



Department of Corrections

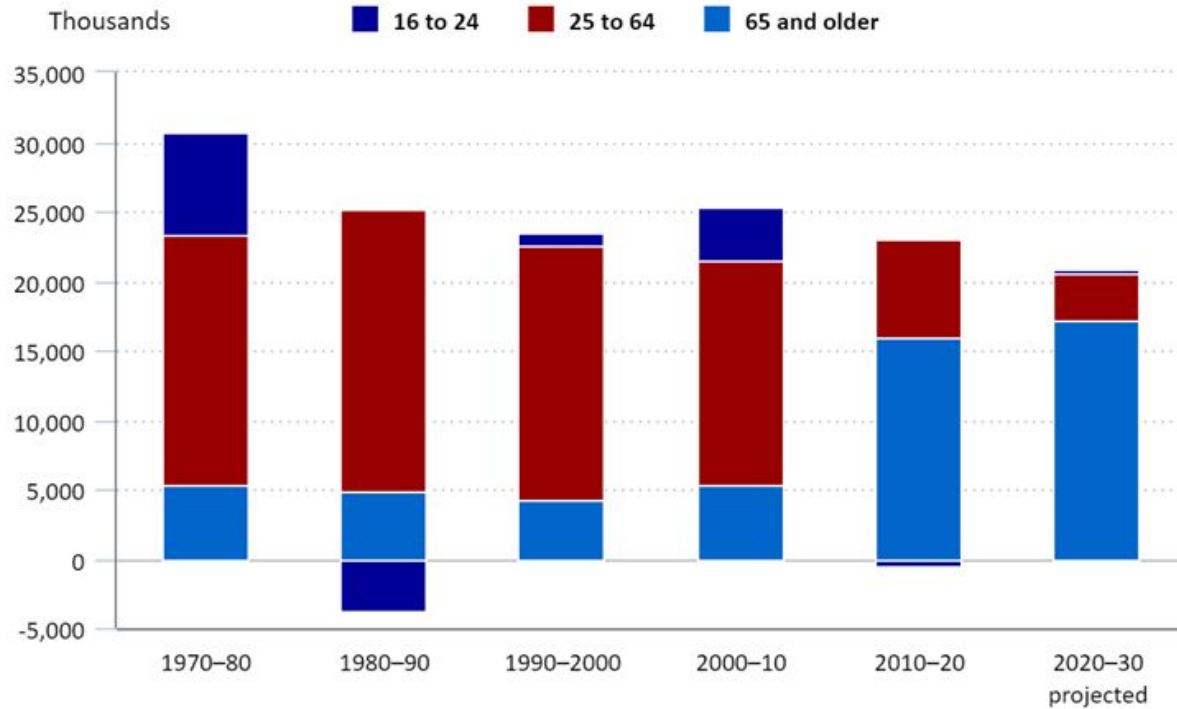
February 2, 2023



Demographic Trends



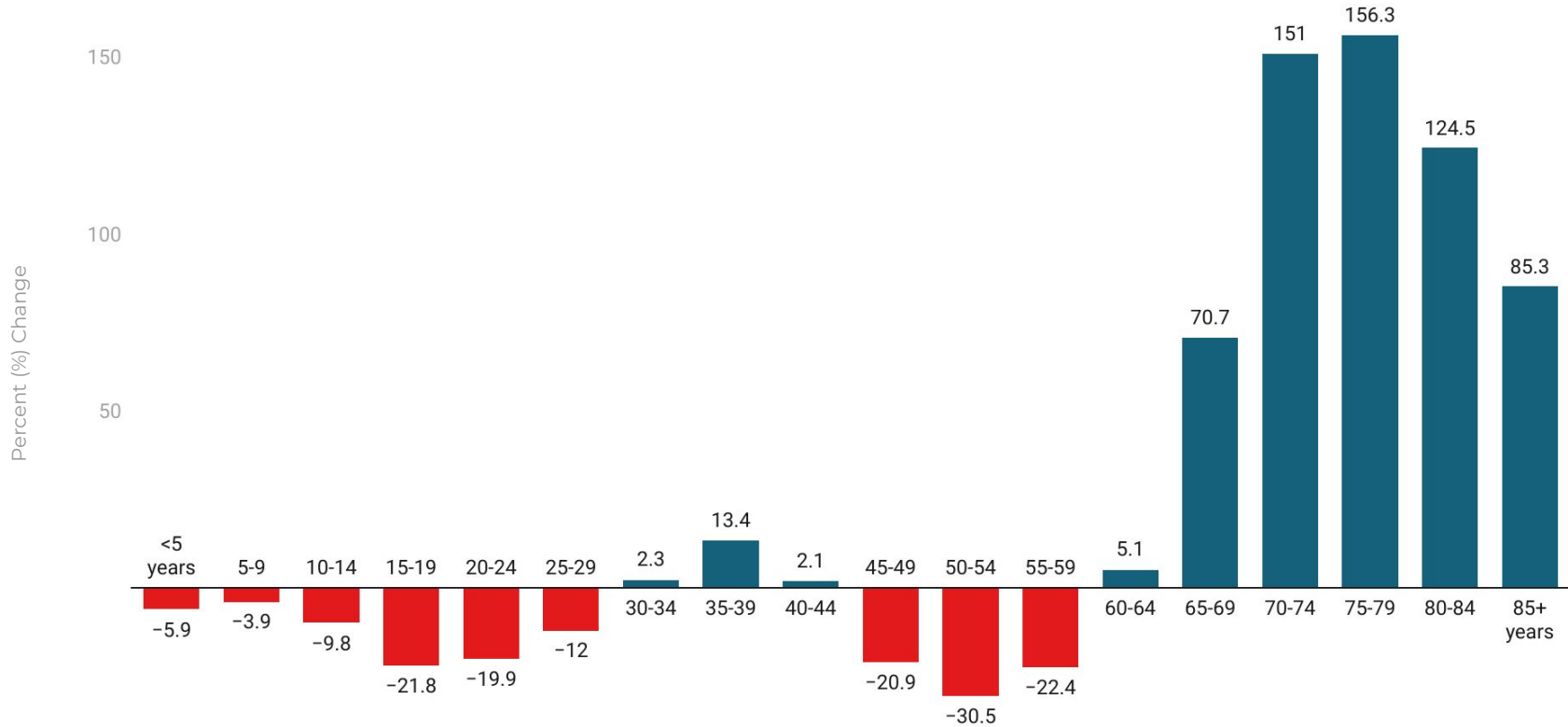
Chart 2. Population change, by age group, for selected periods and 2020–30 projected



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

Vermont Population Projections By Percent Change: 2010-2030

Projected age band population change in percent from 2010 to 2030.



Source: US Census; Vermont DAIL 2013 Projections • Created with Datawrapper



Key Takeaways

- Vermont is experiencing a **national problem**
- For the foreseeable future, the **available workforce will contract**, not expand
- We will not be able to conduct the practice of corrections as we have in the past—**innovation will be key to our sustainability**



DOC Staffing

PROBLEM SET

The Vermont Department of Corrections (DOC) staffing challenges included:

Insufficient security staff needed to sustainably achieve the facility mission



Staff shortage caused vicious cycle of burnout, resignations, disciplinary action, and early retirements



DOC was not successful in showing it valued staff resulting in low morale



DOC had not invested in structured data analysis, preventing leaders from making data-driven decisions and resulting in the reliance on gut-based, anecdotal evidence and ineffective strategies

