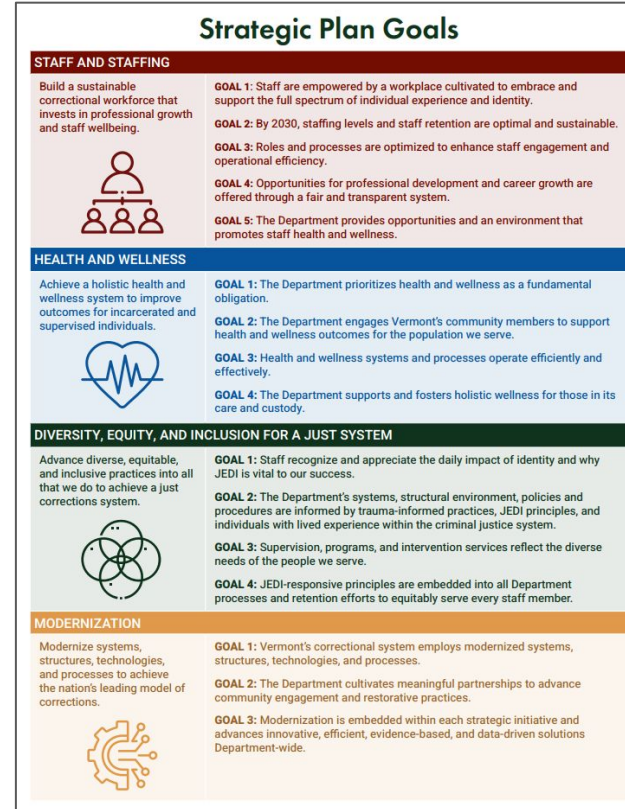




Department of Corrections

Recruitment & Retention

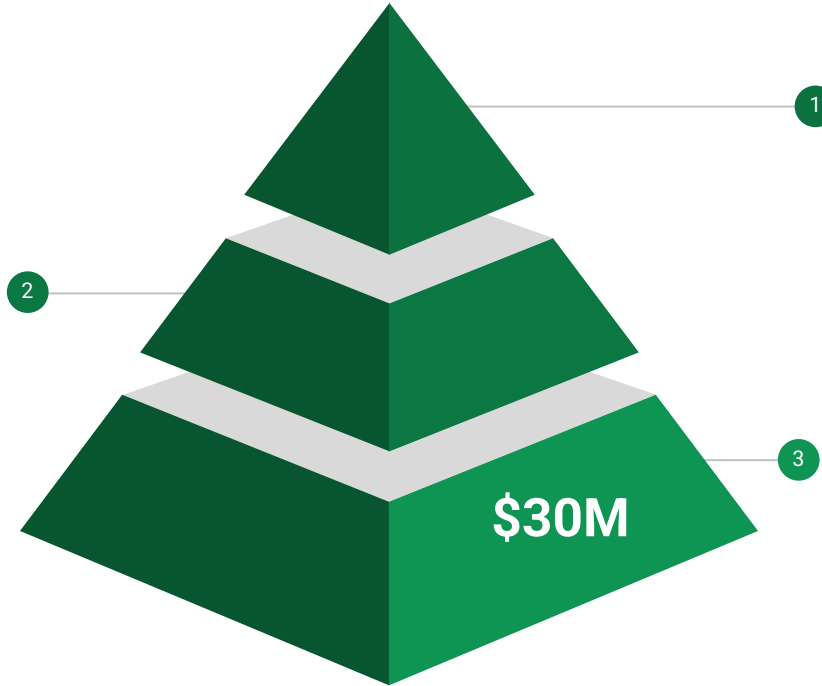
DOC Strategic Plan: Staff & Staffing



DOC Initiatives: Last Three Years

Operations

- **Staff deployment:** Redesigned schedules to maximize time away from facilities, hospital coverage team
- **Data:** Stay/transfer/exit interviews, all-staff surveys
- **Mental health:** Peer support team, mental health clinician
- **Benefits:** Free CCV program, also available to family of staff
- **Internal organization:** Division focused on staff, embedded staff experience supervisors, recruiting at job sites, campuses statewide



Modernization

DOC Strategic Plan, updated Vision, Mission, Values, WCAX media investments

Financial investment

Significantly adjusted pay scales, retirement, CBA, and bonus structures (\$30+M)

Recruitment & Retention Staff Structure



DOC Office of Professional Standards and Compliance (OPSC)

- Created in 2021 to centralize DOC employment services, including recruitment and retention, training, PREA, etc.
- Includes dedicated Recruitment and Retention Coordinator team collaborating across field and facilities

Facilities

- Facility Staff Experience Supervisor (FSES) embedded at each facility
- Responsible for site-specific recruitment efforts & post-academy guidance, mentorship

Open Positions

- Open positions advertised on Indeed, Handshake, VDOL Job Link, VT National Guard's PRIME Program, etc.

