

**Virginia Department of Corrections:
2022 Special Session I
Effectiveness of Targeted Salary Increases
for Corrections Officer Personnel**



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Effectiveness of Targeted Salary Increases for Corrections Officer Personnel

Introduction

This report has been prepared in response to the 2022 Special Session I, Virginia Acts of Assembly, Chapter 2 Item 402 O.2. This section of the Appropriations Act requires the Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC) to report on the effectiveness of the targeted salary increases for corrections officer personnel implemented on July 10, 2022. The report will identify and analyze specific measures of effectiveness that indicate the degree to which these salary adjustments reduced the number of vacancies. The report will also review ongoing efforts implemented to recruit and retain qualified and diverse corrections officer personnel. The report containing such data and information is required to be submitted to the Governor, the Chairs of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance and Appropriation Committees, the Director of the Department of Human Resources Management, and the Director of the Department of Planning and Budget by October 15, 2023.

The Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC) is a nationally and internationally recognized leader in corrections that provides long-term public safety to the Commonwealth. Corrections Officers are frontline public safety workers for the Commonwealth, supervising approximately 24,598 incarcerated inmates daily as of August 31, 2023. Corrections Officers play a critical role in promoting lasting public safety and helping people to be better. As of August 31, 2023, the Corrections Officer series consists of **5,566** employees serving at correctional facilities across the Commonwealth. These employees include:

- 4,457 Correctional Officers
- 561 Sergeants
- 391 Lieutenants
- 111 Captains
- 45 Majors
- 1 Lieutenant Colonel

As one of the largest segments of the Commonwealth's workforce, these public safety employees operate 26 Majors Institutions, 8 Field Units, 6 Community Corrections Alternative Program (CCAP) facilities, 5 Work Centers, and 2 Secure Hospital Units.

Summary: Challenge and Response

In accordance with Chapter 1, Virginia Acts of Assembly, 2021 Special Session II, a VADOC workgroup reported on significant workforce challenges for the Corrections Officer personnel. As reported in the findings of the workgroup, staffing was at critical levels, which jeopardizes our ability to sustain safe and secure conditions in our facilities as well as sound treatment practices that favorably impact community reintegration.

The VADOC must ensure our employees are able to carry out their duties in a safe, secure, and healthy environment. Secondly, we must ensure our inmates, probationers, and parolees receive the evidence-based care, programming and supervision that leads to successful reentry in the



community resulting in long-term public safety. High vacancy rates trigger a vicious cycle of overtime, absenteeism, turnover, reduced health, safety, and work life balance. This impacts our ability to provide secure environments inside our correctional facilities and communities. Without a qualified, trained security workforce, it is not feasible to safely offer programming and services associated with recidivism reduction. Unsuccessful reentry results in increased victims, decreased public safety, and more families without appropriate support systems.

Based on the identified challenges, targeted salary increases were approved and subsequently implemented for corrections officer personnel on July 10, 2022. The appropriated funding allowed the VADOC to increase minimum salaries and address salary compression issues for Corrections Officers, Sergeants, Captains, Lieutenants, and Majors. The goals of these compensation actions were to reverse the vacancy driven cycle, foster workforce stability, and retain the expertise of our security workforce, ensuring that Virginia continues to benefit from having one of the lowest recidivism rates in the nation.

Measures of Effectiveness

Security Staff Salaries

The increase to the minimum salary, along with compression adjustments assisted the Agency to address pay equity issues and disparities among security staff and supervisors.

Working Title	June 2022 Minimums	June 2022 Averages	July 2022 Minimums	June 2023 Minimums	June 2023 Averages
Corrections Officer	\$35,064	\$39,849	\$42,000	\$44,100	\$46,812
Sergeant	\$40,347	\$44,847	\$46,400	\$48,720	\$53,489
Lieutenant	\$44,382	\$50,005	\$51,240	\$53,802	\$60,117
Captain	\$48,821	\$55,936	\$56,564	\$59,392	\$66,444
Major	\$53,703	\$63,014	\$62,420	\$65,541	\$73,961

As a result of the targeted salary increases implemented July 10, 2022, Corrections Officers received:

- Adjustment to new minimum salary of \$42,000 (if current salary was below new minimum)
- Compression adjustment of \$300 or \$600 based on years of continuous state service
- Longevity adjustment of \$50 or \$100 per year based on years of continuous state service capped at 30 years
- Across the board increase of 5%, if the combination of the increases above was less than 7.5%, otherwise a 2.5% increase