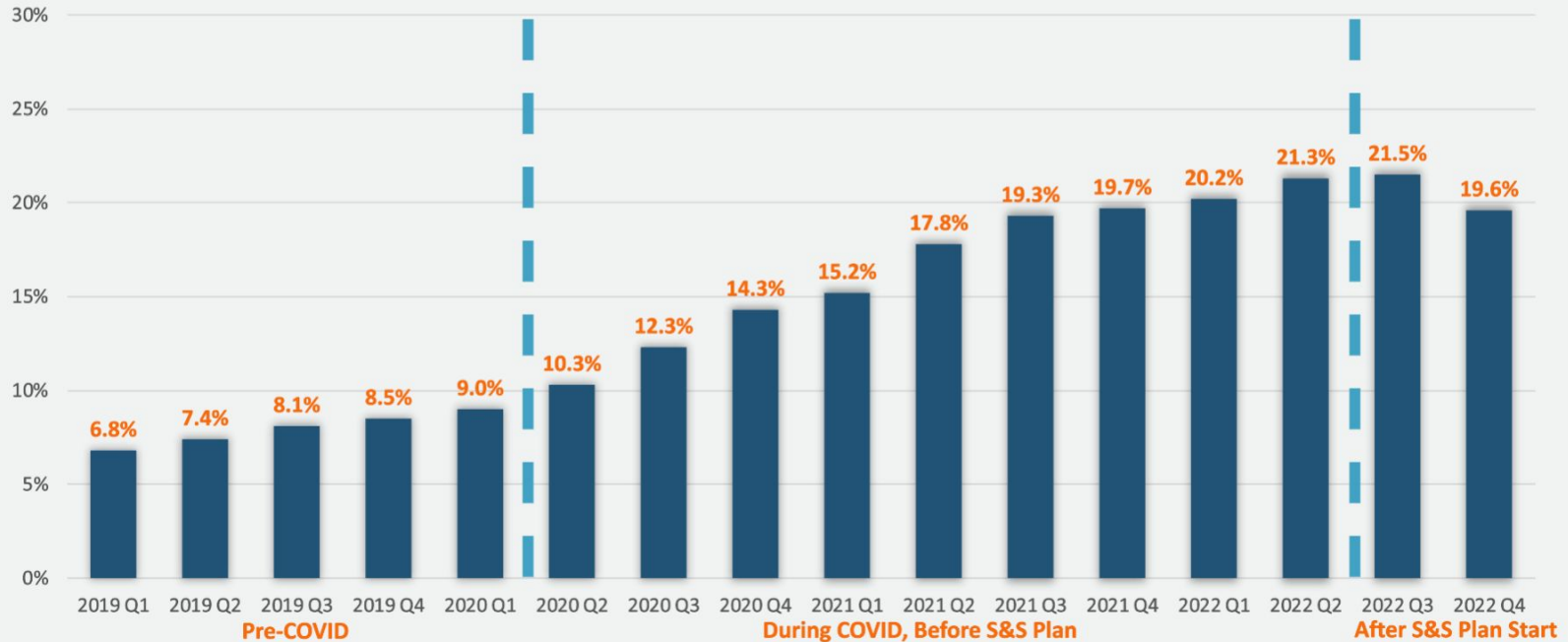


In sum, the DOC had too few security staff to achieve its mission and the underlying causes were not understood or addressed to correct the issues

PROBLEM: STAFF VACANCIES

Despite recent progress, the percentage of Vermont DOC staff vacancies are still higher than pre-pandemic averages. This is primarily driven by facility vacancies.

