staff have developed plans for "one day hiring events." The events are held on site at high need prison facilities, or in a regional area within commuting distance of several facilities. Applicants will have the opportunity to tour a facility, ask questions, apply, interview, have background checks performed, have a psychological assessment conducted, and go to a nearby medical facility for a medical exam, drug screen and TB test - potentially, all in one day. The first of these events was held at Polk CI on Saturday, November 2, 2019 and was very successful. A subsequent event planned for Warren CI in April has been postponed due to the pandemic. Events planned for Southern and Pasquotank have also been postponed. No new dates have been established.

Recruiters continue to actively work with staff from the prison facilities to strategize and implement processes for recruitment of new correctional officers from the surrounding community. During this reporting period, 27 meetings were held between recruitment staff and Facility staff for this purpose. Career information events have been held at several prisons with the highest vacancy rates such as Polk, Columbus, Tabor, and Southern Correctional Institutions. These events engage potential applicants by providing them a tour of the facility, giving them an overview of merits of a career as a correctional officer and giving them an opportunity to apply that day.

Concentrated recruitment efforts are underway in areas of the state with the highest vacancy rates. Local advertising through the use of billboards and yard signs have been incorporated to promote

correctional officer career opportunities. In light of the current pandemic, advertising is being switched to emphasize the use of social media (Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn) along with other web-based platforms such as YouTube.

(8) Actions taken to increase retention efforts of staff.

Retention is key to stabilizing the prisons workforce. Retention initiatives include:

Implementation of legislatively enacted salary increases is anticipated to improve retention. All Prisons employees received 2.5% salary increases, effective July 1, 2020 and received five days of additional bonus leave.

In addition, employees at 13 facilities received monthly salary supplements for high-need facilities, based on criteria set by the General Assembly. Supplements for July, August and September were paid in the October 2019 paycheck. After October, supplemental payments have been made each month, paid a month in arrears.

There are three levels of salary supplements:

Level 1 Facilities - had vacancy rates of at least 20% for all positions for at least 12 months from July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2019. They will get \$2,500 per year, divided monthly in their paychecks. Those facilities are Caledonia, Caswell, Franklin, Anson, Neuse, Orange, Pasquotank, Swannanoa, and Tyrrell.

Level 2 Facilities - had vacancy rates of at least 25% for all positions for at least 12 months from July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2019. They will get \$5,000 annually, divided monthly in their paychecks. Those facilities are Bertie, Hyde, and Warren.

Level 3 Facilities - had vacancy rates of at least 30% for all positions for at least 12 months from July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2019. They will get \$7,500 annually, divided monthly in their paychecks. Polk is the only facility that qualified for that payment.

Development of Prisons Career Pathways, which includes assessing and analyzing Prisons supervisors' knowledge, skills and abilities in order to meet current and future leadership staffing needs. The project goals are to establish the prisons profession as a career of choice, to develop strategies to retain leaders, and to prepare prison staff for future promotional opportunities. Approximately 1,700 Prisons supervisors participated in a survey between August 21, 2019 and September 6, 2019 to identify leadership competencies for various of levels within the organization. Survey results will be used to develop training programs for each level of supervisor.

Improving internal communication and sharing additional information with employees is also a priority. Prisons management initiated a weekly publication called "Prisons News You Can Use" to provide regular and relevant updates to staff. The messages have been well-received and generated positive feedback.

Establishment of a Facility Enhancement Fund, from revenues generated through Correction Enterprises, to provide facilities an annual allocation ranging from \$1,000 to \$3,000 to develop programs and activities to increase morale and enhance personal and professional development among correctional employees. Some facilities are providing small commemorative items such as a North Carolina flag coaster, logo-engraved pens, and facility travel mugs or tumblers as tokens of appreciation. Feedback received from facility management is positive regarding the impact on employee morale.

Prisons has implemented of an Employee Recognition Program to honor Prisons employees for exemplary service on the job and in the community. *As noted previously, in February 2019, 12 staff received the 2018 Employee of the Year awards in various categories during a statewide recognition event.* Prisons was scheduled to present the 2020 awards during the February 2020 statewide wardens meeting, but was delayed.