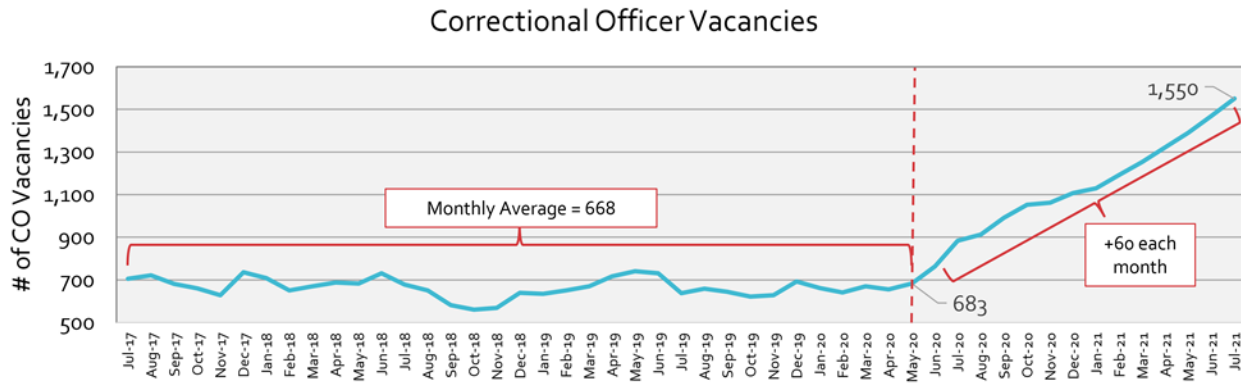
As a result of the targeted salary increases implemented July 10, 2022, Security Supervisors received:

- Adjustment to new minimum salary for the role (if current salary was below new minimum)
- Compression adjustment of \$1,500 for those with 3 or more years of service
- Longevity adjustment of \$100 per year of continuous state service capped at 30 years with 3 or more years of service
- Across the board increase of 5%, if the combination of the increases above was less than 7.5%, otherwise a 2.5% increase



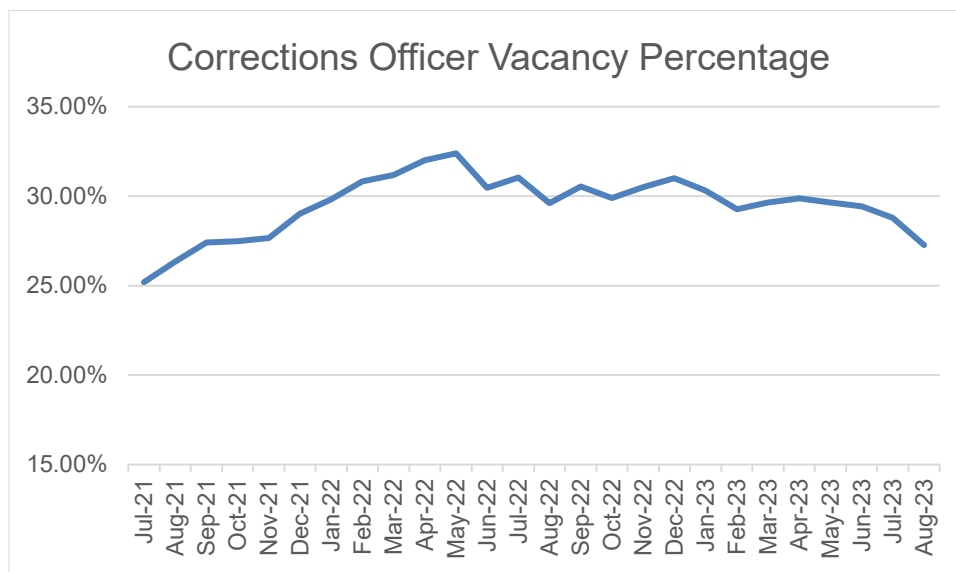
Vacancies

The FY23 targeted increases were supported in part due to the notable rise in Corrections Officer vacancies as seen in the chart below for the period of July 2017 through July 2021.



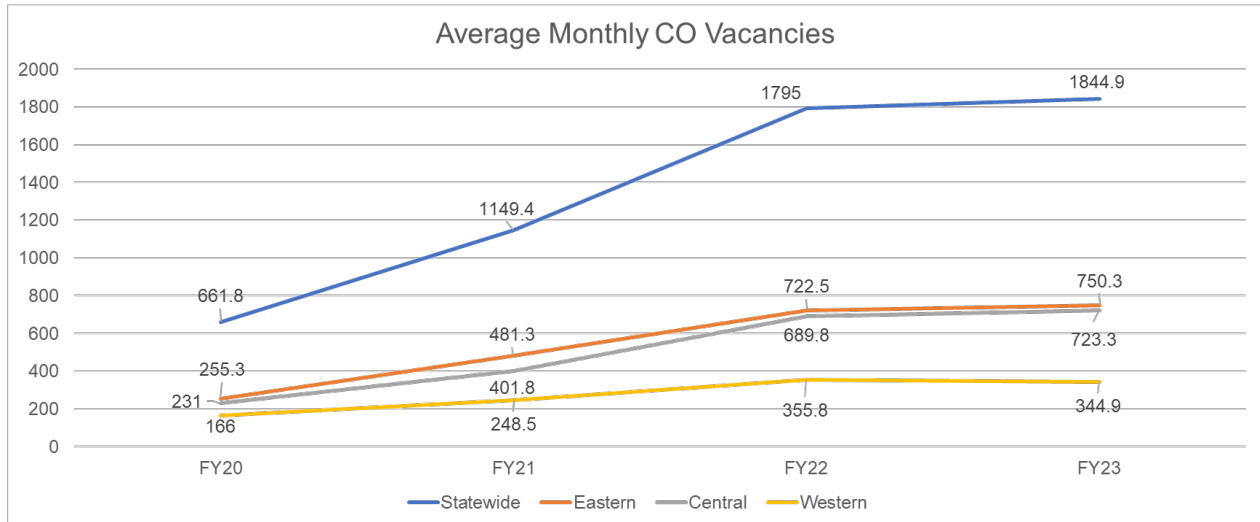
As compared to the previous chart, CO Vacancies have now leveled off. The number of CO vacancies have decreased since June of 2022 from 1,941 to 1,670 in August of 2023 (the height was May 2022 with 1,989 vacancies). While vacancies have begun to decrease after plateauing, they continue to pose a substantial challenge.