Community Engagement



Partnerships with high schools, tech centers, and universities

- Corrections presentations and condensed trainings
- Informing students about internships and future career opportunities
- Discussing career paths and showcasing internship opportunities

Career fairs and community events

- Consistent presence at in-state and neighboring state career fairs

Community participation

- Trunk-or-treats, Green Up Day, Upper Valley Haven volunteering, etc.

Media Presence



WCAX Marketing Partnership

- Statewide 'Corrections Minute' campaign focused on recruitment and public education
 - Career paths, Vision, Mission, and Values, position spotlights
- Direct geographic targeting for focused media

DOC Podcast Series

- Interview series (anticipated launch Summer '25) to be streamed on DOC YouTube, Spotify/Apple Podcast

Consistent social media presence

- Department and facility site-specific

Retention: Professional Development



Professional development training series

- Core Strengths, Excellence in Supervision, Emotional Intelligence, PMI & Evaluation training

Access to higher education

- Corrections Post-Secondary Education Initiative (CPSEI) partnership with CCV and Springfield College (free or discounted college courses, integration of CCV at DOC Academy)

Internal development

- Development of all-staff inclusive mentorship program
- Women's leadership initiative
- Job shadowing opportunities
- Trainer Development Program

Retention: Staff Experience & Wellness



- Confidential Peer Support and clinician available to staff
- Wellness Challenge (daily wellness challenges, tips, and prompts)
- Consistent messaging to staff of wellness opportunities
- Family Support Group (for families, by families)
- Reward & Recognition Committee events and programs
- Wellness-related trainings (Traumatic Stress Management, Suicide Prevention)
- Implementing Wellness Specialist and K-9 Handler position
- Staff Wellness Committee

Data-Driven Decision Making



Using **data to identify target areas** for recruitment and retention

- Departure Interviews
- Exit and Transfer Interviews
- Stay Interviews
- All-Staff Surveys
- Facility Culture Assessments