Prisons developed a Field Training Officer (FTO) program to mentor new correctional officers after they complete Basic Correctional Officer Training. *See section 9 for a discussion of the FTO program.* A new program is under development, which focuses on mentoring the Correction Sergeant. The program will be titled, Field Training Sergeants Program.

Prisons developed an Integrated Behavioral Health Services (IBHS) program to address the mental health needs of employees who suffer work-related primary and secondary victimization, or stress arising out of critical incidents, or their ongoing dangerous work environment. Funded through a two-year grant from the Governor's Crime Commission, the program will employ behavioral health professionals deployed throughout the state in correctional and law enforcement settings. Total budget for the program is \$4.3 million, including federal and state funds. The program will be integrated with the current Employee Assistance Program, as well as existing DPS peer-to-peer outreach programs. The program director has been selected and has initiated program development. The program will consist of 16 licensed mental health providers and 2 case managers an administrative officer and a director. The director has met with the majority of leadership to initiate introductions and program concept. At the close of this quarter, the administrative officer and 3 clinical staff have been hired along with the director. Interviews for the case manager positions have been conducted and the selection process is underway. The second round of applications for licensed mental health provider positions has been screened and interviews are being scheduled. The IBHS program director has been working with DIT to select the electronic health record system and has developed a policy for implementing telehealth capabilities. The goal to deliver program services to employees by June 30, 2020 has been moved up as a result of the impacts of COVID-19. The IBHS will utilize telephone and secure video conferencing platforms for service delivery when face-to-face services at office locations cannot be conducted.

(9) Changes to the Hiring and orientation processes and procedures for correctional officers

Due to COVID-19, the DPS regional employment offices and prison facilities have taken measures during this timeframe to reduce the risk of exposure through social distancing efforts and PPE supplies. As noted in previous reports, the hiring process for correctional officers has been reviewed and modified many times during the last decade. This process is multi-faceted and contains many Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards (CJETS) requirements for certification as well as shared responsibilities between DPS Human Resources and Prisons facility, region, and central administration staff. The hiring process continues to be reviewed and modified. Recent changes include:

Application Process – As previously reported, consolidation of the three levels of correctional officer (CO) positions into a single posting was implemented in March 2018. This change significantly improved the application screening process by reducing duplication and processing time frames. Executive Order Number 93 was signed in April 2019, and prohibits the use of salary history in the state hiring process. As a result, the state application form was updated to make sure salary history information does not appear on new applications. The agency revised the correctional officer continuous posting to ensure prior salary information no longer appears on new applications.

Expanded Background Check – In August 2018, the agency expanded its criminal background check and employment references to align agency procedures with Criminal Justice Standards requirements, and to improve the selection process. Employment reference checks on previous criminal justice employment (corrections and law enforcement) continue to be obtained during the application

screening process to ensure eligibility for certification prior to placing applicants on an interview roster. References on previous 'non-criminal justice' employment are completed on selected candidates after the interview. Effective May 1, 2019, new procedures were implemented to standardize the requirements for references on selected candidates.

Interviews - As reported previously, facility-based CO interviews were expanded to all facilities in January 2019. This change continues to be favorably received by prison staff and prospective employees. In addition, this change has allowed prison facilities to partner with HR Recruitment and take an active role in their communities to target hiring for critical vacancies.

Pre-employment screening - The agency's contract with a third-party vendor to complete the pre-employment physical and psychological evaluations ended in April 2019. Currently, the agency contracts with medical providers statewide for pre-employment medical services, including a medical examination, drug testing and TB testing. Medical providers are conveniently located in multiple counties across the state. Additionally, a psychological screening assessment is administered to applicants at the DPS regional employment offices and proctored by trained staff. The psychological assessment program is operated under the authority of a DPS licensed psychologist who also manages the same program for applicants for certified positions in Juvenile Justice. Applicants take an on-line assessment known as a MMPI-2-RF, which is a widely used testing instrument. If, after completing the MMPI-2-RF, or based on other factors identified in the selection process, an applicant requires an in-person screening interview with a licensed psychologist or psychiatrist, the screening interview will be conducted by Cary Psychology, the agency's contract provider, which has multiple offices across the state.