The rate of unfilled Corrections Officer positions experienced a swift increase from 25.2% to a peak of 32.4% prior to the FY23 targeted increases. Following the salary increases in July 2022, the vacancy rate has stabilized, consistently hovering around the 30% mark. Vacancies have reached a plateau, yet they continue to pose a substantial challenge.



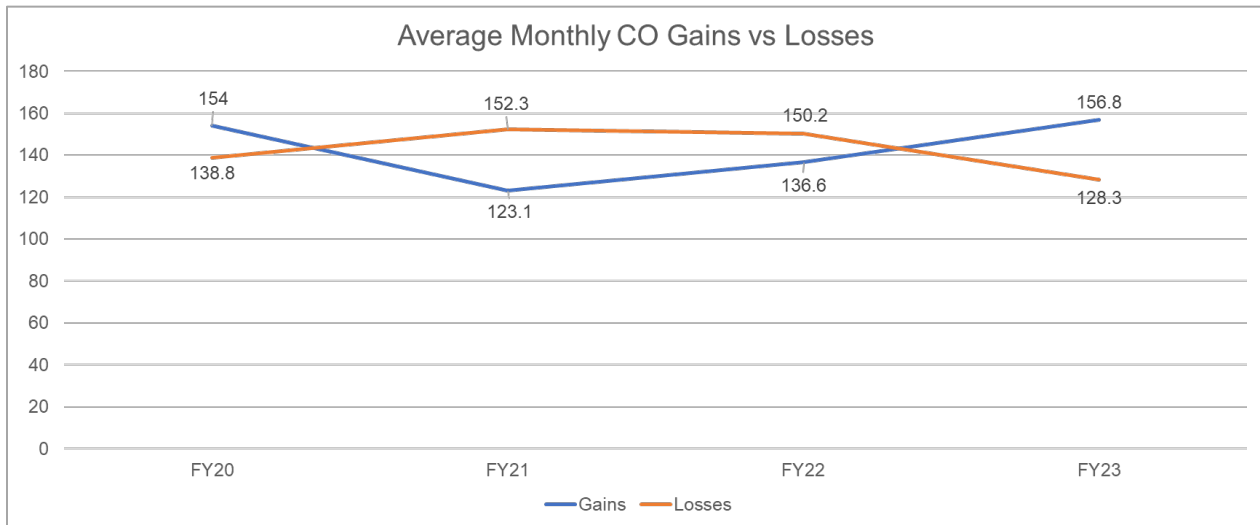


The chart below shows the average monthly CO vacancies by fiscal year.



It should be noted the Eastern Region, Central Region and one facility in the Western Region are the significant factors in the average monthly Corrections Officer vacancies increasing over time.

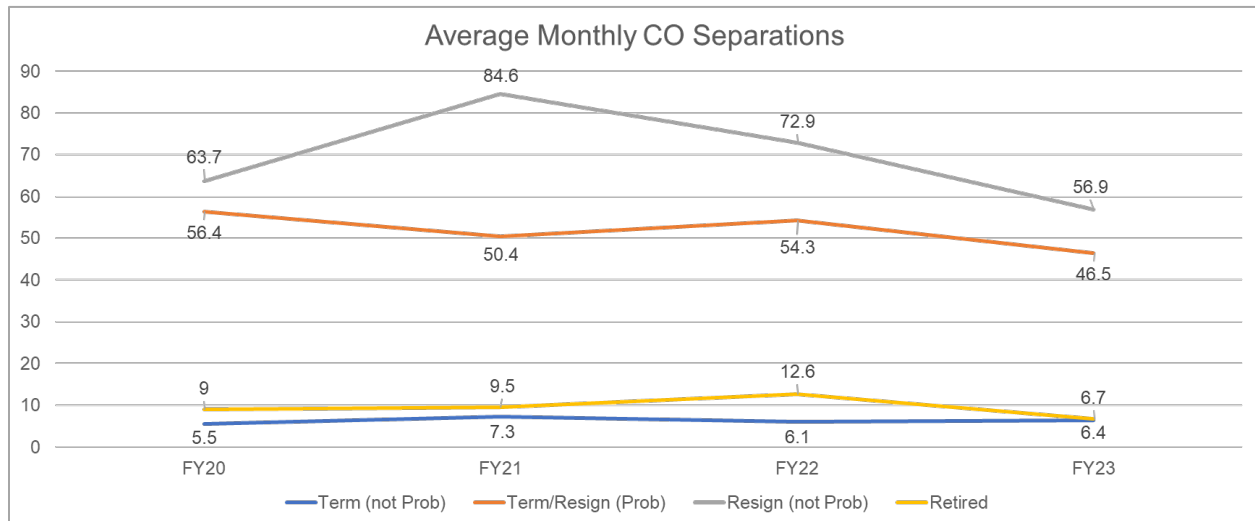
The chart below shows the average monthly gains and losses of Corrections Officers.