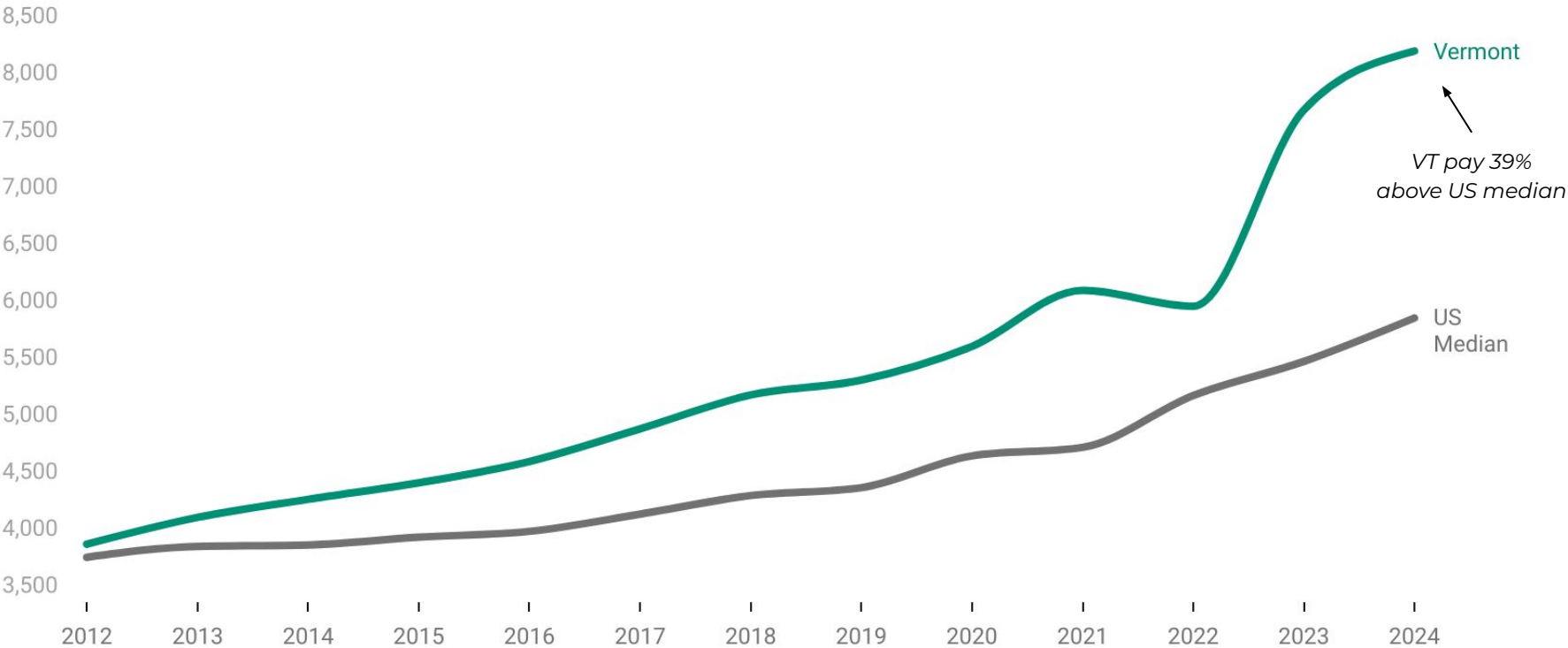


Data



Pay

Correctional Monthly Pay: Vermont vs US Median

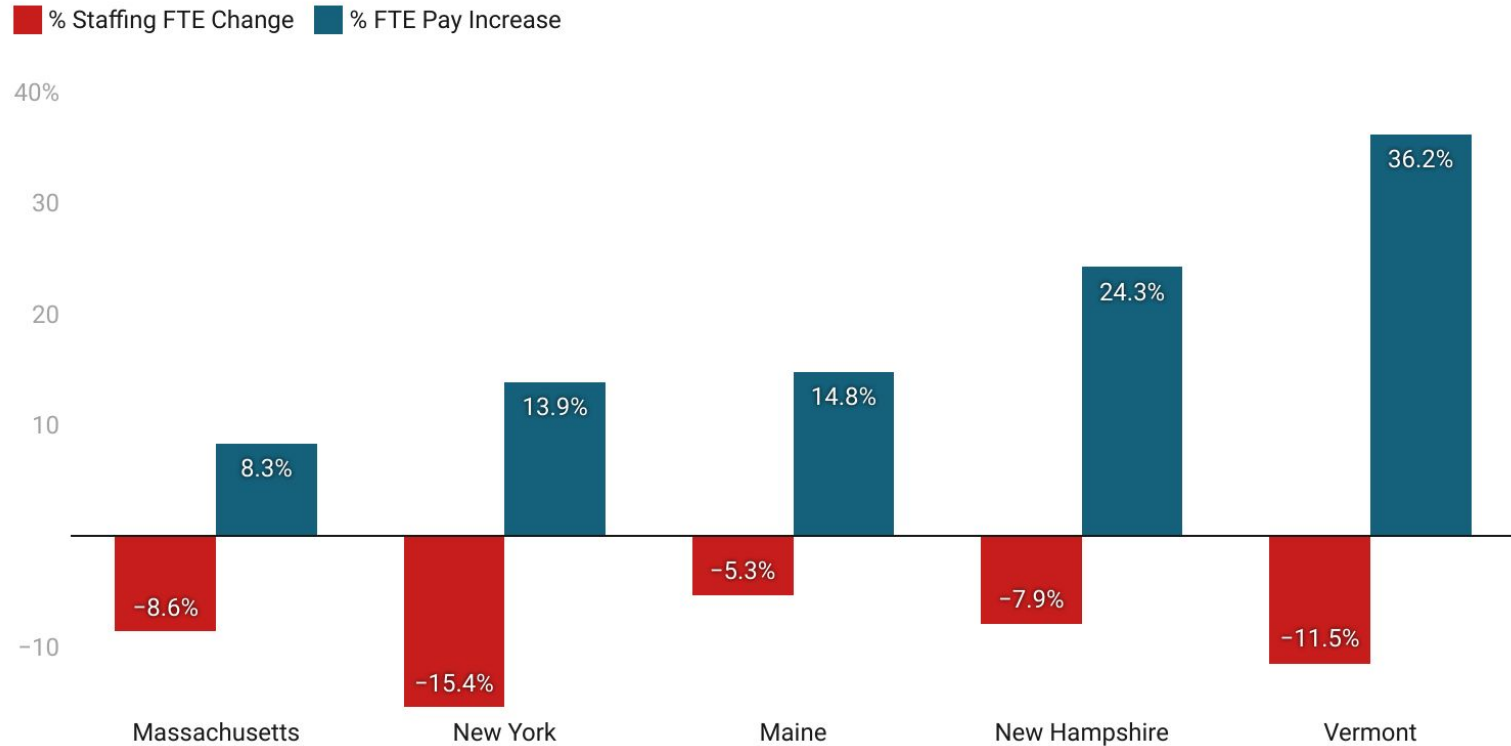


Gross monthly pay per FTE

Source: US Census | Annual Survey of Public Employment & Payroll • Created with Datawrapper