An advisory committee to the Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Committee is reviewing pre-employment psychological screening standards for all sworn law enforcement and certified corrections and juvenile justice employees in North Carolina. The committee includes representative of DPS, law enforcement and psychological services professionals.

Timing of Correctional Officer Basic Training (COBT) - The agency has transitioned to an onboarding process that includes orientation training, followed by structured training and supervised work assignments in the facility until the new hire is scheduled into basic training. The new model has worked as expected to effectively speed up the hiring process and has provided new staff limited exposure to work in a prison environment prior to enrollment in basic training.

Correctional Officer Field Training Program - In April 2018, Prisons implemented the Correctional Officer Field Training Program, which pairs a new basic training graduate with a field training officer (FTO) for three weeks of facility-based "hands-on" experience before a new officer is assigned to work a post independently. This gives the new correctional officer an opportunity to apply the skills learned in training while under the direction and guidance of a seasoned officer. This program better prepares new staff with the necessary skills, qualities, and confidence to effectively meet the challenges they face daily once given a specific assignment inside the facility. As of June 30, 2019, there were 388 FTOs and approximately 2,058 new correctional officers have completed the three-week training program.

(10) Methods used to prevent delivery of contraband items to offenders, including illegal drugs and mobile phones, and an evaluation or summary of the effectiveness of the methods.

DPS is deploying technology to detect, intercept and block the use of unauthorized cell phones in the facility. Prisons is currently implementing two methods of managed access systems: stationary systems and mobile. Scotland and Maury correctional institutions both have fully operational stationary managed access systems, as of August 2019. The use of mobile managed access systems began in November 2018 and 30 assessments were completed. The assessments provided insight into the number of illicit cell phones within a facility. All information from the cell phones to include the

phone number of the device, the identification number, the number attempting to be reached, and any texts that were attempted to be sent during the scan were captured in reports from the vendor performing the assessments. This information is shared with Special Operations and Intelligence (SOIU) for evaluation. SOIU then sends its report back to Prisons to include the facility scanned for intelligence purposes in attempt to locate the phones, as well as provide any intel valuable to that facility. Prison staff and the Office of Special Operations and Intelligence collaborate on identifying which offenders may possibly be in possession of the cell phones. In addition, Prisons previously deployed Cell Sense phone detection equipment at every facility.

Other contraband detection and deterrent measures include:

A Motion Sensor Technology prototype was installed by DPS staff. The device is designed to alert with an audible and visual alarm if anyone approaches the perimeter of a facility. This technology is currently being piloted.

Additional fencing was installed at Sampson CI, Neuse CI, and Randolph CC to assist in preventing throw overs.

Central Engineering is working with vendors to conduct cost assessments for the installation of security netting at Columbus and Johnston CI.

Photocopying envelopes of non-legal mail sent to offenders. This reduces the introduction of contraband being delivered to offenders via altered envelopes.

The Division of Prisons is partnering with a vendor to pilot an electronic mail system (Text Behind) at all female facilities. All incoming mail for the female facilities will be received by the vendor and electronically forwarded to facilities to screen for content and subsequently printed and distributed to offenders. The pilot began in February 2020.

The Division of Prisons has purchased 22 desktop level detection systems that scan suspected substances for close custody facilities, drug interdiction teams and the Prison Emergency Response Teams to utilize in scanning any substance suspected of being an illegal drug/material. Eight (8) devices have been received; awaiting delivery for the remaining 14 and train the trainer courses have been completed.

Collaborating with DPS Information Technology to develop a database that will capture and document all contraband entered into the system. The database will include the type of contraband, where it was found, how it was introduced (if known), and will start an evidence tracking sheet for each piece of contraband found. Implementation occurred in mid-October 2019.

Tracking and monitoring funds received by offenders through their approved visitors' list. The JPAY and GTL Systems provide tracking of all deposits made on offender's accounts.