The number of gains (including new hires and rehires) decreased during FY21 and FY22. However, the average gains in FY23 surpassed those in FY20, representing a noteworthy improvement. The data followed a similar pattern for losses (including separations, resignations, terminations, and retirements).



The chart below depicts the average monthly CO separations by fiscal year.



Various factors play a role in separations. VADOC has been monitoring different types of separations, including Terminations (excluding probationary period), Terminations and Resignations (occurring during probationary period), Resignations (excluding probationary period), and Retirements. The data shows a declining trend in separations during FY23 which is a notable improvement.

The chart below confirms the data in the line charts above:

Average Monthly CO Vacancies	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Statewide VADOC	661.8	1149.4	1795.0	1844.9
Eastern Region	255.3	481.3	722.5	750.3
Central Region	231.0	401.8	689.8	723.3
Western Region	166.0	248.5	355.8	344.9
Average Monthly CO Gains/Losses	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
CO Gains	154.0	123.1	136.6	156.8
CO Losses	138.8	152.3	150.2	128.3
Average Monthly CO Separations	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
CO Terminations outside of probationary period	5.5	7.3	6.1	6.4
CO Terminations during probationary period (Removed or Resigned)	56.4	50.4	54.3	46.5
COs who resigned outside of probationary period	63.7	84.6	72.9	56.9
COs who retired (enhanced or service)	9.0	9.5	12.6	6.7

Data Summary

The data reveals some favorable trends in VADOC vacancy and turnover metrics. The average number of gains has increased, while losses have decreased in comparison to the averages observed from FY20 and FY22. This positive shift can be attributed to the FY22 targeted salary



increases, continuous daily recruitment efforts and emphasis on retaining employees to minimize attrition. Vacancies have remained steady in the Central and Eastern regions, where intense labor market competition and higher salaries have a significant impact.

Retention / Turnover Rates

At the end of FY22 (June 2022), VADOC Corrections Officer turnover rate was 41.2%. Following the implementation of the targeted increases, VADOC has experienced an 8.5% reduction in turnover, decreasing to 37.7% in FY23.

Turnover	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Corrections Officers	31.3%	38.0%	41.2%	37.7%

Below are the primary reasons for turnover:

- Retirement
- Removal of misaligned employees
- Better pay
- Enhanced work conditions
- Less demanding job roles and schedule
- Pursuit of other law enforcement opportunities

Tenure, Retirement, and Employment Conditions

In addition to vacancies and turnover rates, we will briefly examine tenure, retirement, and the unique employment conditions faced by corrections professionals.

Tenure

The table below illustrates the average years of continuous service for employees in each security role at the end of the last two fiscal years.

Working Title	FY22	FY23	Percent Decrease
Corrections Officer	7	5	29%
Sergeant	11	9	18%
Lieutenant	16	14	13%
Captain, Major, Lieutenant Colonel	20	18	10%

The average length of tenure has declined ranging between 10% to 29%.

In 2023, a substantial 68% (32 out of 47) of facilities have 50% or more of their security staff comprised of individuals with 0-5 years of experience, marking a notable increase from 33% recorded in 2021.



Among security staff, 38% have less than 2 years of VADOC experience, demonstrating an increase from the 30% recorded in 2021 and 56% have less than 5 years of experience with VADOC, slightly surpassing the 53% from 2021.

Retirements (actual and eligible)

In addition to the alarming trends in the tenure of security staff, the VADOC has also faced a significant number of retirements.

Below is a table of security staff retirements presented by Fiscal Year:

Working Title	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Corrections Officer	111	115	141	80
Sergeant	19	18	21	12
Lieutenant	20	20	15	12
Captain	8	8	16	16
Major	1	5	3	3
Total	159	166	196	123

As of August 31, 2023, a total of 1,042 security personnel (19%) meet the criteria for VRS retirement eligibility. This eligibility is based on either a full, unreduced retirement or a retirement with reduced benefits. The main factors influencing retirement eligibility are age and length of service.