Change in Correctional Staffing & Pay: Northeast States

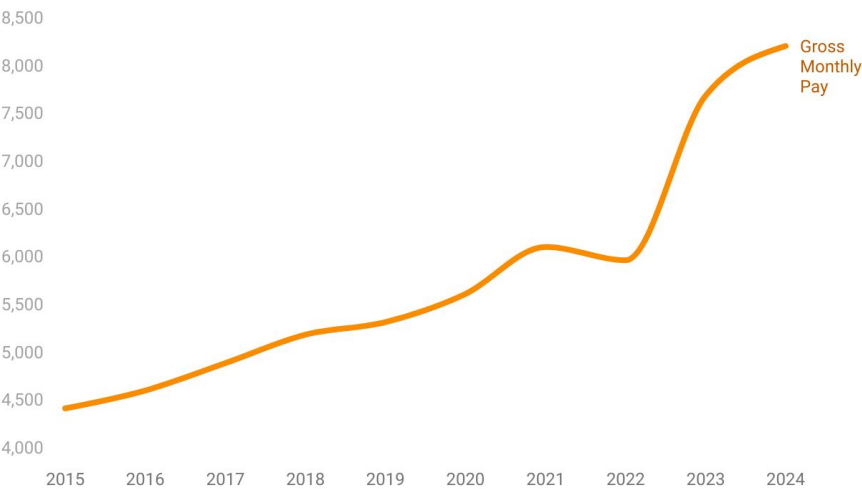
2020 to 2023



Source: US Census | Annual Survey of Public Employment & Payroll • Created with Datawrapper

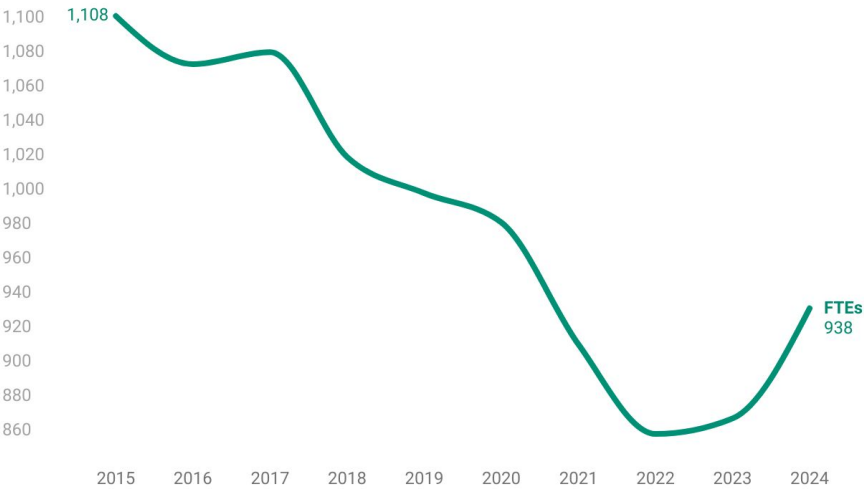
DOC Pay vs Staffing: 2015 to 2024

Vermont Correctional Pay: 2015 to 2024



Source: Annual Survey of Public Employment & Payroll • Created with Datawrapper

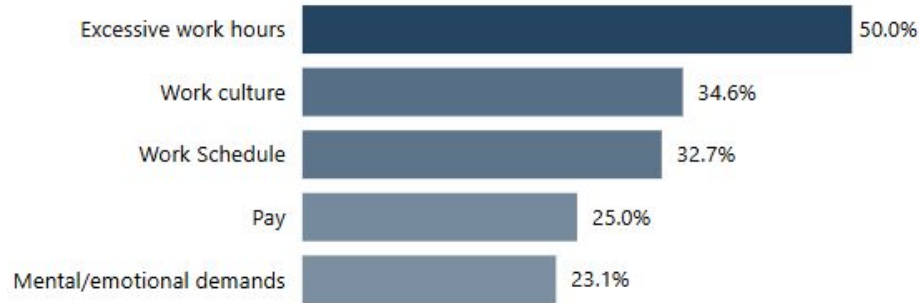
Vermont Correctional Staffing Numbers: 2015 to 2024



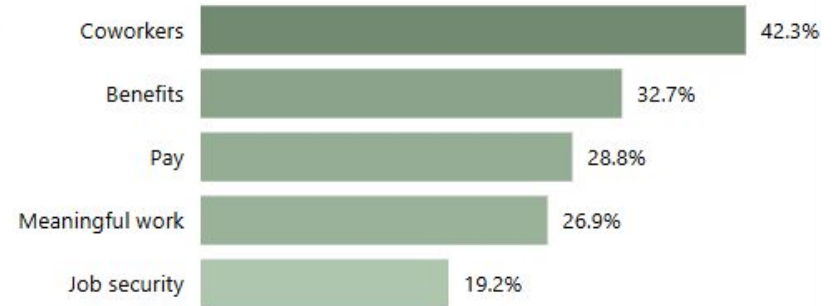
Source: Annual Survey of Public Employment & Payroll • Created with Datawrapper