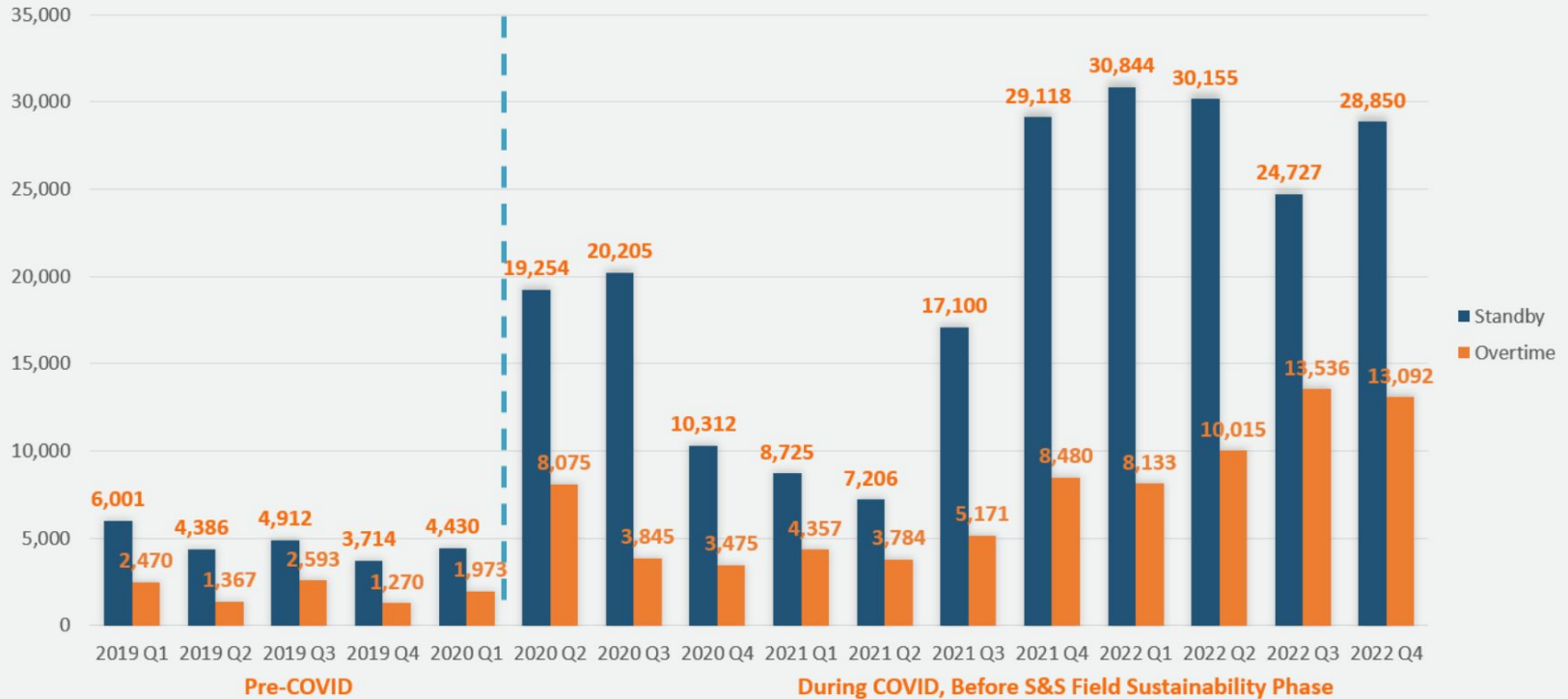
QUARTERLY AVERAGE DOC PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL STAFF VACANCIES CALENDAR YEAR 2019-2022



Note: 2022 Q4 includes data through 12/16/2022

PROBLEM: OVERBURDENED FIELD STAFF

QUARTERLY DOC FIELD STAFF TOTAL STANDBY AND OVERTIME HOURS CALENDAR YEAR 2019-2022



Note: Standby hours include any standby and is not limited to hospital standby. Overtime hours can include P&P overtime as well as facility and hospital coverage.

STABILITY & SUSTAINABILITY (S&S) PLAN

KEY INITIATIVES

50/50 Work/Life Balance 12-hour shift schedule for facility security staff

Market factor analysis for fair compensation for all DOC staff

Permanent, systematic commitment to and investment in staff professional development

Inclusive staff wellness to promote physical, mental, and emotional health

Creation of a Research and Data Unit for data-driven decision making and identifying trends

Create Field Stability Plan for field staff to ease burden of hospital standby shifts

STABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

FACILITY STABILITY PHASE EARLY SUCCESSES

- Reached agreement on benefits package to compensate and recognize Vermont DOC's staff contribution to stabilize the state's corrections system.
- The 170th Academy, was **nearly 3X larger** than the average academy class size over the past two years
 - **68** background checks were requested
 - **51** graduated
 - New recruits reported 12-hour shifts as a key reason for joining Vermont DOC
- Created facility-specific 50/50 schedules that are more efficient and designed to optimize the use and number of each post
- **Four** of six facilities are on the 50/50 schedule
 - Goal: all facilities on this schedule by spring 2023

STABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY PLAN EARLY SUCCESSES

Only favorable ratio of hires to terminations/retires in Quarter 3 (after implementation of S&S Plan) compared to prior quarters this calendar year.