Working Title	Retirement Eligible (unreduced)	Retirement Eligible (reduced)	Total	Percent of current EEs
Corrections Officer	294	448	742	17%
Sergeant	38	78	116	21%
Lieutenant	47	92	139	36%
Captain	15	12	27	24%
Major	12	6	18	40%
Total	408	637	1,042	19%

Tenured and trained security staff are crucial for maintaining safe and secure environments. Their familiarity with protocols, procedures, inmate dynamics, and facility operations enhances their ability to make valuable contributions optimizing daily operations in our facilities. The departure of experienced staff members has repercussions on training, mentorship, and the overall efficiency of operations.



Employment Conditions:

Facilities dealing with significant turnover encounter difficulties in maintaining consistent operations. Security staff within VADOC are currently facing circumstances that can lead to job dissatisfaction. These include mandatory overtime, burnout, and decreased morale, all of which intensify job-related stress. Factors such as unplanned absences, short-term disability cases, training obligations, and existing vacancies further contribute to this challenging situation.

Other factors contribute to the challenging employment conditions in corrections such as the demanding environment, less than favorable public perception, a competitive job market, and stringent entry-level requirements. Compensation does not adequately align with the demands of the role and the absence of clear pathways for career advancement exacerbates these challenges.

Unfavorable working conditions due to staffing and turnover not only compromises the well-being of employees but also disrupts the balance between work and personal life. Ultimately, this impacts the Agency's overall ability to attract and retain Corrections Officers.

Agency Efforts to Recruit and Retain Corrections Officer Personnel

VADOC evaluates CO recruitment strategies and adjusts its approach to optimize outcomes for facilities. A diverse range of exceptional recruitment and incentive programs are being utilized to increase applicant flow and interest in these entry-level positions. VADOC uses its existing budget to fund these recruitment incentives. The Agency actively engages in recruitment efforts for Corrections Officers across the Commonwealth on a daily basis. These efforts are closely monitored, with metrics such as time to fill, source of hire, and offer acceptance rate being tracked to gauge the effectiveness of our approaches and make necessary adjustments.

The hiring process for Corrections Officers has been optimized to minimize candidate drop-off rates and waiting times, while also expediting the issuance of job offers and start dates. Apart from local efforts to recruit COs at various institutions, VADOC is organizing weekly same day hiring events across the state. On average, the CO Recruitment team takes part in three such events every week. These events, sponsored by the Department of Corrections, provide interested candidates with the opportunity to interview, complete necessary pre-employment procedures, and receive a conditional job offer all in one event. Since July 2022, VADOC has achieved significantly improved recruitment outcomes. The Agency has effectively reduced its time-to-fill, with an average of 19.7 days taken from extending a contingent offer to hire date.

The local job markets in Virginia are currently marked by intense competition for entry-level candidates. The presence of less demanding roles within more flexible work settings adds to the difficulties encountered by VADOC. As of June 30, 2023, Virginia's unemployment rate has dwindled to 2.7%. Additionally, the labor force participation rate, which gauges the percentage of individuals in the working-age bracket who are either employed or actively seeking employment, stands at 66.6% – the highest it has been in Virginia since 2013.

To address these challenges, the VADOC recruitment team is taking proactive steps to engage with passive job seekers and establish avenues to promote and showcase the appealing career prospects within VADOC.



Active Recruitment Efforts

VADOC has implemented an array of recruitment strategies that are influencing hiring success:

- Offering a \$6,000 sign-on bonus with a tenure agreement
- Offering \$2,000 employee referral bonus to existing staff for successful CO referrals
- Utilizing a mix of advertising methods, including billboard ads, media advertisements, VDOT Message boards, yard signs, radio, online and newspaper advertisements
- Engaging in outreach to connect with military veterans transitioning into civilian careers
- Enhancing job visibility through sponsoring postings on Indeed job board
- Deploying part-time, retired (wage) recruiters in facilities experiencing high vacancy rates with a specific focus on CO recruitment
- Organizing on-site same day hiring events, as well as participating in local community events, evening and weekend community events
- Collaborating with local high schools and community colleges to engage with graduating students and maintain a presence in local communities
- Partnering with local workforce development centers and engaging with displaced workers in local communities like Tyson Foods
- Conducting targeted mailings to local churches and community organizations to promote the benefits of corrections career opportunities and enhance community awareness
- Establishing Rideshare programs in the Eastern and Central Regions to facilitate transportation for potential candidates
- Extending recruitment efforts to border states such as North Carolina and West Virginia
- Hosting a virtual CO hiring event for COs
- Working to bolster a stronger online presence through VADOC website, social media platforms and professional networks to actively engage with prospective candidates

VADOC provides an attractive \$6,000 sign-on bonus to qualified new recruits who commit to a two-year tenure agreement. This bonus is distributed in two parts: \$2,000 upon commencement of employment and an additional \$4,000 after the successful conclusion of the twelve-month probationary period. During FY 23, VADOC issued a total of 958 bonus payments to Corrections Officers.