Why DOC Facility Staff **Leave** vs. **Stay**

Top Contributors for Leaving VT DOC

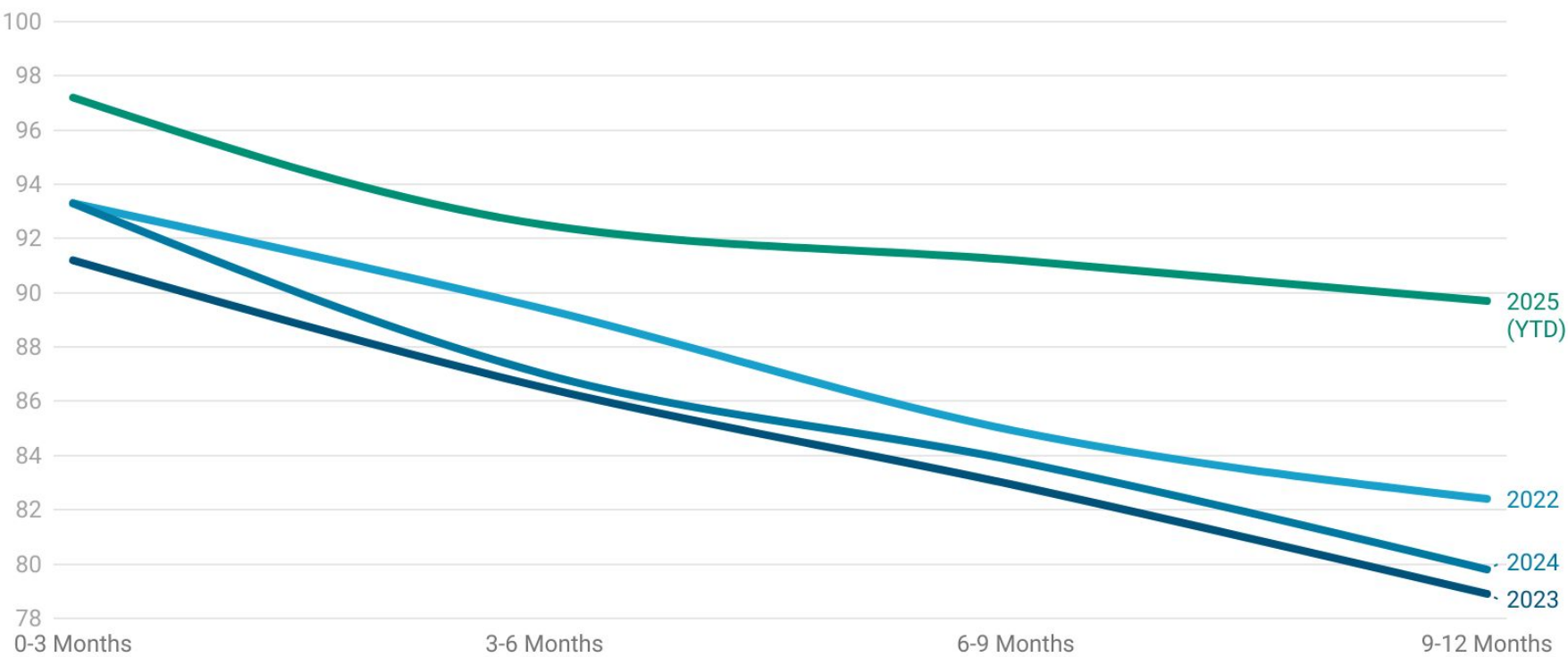


Top Enjoyable Aspects of VT DOC



Correctional Officer Retention: Last 4 Years

Quarterly % retention by fiscal year



Source: Vermont DOC • Created with Datawrapper



Questions?

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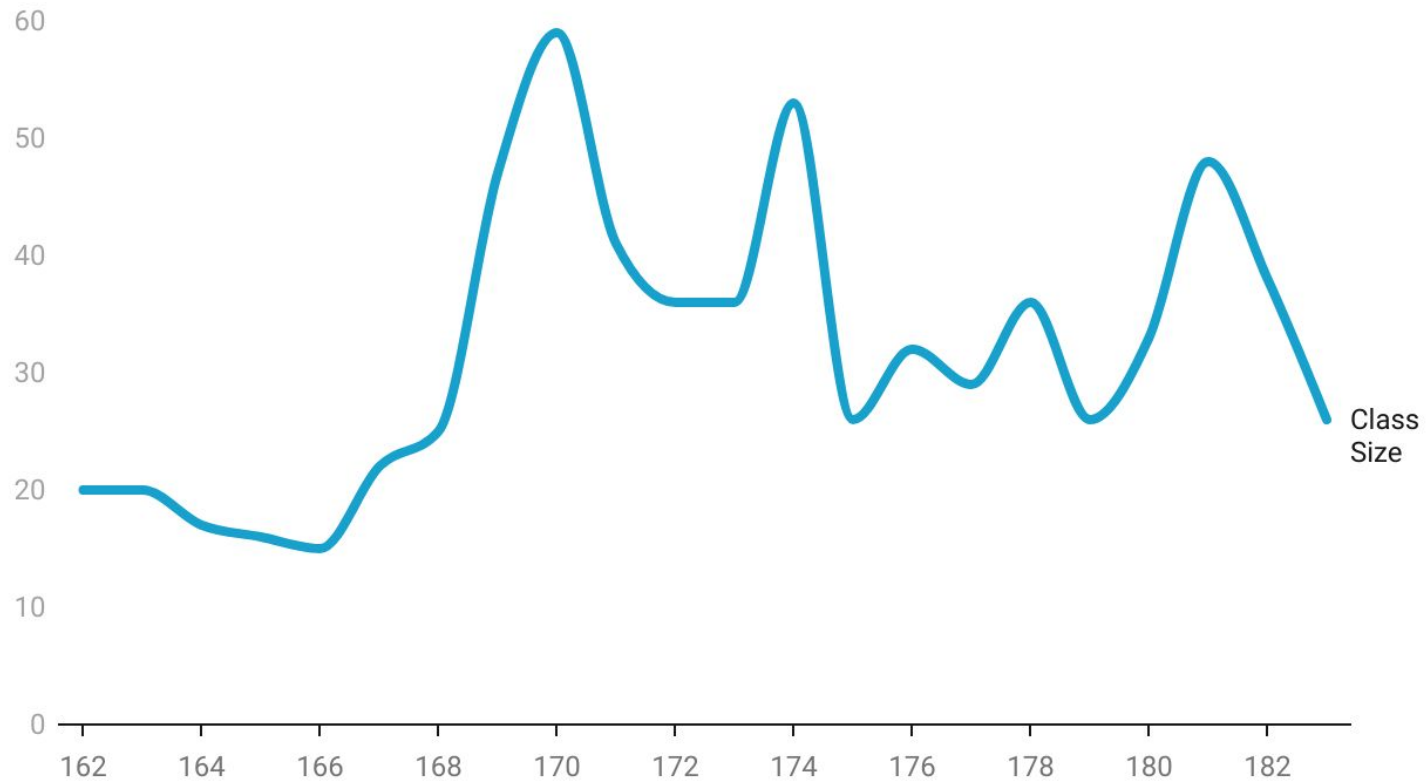
Constituent Services