DOC FACILITY HIRES AND TERMINATIONS/RETIRES BY QUARTER FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2022

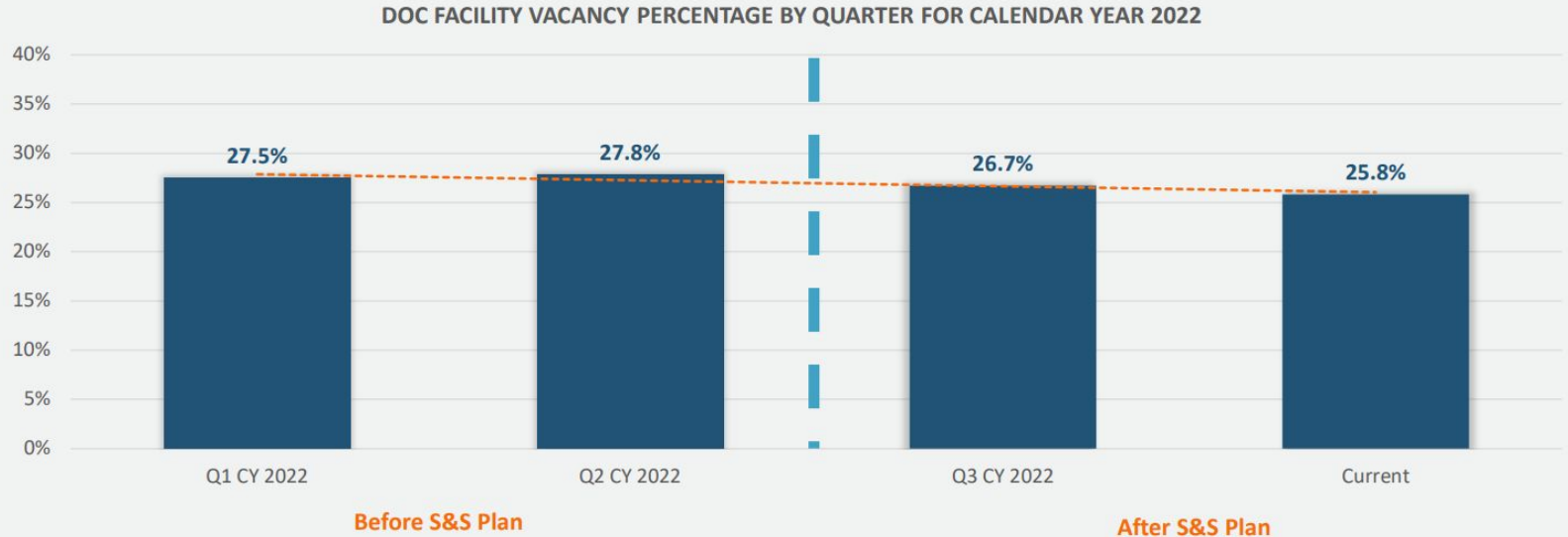


Positive ratio trend driven by those who moved to 50/50 model in Q3 (CRCF & MVRCF) or found success in 12-hour shift schedule this year (NECC). All other facilities still had a negative hire to terminations/retires ratio.

STABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

EARLY SUCCESSES

Facility vacancy percentage decreasing since implementation of S&S Plan in Quarter 3 of calendar year 2022.