Another source for recruiting Officers is through employee referrals. During FY23, a total of 417 referral bonus payments were issued to current VADOC employees for successfully referring candidates who were subsequently hired as COs. Another significant recruitment channel is the Indeed Job Board, which VADOC utilizes to extend its reach to a more diverse and extensive audience by sponsoring CO vacancies. However, despite these sourcing endeavors, applicant pools frequently do not yield individuals who are both willing and capable of meeting the minimum position requirements, which include the following:

- Possession of a valid driver's license
- Possession of a high school diploma or GED equivalent
- Ability to possess a firearm in Virginia
- Ability to pass background check and drug testing for marijuana
- Ability to pass medical screening
- Willingness to work in prison/congregate setting with less flexibility than other employers (no cell phone, access to personal items)



- Willingness to work at relatively remote locations
- Willingness to work shifts and mandatory overtime in a 24x7 operation

VADOC has re-evaluated criteria for candidates who previously worked for VADOC and are being considered for rehire. Generally, rehired employees require a review and approval of regional management. Additionally, any candidate who has derogatory information reported on their preliminary background report requires additional review and consideration before a contingent offer is extended. Based on the current staffing levels, regional management has adopted a less stringent approach to evaluating candidates which leads to more flexibility in hiring decisions, since all new Corrections Officers serve a 12-month probationary period.

VADOC has experienced difficulties with inadequate applicant pools, hampering recruitment efforts. In the calendar year 2021, there were 5,282 applications reported for CO positions. The situation improved significantly in 2022, as VADOC saw CO applicant flow increase by 57% to reach 9,161 applications. As of August 1, 2023, VADOC has received 4,486 applications, with the implementation of a new recruitment management system (PageUp) attributing to a slight decrease in applications earlier in the current calendar year. The increase to the minimum salary is attributed to the substantial increase in applications in the last two years as well as extensive recruitment efforts.

Stabilization Efforts – Retention Bonuses

In 2018, VADOC initiated and funded incentive programs aimed at retaining security staff, with the primary goal of stabilizing the retention of Corrections Officers at sites grappling with critical staffing shortages. On September 30, 2021, Director Clarke approved the extension of the retention bonus program to cover all remaining sites, aiming to address retention concerns and enhance operational stability. Those Corrections Officers who chose to receive the retention bonus were required to sign a one-year tenure agreement. Given the ongoing challenges associated with recruitment and retention, Director Clarke authorized an additional retention bonus program on November 9, 2022, specifically for designated sites marked by persistent high vacancy rates. The existing one-year tenure agreements will expire on November 30, 2023, potentially exposing the Agency to increased turnover.

Market/Salary/Economic Outlook

While the targeted raises in FY22 and the approved 5% increase on June 10, 2023, have contributed to enhancing VADOC's competitive stance in the market, our current minimum salary of \$44,100 still falls behind that of other states and our local competitors in Virginia. According to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics, the average salary for a Corrections Officer is reported at \$54,760 as of May 2022, which is \$10,660 higher than the VADOC minimum salary. A significant number of local and regional jails in Virginia offer a higher minimum salary, and many offer additional locality pay supplements that surpass the VADOC minimum. Some local law enforcement agencies specifically recruit for VADOC security staff in their job listings, indicating their preference for our DCJS certified officers.

With the growth of new businesses expanding to Virginia, VADOC will need to consider strategies to enhance its recruitment efforts. Several new competitors are launching in areas that will directly impact VADOC's ability to attract and retain staff at facilities that are experiencing high vacancy rates. Some examples include:



- Lego Manufacturing Facility in Chesterfield will hire 500 people by the end of 2023 and will eventually employ 1,760 people. The average annual salary is expected to be \$60,000.
- Amazon Fulfillment Center in Fishersville adding 500 new jobs to Augusta County.
- Virginia MetalFab in Appomattox adding 130 new jobs during the next three years.
- World Class Distribution Center adding 745 new jobs in Caroline County.

Geographic Locations / Differences

VADOC directly competes with Regional Jails and Federal Prisons for candidates to fill positions. According to data provided by the Virginia State Compensation Board, most localities near VADOC facilities, provide a local pay supplement. The supplements range from \$1,000 to \$9,500 above the approved salary of \$42,000. The data provided did not include consideration for the recent 5% increase in July 2023.