ahs.docconstituentmanagement@vermont.gov



Appendix

Vermont Correctional Academy Class Sizes: 2021 to Present

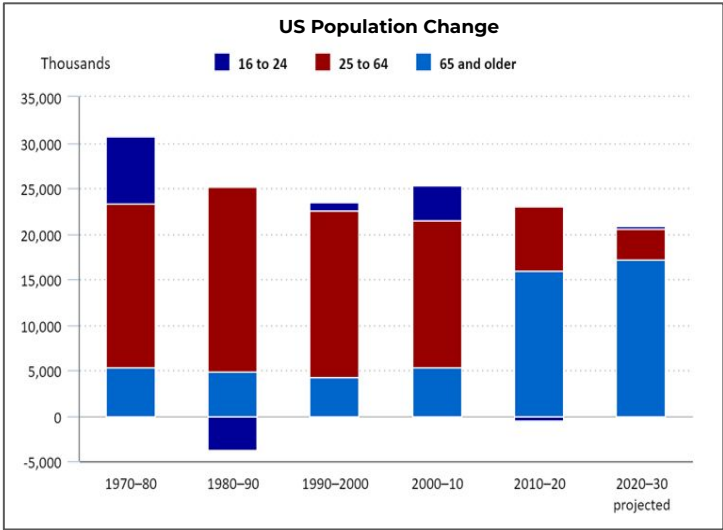
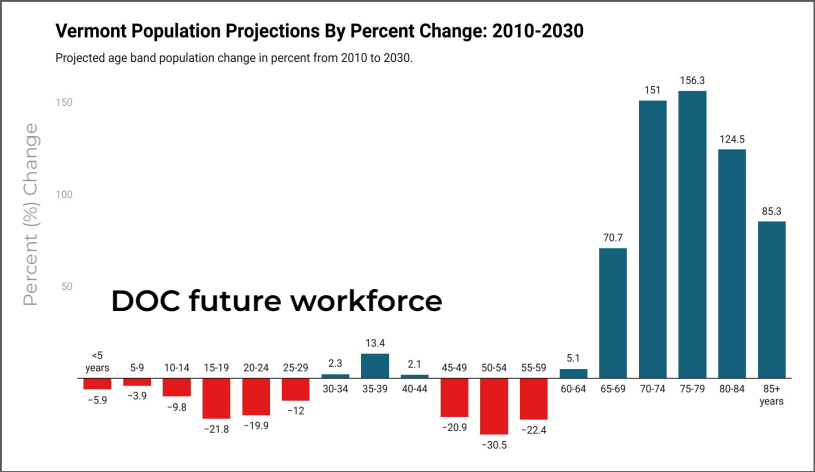


Source: Vermont DOC • Created with Datawrapper

Future of Vermont Workforce

A disproportionate share of Vermonters are **at or near retirement age**: more than a fifth are 65+, and more than 35% are 54+, the age at which Americans typically begin to exit the workforce.

No state has a *smaller share* of residents in prime working years.



National Corrections Context

Chronically understaffed [redacted] prisons set stage for prison bus escape and massacre of family

Investigative reviews by the [redacted] and independent consultants found the severely short-staffed prison routinely bypassed crucial security checks, leading to a convicted murderer's escape.

