

7/3/2024

Statement from the Michigan Department of Corrections Related to Staffing

The safety of staff is the MDOC's paramount concern as we operate facilities around the state.

For several years, the Michigan Department of Corrections has faced staffing challenges in some of its communities, requiring staff to work high levels of both voluntary and mandated overtime. The Department is appreciative of the work that our staff has done during this difficult time, including working throughout the COVID-19 pandemic response.

During this period, the MDOC has been focused on recruitment and retention of staff, including advertising positions within the MDOC across multiple platforms, conducting hundreds of hiring events, improving the working environments of staff, and operating four Corrections Officer academies each year. The state has also negotiated raises totaling 18% since October of 2020 for these employees. These efforts have helped some facilities achieve staffing stability, while other sites continue to face staffing challenges. As of the MDOC's last report to the Legislature in April, the vacancy level at facilities ranged between 4.3% and 36.3% for officers. Half of the MDOC's prisons are now operating with vacancies under 15% and 8 facilities have a vacancy rate at 5% or below.

In addition to recruitment, the MDOC has responded to the challenges staffing presents at sites by allowing previously certified officers to voluntarily work overtime in that role, closing housing units at prisons with above average staffing vacancies to reduce daily staffing needs, and other operational changes.

The situation facing MDOC staff continues to be challenging, but the solution is not a temporary measure such as bringing in National Guard members who have not been trained to operate in

this environment. The Department and other stakeholders need to remain focused on efforts that can stabilize staffing in the long-term, including promoting the benefits of a career in Corrections. These include having an active role in keeping their communities safe, serving in a role that can change lives, and the ability to reach annual maximum pay of \$68,500 after just 3 and a half years of service as an Officer, which will become effective on October 1st .

We thank staff for their many sacrifices over the last several years and will remain focused on bringing more talented members to the MDOC team to stabilize staffing at all facilities.