The agency received funding in November 2019 to procure additional hand-held metal detectors and electronic key lock boxes for select close custody facilities.

(11) Modifications to housing capacity to meet prison staffing requirements.

As previously reported, Prisons management reduced offender populations at several close and medium custody facilities over the last year, in some cases resulting in entire housing areas being taken offline, which allowed facility heads to re-deploy existing staff to other locations in the prison.

In June 2019, Prisons suspended operations at the Robeson Confinement in Response to Violation (CRV) Center, and reassigned 42 staff to enhance staffing levels at the following facilities with high

vacancy rates: Columbus CI, Harnett CI, Tabor CI, and Morrison CI. The CRV offenders were temporarily moved to Morrison CI for housing and programming. Prisons administration has continually reviewed the status of this suspension. At this time due to the continued need to enhance staffing across all prison locations, this suspension of operations will continue.

In September 2019, the agency announced plans to temporarily suspend operations at three facilities and redeploy staff to neighboring facilities to improve staffing levels. The three male minimum custody facilities to temporarily suspend operations are Hoke Correctional Institution (CI) in Scotland County, Tyrrell Prison Work Farm in Tyrrell County and Odom CI in Northampton County.

In October 2019, Prisons suspended operations at Hoke CI and reassigned 145 staff to enhance staffing levels at the following facilities with high vacancy rates: Harnett, Morrison, Scotland, Lumberton, Southern, Anson, and Sampson. The offenders were transferred to the following facilities: Neuse, Hyde, Tabor, and Bertie.

In December 2019, Prisons suspended operations at Odom CI and reassigned 125 staff to enhance staffing levels at the following facilities with high vacancy rates: Pasquotank, Bertie, Caledonia, and Warren. The offenders were transferred to the following facilities: Hyde and Caledonia.

In addition, Hyde CI has been re-missioned from a male medium/minimum custody facility to a male minimum-only custody facility. Hyde has historically been a difficult facility to staff due to its location. In addition, it is located in Hyde County which is prone to flooding during major weather events. Re-missioning Hyde to a minimum custody facility will require fewer staff to operate than a medium custody facility. Further, evacuating minimum custody offenders is safer for the community and operationally easier than doing so for higher level offenders.

In January 2020, Prisons suspended operations at Tyrrell CI and reassigned 120 staff to enhance staffing levels at the following facilities with high vacancy rates: Pasquotank, Bertie, and Hyde. The offenders were transferred to the following facilities: Hyde and Pasquotank.

The high number of staff vacancies continues to impact DPS' ability to accept new offenders who are being sentenced to serve active prison sentences through the state court system. As a result of taking housing offline due to vacancy rates in some prisons, there is a backlog of offenders in county jails awaiting transfer to the state prison system. The jail backlog remained low until the end of 2018, when numbers climbed to several hundred offenders a day awaiting transfer. The jail backlog average of unscheduled offenders was 900 during this reporting period. DPS pays counties \$40 a day for each day an offender is awaiting transfer to the state prison system.

As of this reporting period, Prisons has taken 2300 offender beds offline statewide due to severe staff shortages at eight facilities. The temporary closure of the three minimum custody facilities allowed the agency to reassign approximately 427 staff to other facilities. Overall, this measure will continue to reduce the vacancy rates. It may also provide an opportunity to reinstate a portion of the beds taken offline due to improved staffing levels.

Conclusion

COVID-19 – Active totals and current testing results can be found at www.ncdps.gov.

The Department appreciates and values the support of and collaboration with the General Assembly to fund and enact meaningful reform. Additional details regarding prison reform can be found at <https://www.ncdps.gov/prison-reform>.