BY JOLIE MCCULLOUGH · DEC. 9, 2022 · 3 PM CENTRAL

SHARE · REPUBLISH

Independent jail monitor says staffing crisis at root of [redacted] escape

"This is a statewide and a national issue," said [redacted].

[redacted] corrections secretary anxious burnout exacerbating uniformed-officer shortages

State prison system struggles to fill 380 officer vacancies

BY: TIM CARPENTER · JANUARY 20, 2023 · 10:40 AM

CRIMINAL JUSTICE · WORK & THE ECONOMY

As prison populations rise, states face a stubborn staffing crisis

the situation is as prisoners languish and remaining employees struggle.

Prisons struggle with high attrition and burnout among staff

State prisons struggle with staff vacancy rates as high as 40%

Violence, suicides mount in [redacted]'s woefully understaffed prisons

'Dangerous place.' Attorneys and family seek answers after man's death in [redacted] prison

BY KATIE MOORE
UPDATED DECEMBER 20, 2023 3:21 PM

10 guards, 900 inmates: [redacted] prisons see dire results of ignored warnings

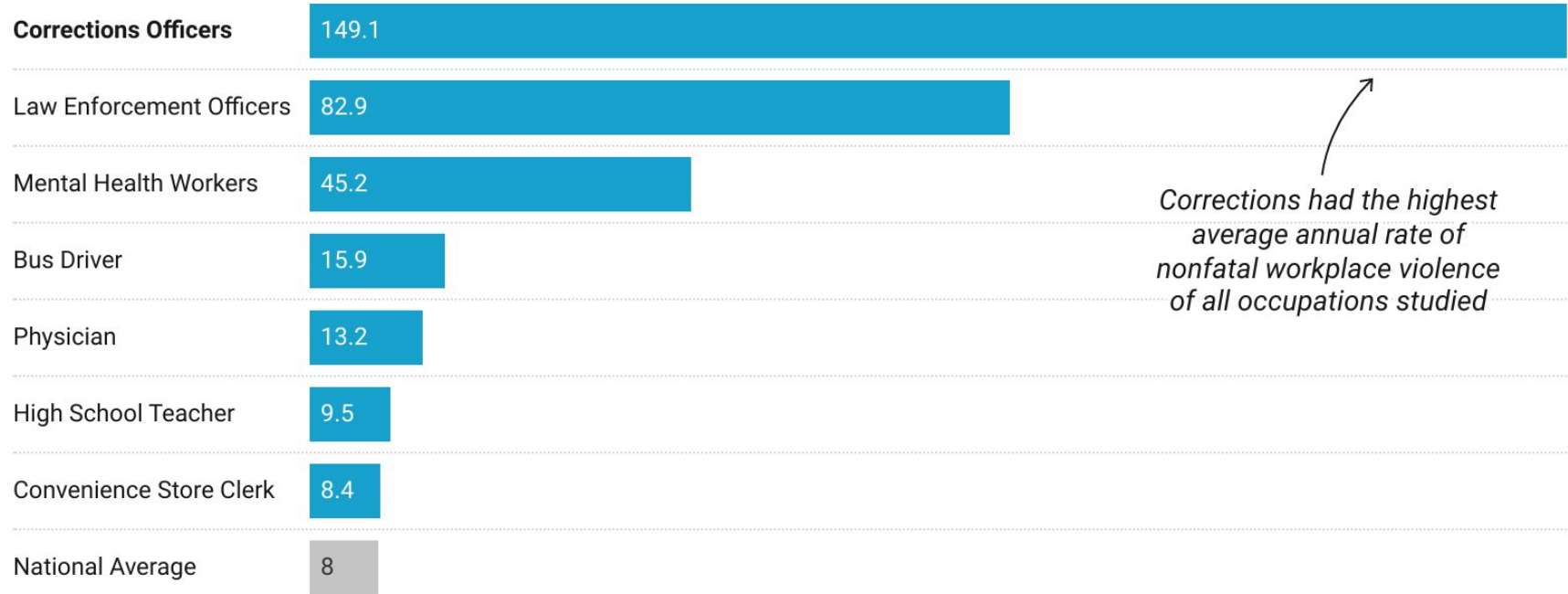
An extreme shortage of guards at [redacted] prisons slowed basic operations to a crawl. Inmates escaped, prisons locked down and conditions deteriorated.