Below is a summary of the locality supplements reported before July 2023 and the VADOC facilities impacted:

Locality	Supplement	VADOC Facilities in Proximity	CO Vacancy Rate as of 8/31/23
Buckingham Dillwyn	\$1,000	Buckingham Correctional Center Dillwyn Correctional Center	50.4% 31.1%
Chesapeake	\$9,500	St. Brides Correctional Center Indian Creek Correctional Center	22.8% 21.7%
Culpeper	\$7,777	Coffeewood Correctional Center	35.8%
Fluvanna	\$2,148	Fluvanna Correctional Center for Women	47.4%
Greensville	\$3,000	Greensville Correctional Center Greensville Work Center	53.9% 51.1%
Henrico (Goochland)	\$4,287	Beaumont Correctional Center State Farm Correctional Center/MCV State Farm Work Center Virginia Correctional Center for Women	26.1% 23.7% 40.0% 20.5%
Northern Neck (Richmond County)	\$1,050	Haynesville Correctional Center	24.1%
Nottoway/Lunenburg	\$1,000	Nottoway Correctional Center Lunenburg Correctional Center	38.3% 12.6%
Pittsylvania	\$1,935	Green Rock Correctional Center	8.5%
Sussex	\$2,361	Sussex State Prison Complex	59.4%

In August 2021, the VADOC reported on recruitment challenges and provided market data from competitors. These competitors have also increased minimum salaries, with many agencies surpassing the VADOC's advertised minimum salary. Despite the substantial targeted increases offered by the General Assembly in Fiscal Year 2023, VADOC salaries continue to lag market benchmarks, as illustrated below.



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Chadwick S. Dotson,
Director

A review of current active recruitments and websites found the following entry salary information as July 2023:

State Positions	2021 Starting Salary	2023 Starting Salary	Percent Change
Virginia Department of Corrections Corrections Officer (Band 3)	\$35,064	\$44,100	25.8%
Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice Resident Spec. I (Band 4)	\$31,021	\$41,894	41.8%
Virginia State Police Trooper (Band 4)	\$47,833	\$55,427 to \$60,970 (after probation)	15.9%
Deputy Sheriff (entry level)	Starting Salary	Starting Salary	Percent Change
Augusta	N/A	\$46,000	NA
Chesterfield	N/A	\$52,930	NA
Hanover (Bailiff)	\$50,786	\$54,205	6.7%
Henrico	\$47,266	\$52,486	11.0%
Louisa	N/A	\$51,000	NA
Richmond	\$44,000	\$46,000	4.5%
Virginia Beach (Recruit)	N/A	\$48,571	NA
Regional Jails (entry level)	Starting Salary	Starting Salary	Percent Change
Albemarle/Charlottesville Regional	N/A	\$49,782	N/A
Blue Ridge Regional	N/A	\$42,000	N/A
Central Virginia Regional	\$42,046	\$46,355	10.2%
Henrico Regional	N/A	\$46,287	N/A
Meherrin River Regional	\$40,000	\$47,250	18.1%
Middle River Regional	N/A	\$44,100 to \$46,111 after academy and 1 year	N/A
New River Regional	N/A	\$42,000 to \$43,915 after 1 year	N/A
Northern Neck Regional	\$35,362	\$43,050	21.7%
Pamunkey Regional	\$44,242	\$47,897	8.3%
Piedmont Regional	N/A	\$43,000	N/A
Rappahannock-Shenandoah- Warren Regional	\$43,443	\$45,945	5.8%
Riverside Regional	N/A	\$46,851	N/A
Southside Regional	N/A	\$45,000	N/A
Southwest Regional	N/A	\$42,000	N/A
Virginia Peninsula Regional	N/A	\$45,000	N/A
Western Tidewater Regional	\$40,719	\$45,000	10.5%
Western Virginia Regional	N/A	\$45,644	N/A
Federal Bureau of Prisons - Virginia	\$43,495	\$46,495	6.9%

Most of these job opportunities found included a sign-on bonus between \$1,000 to \$5,000.



Overall Recommendations

Action 1: Increase Funding to support Career Progression Program for Security Staff

The VADOC seeks funding to effectively launch a progressive career advancement program aimed to tackle the ongoing issues of increased vacancies and frequent employee turnover. Securing funds for this crucial aspect of a sustainable compensation strategy would contribute to maintaining consistent daily operations. This, in turn, facilitates the successful implementation of evidence-based care, programming, and supervision. The VADOC Career Progression Model introduces a competency-based method for career growth and compensation. It empowers employees to progress from the role of a Corrections Officer 1 (New Hire) to that of a Corrections Officer 4 (Master Corrections Officer). See *Appendix A & B – Career Progression Proposal and Cost Projections*.

Action 2: Increase Minimum Salaries for Security Staff

The VADOC seeks funding to increase minimum salary for Corrections Officers by \$1,900 to \$46,000/annually and provide compression adjustments for existing security staff who would be adversely impacted. \$1,900 for Corrections Officers and \$2,000 for Security Supervisors. See Appendix B – Cost Projections

Conclusion

While data and trends confirm the targeted salary increases have produced positive outcomes for the VADOC, ongoing efforts to identify strategies and secure additional funding are essential. Support for these strategies is required to effectively address the dual challenge posed by high vacancy rates and a competitive landscape, in order to maintain public safety in the Commonwealth.