Appendix A
Training Offered January 1, 2020 – March 31, 2020
Courses Managed by Office of Staff Development and Training

Course Title	Course Description	Total Classroom Sessions Completed	Training Hours	Total Completions (*Note 1)
OSDT - Basic Correctional Officer Training	This is the 220.5-hour (6 week) basic training program for Correctional Officers and Case Managers.	12	220.5	226
NCDPS - Fire Safety (Classroom Only) (In-Service)	This training is equivalent to the online training course for all certified and non-certified Prisons in-service training. The purpose of Fire Safety Training is to identify the actions that should be taken by the North Carolina Department of Public Safety – Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice (NCDPS - DACJJ) personnel in the event of a fire or similar emergency situation. In addition, actions are identified which must be implemented and documented, where required, in order to maintain fire protection systems and assist in the prevention of fire on the NCDPS - DACJJ premises. The Fire Safety Training covers fire prevention, evacuation and emergency response.	24	1	799
OSDT - Staff & Offender Relations - Maintaining Professional Boundaries (Participants) (In-Service)	The purpose of this course is to provide the NCDPS – DACJJ staff with the skills and knowledge regarding maintaining professional boundaries in their relationships with offenders and juveniles.	288	2	2767
OSDT - Unlawful Workplace Harassment (UWPH) - Initial Participant Course (In-Service)	The purpose of this course is to provide the NCDPS - DACJJ employees with a clear understanding of the NCDPS' zero tolerance for unlawful workplace harassment. This is the initial training course provided to all newly hired NCDPS employees with the exception of certified staff.	67	4	327

OSDT In-Service - Controls, Restraints and Defensive Techniques (CRDT) Phase I - Annual Refresher Training	This course is designed to provide NCDPS Adult Correction officers with refresher training in Controls, Restraints and Defensive Techniques (CRDT) which helps them handle violent offenders, withstand personal attacks and work effectively in emergency situations.	141	4	1507
OSDT In-Service – Prisons /Community Corrections Block of Professional Ethics: On & Off Duty	The purpose of this course is to provide trainees with an understanding of ethics, ethical conduct and practice with making ethical decisions. This course can be used for new hire orientation and annual in-service training for all North Carolina Department of Public Safety – Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice (NCDPS - DACJJ) Sections.	150	2	1291

Course Title	Course Description	Total Classroom Sessions Completed	Training Hours	Total Completions (*Note 1)
OSDT In-Service - Unlawful Workplace Harassment (UWPH) - Refresher Course for NCDPS - DACJJ Staff	This class provides the NCDPS - DACJJ employees with a clear understanding that the NCDPS has a zero tolerance for harassment of any kind and is committed to prevention and eliminating of all workplace harassment behavior and retaliation.	215	1	2391
In-Service-Occupational Exposure to Infectious Diseases (BBP)	The purpose of this course is to assist the NCDPS – DACJJ employees and offender workers in eliminating or minimizing occupational exposure to blood borne pathogens and tuberculosis through education and training in compliance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Rule 29 part 1910.1030, NC Tuberculosis Control Program (10ANCAC 41A.0205) and recommendations from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Every instructor tasked with teaching this course has successfully completed the eight (8) hour Occupational Exposure to Infectious Diseases (BBP) Instructor Training Program taught and coordinated by the NCDPS Safety, Occupational and Environmental Health Office located at 2020 Yonkers Road, Raleigh, NC 27604, 919-716-3590.	148	2	992
Prisons- OC Pepper Spray (SOP Refresher) (In-Service)	The purpose of this course is to provide Prisons personnel with a review of Pepper Spray (Oleoresin Capsicum), its chemical make-up, its correct application, legal considerations of application, first aid procedures for OC exposure and decontamination procedures.	149	2	1644
Prisons In-Service - Expandable / Rigid Baton: Refresher	The purpose of this course is to provide the employee with a review of all skills learned during the Expandable / Rigid Baton: initial training or Correctional Officer basic training. This course will also review the escalation of trauma chart as well as the Prisons Use of Force Policy. This lesson plan will also cover the basic drawing techniques for use with the Monadnock Expandable / Rigid Baton for facilities which still use equipment.	124	4	1511
Prisons In-Service - Fire Safety (822 Part III)	This training is designed to refresh each employee on the basics of using fire extinguishers to put out a fire.	98	1	409