6

BY MARIO KORAN OF THE NEW YORK TIMES AND WATCH AND JUSTIN MAYO OF BIG LOCAL NEWS · FEBRUARY 2, 2024

Average Annual Rate of Nonfatal Workplace Violence

Incidents per 1,000 workers aged 16+



Source: BJS Special Report: Indicators of Workplace Violence , 2019 (2022); National Crime Victimization Survey • Created with Datawrapper

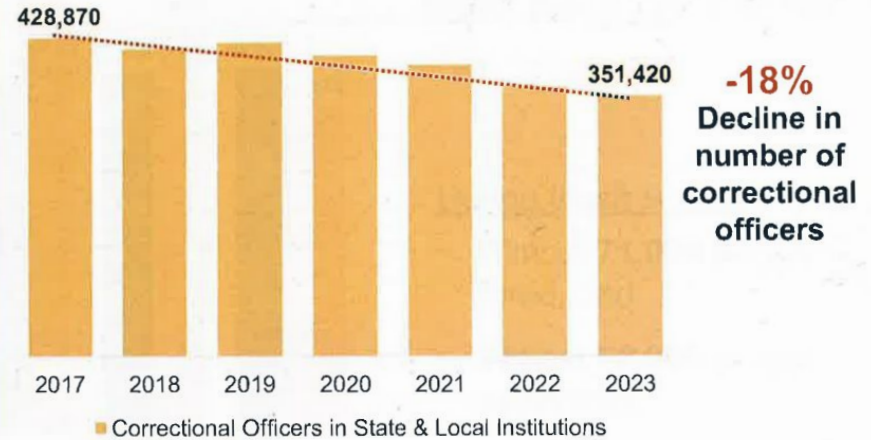
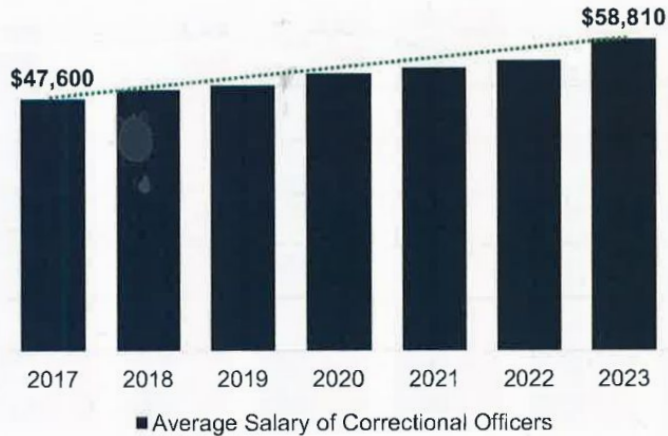
National Context

- Correctional systems nationwide face high vacancy rates:
 - Federal Bureau of Prisons: **24%**
 - Texas: **25%**
 - Michigan: **17.4%**
 - New Hampshire: **25%**
- A DOJ interstate workgroup found correctional systems, including Vermont, make up **50% of all state overtime costs**
- New York, facing strikes, **recently deployed the National Guard**
- The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts a **7% decline** in correctional officer workforce over the next 10 years

National Context

National Employment Trends for Correctional Officers
2017-2023

+24%
Increase in
average
salary for
corrections
officers



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) data tables, 2017 to 2023

DOC 2-2-3 Schedule

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	X	X			X	X
X			X	X		
	X	X			X	X
X			X	X		

Hospital Coverage

Key Context

- Facility staffing crisis required Field (P&P) hospital coverage
- Paid standby limits staff travel and recreation
- Sicker incarcerated pop. requires more frequent ED trips
- Transports and hospitalizations present highest risk to staff

Hospital Central Operations Division (COD) Team

- 19 dedicated staff **focused solely on hospital coverage**
- Spending on Field hospital standby **fell 71%** from 2023 to 2024 (\$702,397 → \$200,792)

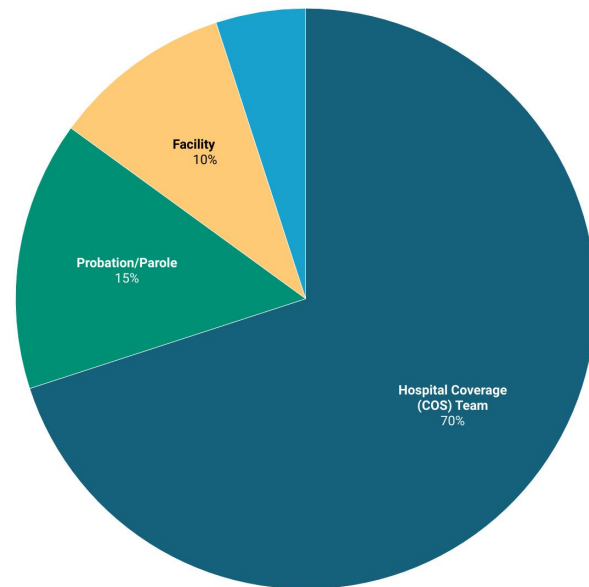
Data

- **17,652 hours** of hospital coverage from November 2023 to December 2024:
 - 12,240 filled by COS
 - 2,628 filled by Field
 - 1,800 filled by Facility
 - 780 filled by volunteers

Vermont DOC Hospital Shift Coverage

November 2023 to November 2024

■ Hospital Coverage (COS) Team ■ Probation/Parole ■ Facility ■ Volunteers



Total DOC Standby Expenditures: 2023 vs. 2024

