

## 2024 Gouverneur and Riverview Correctional Facilities Summary and Facts

For over three decades, the Gouverneur and Riverview Correctional Facilities have provided some of the most comprehensive, creative, and safest services within the entire DOCCS system, resulting in:

- **Safe, secure** facilities
- High American Correctional Association accreditation scores
- Low **Unusual Incident Rates**, fair treatment, successful vocational programs, and well-established and successful programs and regional relationships
- **A number of vocational programs** to assist to prepare the incarcerated for fulfilling, productive lives upon their release
- **Low-cost locations** in communities that stepped up when New York State needed prisons
- **No potential for adaptive reuse** of the facilities
- An area of the state with a **history of attracting DOCCS workforce and corrections officers**

**Closing facilities that are in low-cost areas where DOCCS employees overwhelmingly transfer to, as opposed to from, is neither efficient nor sustainable. The continued closing of facilities in the North Country will ultimately result in DOCCS having to pay higher salaries, more overtime and increased training and retention costs, all of which will add up to higher costs for New York State.**

### Superior Academic Programs at Gouverneur and Riverview Correctional Facilities

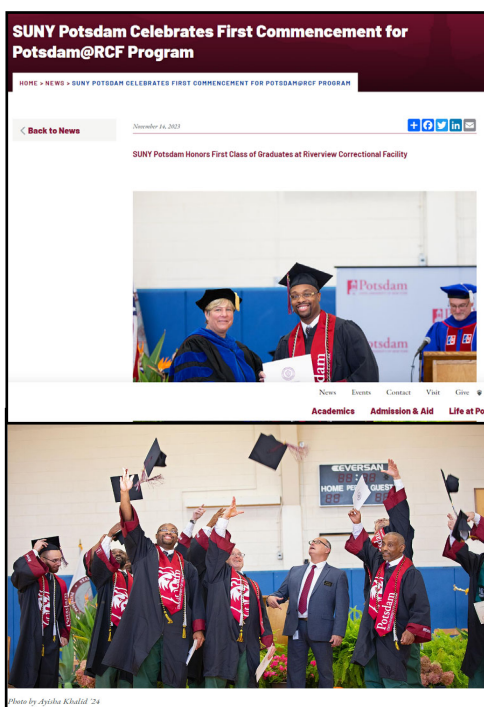
*Adult Basic Education* – instruction in basic skills preparing the student for re-entry into the community.

*Pre-High School Equivalency/HSE Curriculum* – outlines the skills and content areas to prepare students for the GED (General Education Diploma) exam.

*ESL (English as a Second Language)* – designed to provide incarcerated individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP) the opportunity to understand and communicate fluently in English, achieve functional literacy, learn basic English life skills to function in society, and learn basic English writing skills to meet social and employment needs.

*Cell Study* – the program extends a wide range of academic opportunities to incarcerated individuals who are confined or unavailable to participate in traditional academic programs.

*College* – Gouverneur Correctional Facility, in conjunction with SUNY Jefferson, offers college courses to qualified incarcerated individuals, Riverview Correctional offers programs through SUNY Potsdam.



**The facilities in Gouverneur and Ogdensburg have long been leaders in creative programming and leveraging local resources to serve the incarcerated population.**

As an example, in **October** SUNY Potsdam celebrated its inaugural Commencement ceremony for graduates in its degree completion program located at Riverview Correctional Facility.

*“Even though the SUNY Potsdam at Riverview program is relatively new, our two organizations have long been closely connected: We are both important economic engines for the North Country. There are families (and some households) that have members who work at Riverview and at Potsdam, and many of the staff and administration at Riverview have degrees (in some cases, several degrees) from SUNY Potsdam,” said President Dr. Suzanne Smith. “And just as our pasts are tied together, so are our futures... both SUNY Potsdam and Riverview are committed to the continued success of this program, as are, I’m pleased to say, SUNY Higher Education in Prison and DOCCS.”*

## Valuable Vocational Programs at Gouverneur and Riverview Correctional Facilities

Vocational programs offered at GCF and RCF offer the opportunity to learn a trade from qualified instructors with nationally recognized, standardized, portable and competency-based processes include:

Building Maintenance	CDL (Commercial Driver's License)	Custodial Maintenance
Electrical Trades	Floor Covering	General Business
Horticulture	Masonry	Welding

In addition to academic and vocational programming, **therapeutic programming services** offered at Gouverneur and Riverview Correctional Facilities include Transitional Services, Alcohol and Substance Abuse Treatment, Aggression Replacement Training, Trauma, Addictions, Mental Health, and Recovery, Strategies for Parenting from Prison and Beyond, Veterans Residential Program, and Video Visitation.

**Specialized programs like the Canine Training Program at the Gouverneur Correctional Facility, a partnership with a local shelter and a certified canine trainer, provide the incarcerated population opportunities to develop skills to increase successful re-entry into the community.**

## The Impact of closing DOCCS facilities in St. Lawrence County

Closing the Ogdensburg Correctional Facility resulted in the loss of 268 jobs and a \$25 million payroll in a County with a current unemployment rate that is 18% higher than the New York State average and over 48% higher than the US average according to the NYS Department of Labor ([State Labor Department Releases Preliminary December 2023 Area Unemployment Rates \(ny.gov\)](https://www.labor.ny.gov/newsroom/state-labor-department-releases-preliminary-december-2023-area-unemployment-rates)).

According to multipliers identified in a Cornell University Department of Agricultural, Resource, and Managerial Economics Report "Economic Multipliers and the New York State Economy" ([http://aem.cornell.edu/faculty\\_sites/nlb4/publications/pirlu/vol9n2.pdf](http://aem.cornell.edu/faculty_sites/nlb4/publications/pirlu/vol9n2.pdf)), government jobs fall into a category with an income multiplier of 1.42 and a job multiplier of 1.33.

**Using these multipliers, with approximately 375 jobs and a payroll of approximately \$30 million, closing an additional correctional facility in St. Lawrence County would have a total direct and indirect impact (this includes the lost jobs and wages at the facility) on the local economy of:**

- 500 jobs lost, and
- over \$40 million in lost payroll

**It is clear that the already suffering economy in St. Lawrence County and the local region cannot absorb losses of this magnitude and cannot absorb the impact of an additional prison closure.**

The closure of the Ogdensburg Correctional added **525,000 square feet of vacant New York State-owned space to over 500,000 square feet of abandoned State-owned space** that was once part of the St. Lawrence Psychiatric Center. Many of these buildings have been unused for decades and demonstrate the lack of potential for redevelopment in the area.

The North Country has already felt the negative impact of the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision previous closure decisions. These decisions, like the current proposal, have demonstrated no reuse of the facilities and the impact on the affected local communities.

**As of this time the following facilities have already been closed in the North Country:**

- Camp Gabriels (2009)
- Lyon Mountain Correctional Facility (2011)
- Chateaugay Correctional Facility (2014)
- Clinton Correctional Facility Annex (2021)
- Watertown Correctional Facility (2021)
- Moriah Shock Facility (2022)
- Ogdensburg Correctional Facility (2022)



- DOCCS has closed 7 facilities in the North Country in the past 15 years
- Not even one of these facilities has been repurposed, sold, or redeveloped
- Closing more facilities in the economically distressed North Country, with hundreds of thousands of square feet of New York State already sitting vacant