Prisons In-Service - Prison Emergencies: Prevention and Response (822 Part II)	The purpose of this course is to prepare correctional staff to deal with prison emergencies in a safe, effective and lawful manner.	268	2	2279
Prisons In-Service - Safe Search Practices (816-B)	The purpose of this course is to provide correctional employees with a comprehensive understanding of safe searching techniques as well as providing them with the necessary skills to conduct searches on offenders and searches within a facility.	127	2	1489

Court Title	Course Description	Total Classroom Sessions Completed	Training Hours	Total Completions (*Note 1)
Prisons In-Service - Security Risk Groups within Adult Correction	The purpose of this course is to present Division of Adult Correction personnel who have a responsibility of supervising offenders assigned to the Prisons or Community Corrections a general working knowledge of Security Risk Groups presence, origins, characteristics and identifiers used by these groups in their working environment.	158	3	1927
Prisons In-Service - Suicide Prevention / Self-Injurious Behavior	The purpose of this course is to familiarize the participant (usually a non-Mental Health staff member) with the changes in the policy, the risk factors usually present in cases of self-injury and the actions required of them in cases where the risk factors indicate preventative measures are necessary, to provide Prisons staff with a clear understanding of the Suicide Prevention Program and the causes and procedures for dealing with offenders with self-injurious behavior tendencies.	276	2	2248
Prisons In-Service Firearms - 501 Part I - Law & Policy Concerning Use Of Deadly Force	The purpose of this course is to provide the Prisons officer with a review of applicable law, department and section policy concerning the use of deadly force.	140	1	1783
Prisons In-Service Firearms - 501 Part II - Firearms Safety	The purpose of this course is to provide the Prisons officer with a review of Firearms Safety Procedures and the knowledge, skills and ability to handle firearms in a safe manner when on duty.	159	1	1909
Prisons In-Service Firearms - 501 Part III - Handgun Proficiency / Requalification Training	The purpose of this course is to review and recertify the Prisons officers annually with the standard issue handgun.	147	3	1715
Prisons In-Service Firearms - 501 Part V - Shotgun Proficiency Training	The purpose of this course is to review and recertify the Prisons officers annually with the standard issue shotgun.	149	2	1710
Prisons - Reasonable Accommodations for Inmates with Disabilities (ADA)	This course presents to the personnel of Prisons, the Reasonable Accommodations for Inmates with Disabilities Policy and Procedures.	63	1	820

Course Title	Course Description	Total Classroom Sessions Completed	Training Hours	Total Completions (*Note 1)
PREA - Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment 101	The purpose of this course is to provide the NCDPS - DACJJ employees with an understanding of their role in preventing and responding to sexual abuse and harassment. This training will provide the NCDPS staff with a clear understanding of North Carolina General Statute 14.27.7, the Prison Rape Elimination Act and the NCDPS policies relating to offender / juvenile and staff sexual abuse and harassment.	165	1	546
OSDT - Situational Awareness	This course provides correctional staff with the knowledge and skills that will assist them in improving job performance as it relates to officer safety by increasing situational awareness during the course of their daily duties.	148	4	1722
OSDT - First Steps to Supervision Leadership Course	The purpose of this course is to provide first line supervisory training to selected supervisory staff. "First Steps" is a 40-hour NCDPS - DACJJ training program for first-line supervisors, focusing on the transition from staff member to supervisor and developing the skills necessary to become a successful manager. The blocks of instruction are designed to assist supervisors in building the foundation that allows you to become a confident and effective supervisor.	3	40	66
OSDT - Peak Performance	The purpose of this course to provide mid-level management training to selected supervisory staff. "Peak Performance" is a 40-hour Department of Public Safety training program designed to provide supervisors with a solid foundation for achieving proficiency in dealing with people. Peak Performance is an adult learning course requiring workgroup dynamics, participant interaction and individualized reading/writing assignments. Classroom involvement is instructor dedicated to open discussion and forums focusing on instructors and participant's knowledge, experience and expertise.	0	40	0
	Total (from A-1 to A-4)			32,078

Courses Managed by Human Resources
(Courses are open to all Department of Public Safety employees, except where noted otherwise)