Security staff play a vital role in the law enforcement community, maintaining safety and security within correctional facilities, contributing to public safety across the Commonwealth. While law enforcement officers focus on public safety in the community, corrections officers focus on public safety within correctional facilities, making them a critical component of the broader criminal justice system. Their work contributes to reducing recidivism, and helping Virginia maintain one of the lowest recidivism rates in the country. A continued investment in the largest segment of our workforce is essential to meeting our core mission, public safety.

By offering career pathways, fostering competency development and presenting opportunities for additional compensation, VADOC will be better positioned to attract, engage, and retain experienced corrections professionals to contribute to the Commonwealth's public safety efforts. Through this investment, VADOC will gain greater resilience and readiness for operational excellence with better support for all evidence-based practices and programs. This career pathway program helps people to be better and achieve their full potential.

Increased compensation for security staff has yielded favorable results on recruitment efforts. Maintaining entry level salaries that align with market standards and helps attract candidates who are more qualified and motivated for a career in public service. Funding to support an increase



in compensation can further bridge the gap between public and private sector opportunities, making it more appealing for individuals to choose a career in Corrections.



Appendix A: Career Progression Proposal

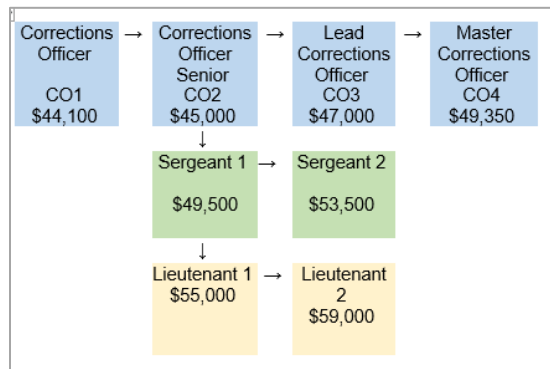
VADOC requests a funding allotment to establish and deliver a security career progression ladder. This is a critical element of a sustainable compensation program that will ensure operational excellence where evidence-based care, programming and supervision can be successfully supported. Security staff are critical resources in modeling behaviors for inmates due to their direct contact in facilities.

The program goes beyond rewarding tenure alone; it integrates essential agency requirements into each stage of advancement. Newly hired Corrections Officers (CO1) will progress to CO2 upon the successful completion of mandated training and the 12-month probationary period. The subsequent level of progression is optional and initiated by the employee. This offers an avenue for a CO2 with a minimum of two years' service to receive advanced training, apply acquired skills, and specialize in fields like Canine, Strikeforce, Intelligence, Treatment, and Field Training, stepping into the role of a Lead Officer (CO3).

The role of Master Officer (CO4) presents an opportunity for Lead Officers (CO3) to further enhance their leadership proficiencies by mentoring colleagues, assisting security supervisors, actively participating in VADOC business practices, and exemplifying VADOC values. Each tier of this proficiency-driven system comes with a specified target salary. With complete funding, 40% of VADOC's Corrections Officer workforce would consist of Lead (CO3) or Master Corrections Officer (CO4) positions.

The funding request for this initiative is not centered on a single isolated transaction, but rather on establishing an investment and dedication to offer security personnel incremental opportunities for career growth. A significant number of experts regard the possibility of advancing in their careers a primary consideration when selecting a new job. As COs specialize and acquire new proficiencies, they have the opportunity to advance in their positions, eventually reaching the rank of Master CO. This advancement would be based on their demonstrated proficiency through training, experience, and skill-related milestones. Enhancing progression would be further reinforced by highlighting leadership, supervisory, and managerial competencies, which in turn provide better support for the workforce.

This program is focused on slowing the rate of attrition through an investment aimed at retaining qualified employees who consistently make value added contributions. The career progression program is in alignment with the VADOC Strategic Plan providing staff with the necessary tools and skills to effectively realize and sustain their career goals. Security staff will benefit from a clearly outlined path for advancement, enhancing their readiness for promotional opportunities within the Agency.





Appendix B: Cost Projections

Action #1: Career Progression Program

Work Title	Position Impact	Staff Impact
Corrections Officer (CO2)	\$2,114,910	2611
Corrections Officer (CO3)	\$2,271,744	870
Corrections Officer (CO4)	\$4,112,640	870
Sergeant	\$428,175	173
Lieutenant	\$326,430	117
Total Staff Impacted		4,641
Projected Costs	Cost	Cost with Fringe
Total Cost for Supervisors	\$754,605	\$1,021,131
Total Cost for CO	\$8,499,294	\$11,501,245
Grand Total for COs & Supervisors	\$9,253,899	\$12,522,376

Action #2: Minimum Salary Increases

Work Title	Cost with Fringe	Staff Impact
Corrections Officer	\$8,911,363	3,466
Corrections Officer (SLR)	\$2,382,284	886
Security Supervisors	\$3,115,066	1,151
Total	\$14,408,714	5,503