

**Memorandum**

**To: Senators Kitchel, Perchlik, and Westman  
Representatives Lanpher, Scheu, and Wood**  
**From: Community Justice Centers funded by the Vermont Department of Corrections**  
**Date: April 29, 2024**  
**Re: FY 2025 Budget Request**

In FY 2024, the Community Justice Centers (CJCs) received **\$3,547,311** in grants from the Department of Corrections for ongoing programming and staffing, which included long-overdue COLA increases. Although DOC used some one-time funds to pay for the COLA increases and other ongoing staffing and programming expenses, **the full \$3,547,311 was for ongoing base staffing and services** – not for any new one-time staffing or services.

In FY 2025, DOC only budgeted \$2,961,000 (**a \$586,311 cut**) for CJCs for staffing and services. Ironically, this deficit comes at a time when there were countless hours of testimony this session about the need to expand restorative justice services in Vermont, with high praise for the valuable and cost-saving services provided by CJCs – noting the reliance on CJCs in the coming year to help reduce the court backlog and prosecutor and defense caseloads.

**This deficit will result in staffing and programming cuts at CJCs beginning in July, resulting in greater court backlog, caseloads, and criminal justice expenses to the state.**

**Requests**

1. A total of **\$3,653,730** - FY 2024 funding (\$3,547,311) + 3% COLA (\$106,419)
2. Add the following **language** in E.338.1 to ensure transparency -  
The Department of Corrections shall allocate \$3,653,730 in grants to the community justice centers to be allocated in the same proportion and for the same purposes as those funds were allocated in FY 2024.

<b>FY 2024</b>	<b>House FY 2025</b>	<b>Senate FY 2025</b>	<b>CJC Need FY 2025</b>
<b>\$3,547,311</b> – includes COLA	<b>\$2,961,000</b> – no 3% COLA (The House included \$750,000 for CJCS in H.880, but it did not make it into the House or Senate budget)	\$2,961,000 + \$96,330 (3% COLA) = <b>\$3,007,330</b>	\$3,547,311 (FY24) + \$106,419 (3% COLA) = <b>\$3,653,730</b>

Thank you for your consideration.