Course Title	Course Description	Total Classroom Sessions Completed	Training Hours	Total Completions (*Note 1)
DPS-HR Introduction to Disciplinary Actions & Policy	This training is to assist staff with understanding the progressive disciplinary process for dealing with employees when job-related performance and/or behavior does not meet expectations and communicated performance standards. Course Objectives: develop and enhance the knowledge and skill level of participants in the disciplinary process, demonstrate an understanding of the sequence and procedures necessary to complete a disciplinary action, understand the grievance process and participate in class activities which will assist participants in administering discipline.	4	8	28
Coaching for Leaders: Creating an Engaged Workforce	The results of coaching benefit organizations because they improve the speed of decision-making, free up management time for higher-level activities, and increase job satisfaction among team members. Leaders need to develop coaching qualities, skills and competencies that include core elements. This course will help develop skills and competencies needed to successfully coach staff to create an engaged workforce. Course Objectives: learn how a performance management culture can drive both employee and organizational success, understand the nature of coaching, know the difference between coaching and other forms of engagement, use effective techniques to maximize your employees' / team's performance and use skill practice to reinforce coaching techniques.	1	4	7
Employment Interviewing	This course is to provide the NCDPS employees designated to participate in employment interviews with appropriate laws and federal acts regarding the hiring process, legal interviews and skills needed to make the interview effective. Course Objectives: identify the key landmarks that are the basis of applicant rights, define structured interview, develop interview questions and benchmarks, use the interview guidelines DPS-Internal Policies & Procedures to conduct an interview and document interview results using DPS forms required during the interview process.	7	4	92

LAAL-S: Leading Teams for Supervisors (NCDPS)	This is a basic course for those individuals who currently have formal supervisory for frontline employees. Objectives include: Identifying the characteristics of high performing teams, explaining five dysfunctions of low performing teams; describing the four stages of team development; communicating techniques that promote constructive discussion of diverse perspectives; describing how change agents create continuous learning environments to inspire excellence.	1	8	11
LAAL-S: Managing People (NDCPS)	This is a basic course for those individuals who currently have formal supervisory responsibility for frontline employees. Objectives include: Explaining the principles & strategies of managing people and applying the skills to achieve a better work environment with increased cooperation & productivity; learning and understanding how your personality type speaks, gives and receives feedback; gaining a better understanding of employees' responses, conflicts and motivations based on their personality type; learning and implementing a simple 5-step process to conflict resolution.	1	8	2
LAAL-S: Supervisory Foundations (NCDPS)	This is the initial leadership training course for those individuals who currently have formal supervisory responsibility for frontline employees. Lead workers and those who have more informal leadership roles should attend LAAL courses for individual contributors. Course Objectives: describe the scope and responsibilities of a frontline supervisor, identify supervisory competencies and success factors, demonstrate the three steps to ethical decision making, set and maintain standards of accountability for your team, define your customer network and customer satisfaction metrics, describe how effective supervisors lead change and use a structured two-way discussion model to ensure communications are clear, efficient, results-focused and respectful.	2	16	16
NCVIP New Supervisor Performance Management Training	This course is mandatory for supervisors / managers and will provide an overview of the Performance Management / NCVIP. Detailed information will be given to allow managers to effectively manage and conduct performance evaluations. Course Objectives: cover the three Performance Management stages – WP, Interim, & APE; cover how supervisors /managers should effectively communicate with staff by using discussion tools provided in the training. Ensure employees have a clear understanding of their performance expectation & core values and the importance of	8	8	102