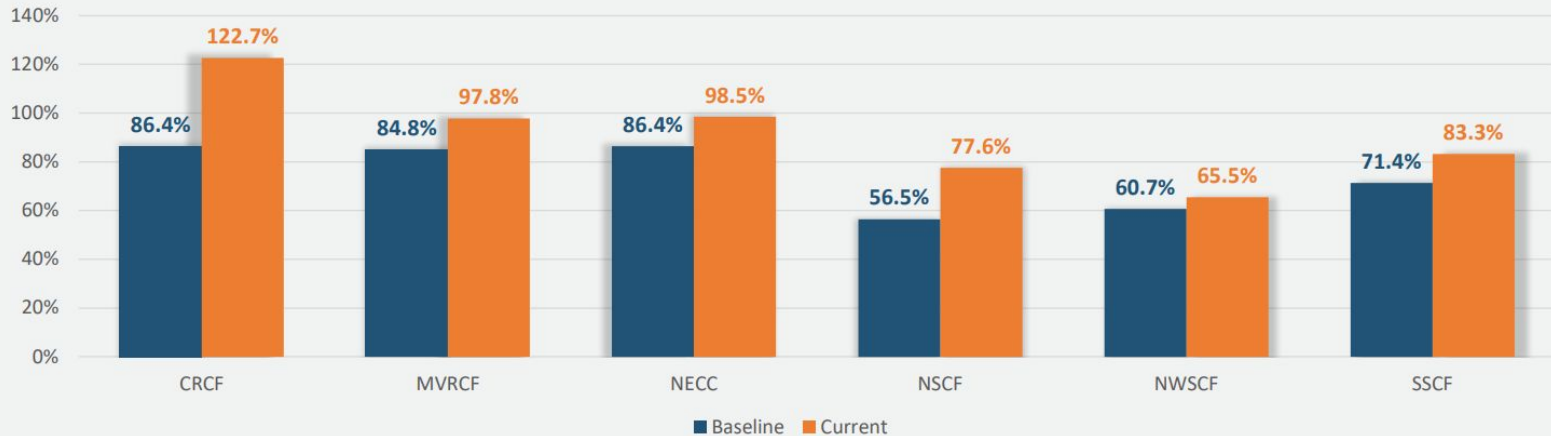
Quarterly vacancy percentages are provided from the last date of each quarter where the data were reported (reported every two weeks). The *Current* percentage numbers are from 12/1/2022.

STABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

EARLY SUCCESSES

The following visual contains facility specific information on S&S Plan percent to upper threshold based on staffing levels at baseline (after 169th Academy, graduated 9/2/2022) and current levels (after 170th Academy graduates on 11/18/2022).

DOC BASELINE & CURRENT PERCENT TO UPPER THRESHOLD BY FACILITY



Three facilities (including the only two who have adopted the 50/50 model thus far) are at or above the upper threshold since the S&S Plan was implemented: **CRCF (50/50), MVRCF (50/50; 1 away from upper), & NECC (5/12s; 1 away from upper).**

Summary



1. DOC faced significant staffing shortages threatening facility security, but had not invested in understanding the **root causes** of those shortages.
2. The Stability and Sustainability Plan reversed facility hemorrhaging, dropped vacancy rates, and DOC graduated one of the **largest Academy classes on record**.
3. Future work: DOC lifted the Field hiring freeze and is rolling out a Field hospital standby plan to **transfer responsibility back to facilities**.
 - a. Continued focus on recruitment and retention, with expansion of professional development.
 - b. New projects and physical spaces that improve staff wellness.



Key Takeaways

- **Vermont is the national leader** on this topic.
- Vermont injected approximately **\$11,000,000 into the pockets of the corrections workforce** above the state/labor contract.
- To make our system sustainable, **we need to succeed in the following areas:**
 - **Leadership** improvement
 - **Professional development** of our staff
 - Staff **health and wellness**
 - **Rewards and recognition**
 - Schedules and structures that **meet the personal needs of our staff**
 - Fair **compensation**
 - **Process improvement**

Contact



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