	documentation and feedback and ensure employees have a clear understanding of how their performance expectations & core values contribute to the agency goals /mission.			
Timesheet Training for Supervisors	The purpose of this training is to provide the knowledge and resources needed for supervisors to accurately document the attendance and absence of employees ensuring that all compensation and leave benefits are correctly administered. Course Objectives: familiarize staff with the basic steps of the time administration Process, identify the policy and laws governing attendance, absence and overtime compensation, define the methods used to document attendance and absence, identify procedures to document attendance ensuring proper credit for premium hours is applied and understand leave functions and the procedures to document absences properly.	3	8	26
DPS Equal Employment Opportunity Diversity Fundamentals	This course, as mandated by G.S. 126.16.1, is required for all state government employees who were hired, promoted or appointed to the position of supervisor or manager on or after July 1, 1991. Managers and supervisors hired, promoted or appointed prior to July 1, 1991 are strongly encouraged to attend the Institute. This course is designed with the latest information needed to help managers and supervisors understand federal and state equal employment opportunity/affirmative action laws in the context of daily work situations. The course is offered in a blended format, 3.5 hours of online training which includes a final assessment and one full day of instructor-led classroom training. Course Objectives: upon completion of this training, participants should be able to explain equal employment opportunity, affirmative action, protected classes and other concepts and principles related to EEO, understand standards courts and investigators use to determine if and when illegal discrimination has occurred in the workplace, describe federal and state laws related to EEO and the scope and responsibilities of supervisors / managers for enforcement of these laws, engage in legally defensible hiring practices, recognize, prevent and correct unlawful workplace harassment, understand employees', supervisor's and manager's rights and responsibilities with regards to upholding EEO policies and practices; create / maintain an inclusive and productive environment where all employees feel valued and respected and identify best practices for working in a diverse work	4	8	59

	environment.			
COFT – Correctional Officer Field Training	The FTO (Field Training Officer) program provides a process to motivate, guide, and support new correctional officers by providing individual professional development. This is done by pairing the new C.O. with an FTO for 120 hours (three-week period). By completing the 24-hour FTO instruction, the learner will be able to serve as a trainer, advisor, guide, and role model to new C.O.'s. Objectives include: defining the Role of an FTO; providing tools for developing integrity & making ethical decisions; identifying techniques to use for cultivating initiative and building enthusiasm; defining leadership; learning qualities of an effective leader; and assessing personal leadership skills; identifying elements of effective communication; and providing tools to aid with effective communication; identifying the benefits of a Diverse Workforce; presenting methods & techniques that FTO's use to instruct new C.O.'s to perform job related task.	4	24	69
DPS-HR VSL (Voluntary Shared Leave)	The target audience for this training is staff with the responsibility of processing voluntary shared leave applications or receiving donation forms at the Unit/Facility level. Objectives include identifying the policy, purpose, eligibility for participation, recipient & donor guidelines, and common terms utilized with VSL; showing participants how to utilize the NCDPS website to obtain VSL documents, complete VSL forms, and enter VSL into the Integrated HR Payroll System. Reviewing the VSL audit standards and the expiration process.	3	8	55

DPS – HR VSL – Online Training	This 1-hour on-line training is designed to assist you in becoming familiar with the Voluntary Shared Leave Policy and preparing you prior to attending the in-person training session. Objectives include: Policy and purpose of Voluntary Shared Leave (VSL); Eligibility for participation in VSL Program; Recipient and Donor guidelines according to policy. Defining the terms utilized with VSL; How to utilize NDCPS' Website to obtain VSL Documents; How to Complete a VSL application, worksheet and donation form; How to enter VSL in the Integrated Payroll System; explaining the VSL audit and expiration process.	20	1	20
DPS – HR Mediation for Respondent	DPS policy provides an Employee Mediation Process for employees to allow for the prompt, fair, and orderly resolution of appeals arising out of employment. The purpose of this training is to educate respondents representing the Department in the mediation process and to familiarize them of their role pertaining to the mediation process. Exec. Staff and Division Directors designate employees to serve as respondents in agency mediations. This training is required for all staff designated prior to serving as a respondent during the Appeals process. These individuals represent the agency and have been granted authority to reach an agreement on behalf of the Department to resolve an appeal. Objectives include: 1. Understand the Department of Public Safety Mediation Policy and Procedure; 2. Define the purpose of mediation; 3. Define the role of the Mediation Intake Coordinator; 4. Define the role of the respondent in the mediation process; 5. Identify the tools used to administer the mediation program; 6. Review, Discuss and Promote the mediation process and procedures	3	8	18
TOTALS		61		505

Note 1 – Includes Classroom and Online Completions