FROM THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
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NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES
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Dir. Frakes Unveils Strategic Plan to Move Corrections Forward

Plan includes the implementation of performance measurements, increased capacity

LINCOLN – Today, Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS) Director Scott Frakes unveiled his strategic plan outlining initial steps to move his agency forward. This announcement follows a pledge from Frakes, who was appointed agency earlier this year by Governor Pete Ricketts, to release a plan this fall providing a roadmap for the future of NDCS.

"This strategic plan will serve as a road map for the agency's work in the coming months and years," said Director Frakes. "As we work to achieve the goals we have set, the team at Corrections will use targeted strategies to achieve outcomes and measurements to keep us on course."

"Director Frakes continues to chart a new course for Corrections," said Governor Ricketts. "The framework and first steps contained in the department's strategic plan address some of the key challenges the agency has faced in recent years. My administration will continue to support his team's efforts to build a culture of transparency and accountability in the agency."

The strategic plan released today has set five goals for the department with specific outcomes:

- Build **One Team, One Vision** by retaining employees, engaging the agency's workforce, and providing the training needed to keep employees safe.
- **Transform Corrections** by employing data-guided approaches to improve operational excellence, complete justice reinvestment initiatives, and create mission-specific housing.
- Foster a **Transparent and Accountable** culture by making the agency accessible to oversight and media stakeholders, maintain a balanced budget, and integrating external measures
- Create **Collaborative Community Relationships** by focusing resources on community corrections, encouraging staff to engage their community through volunteerism, and fully understanding the role of the NDCS within the criminal justice system.
- Shift to a **Culture of Reentry and Rehabilitation** that focuses on reentry, creates individual reentry plans starting at reception, and ensures that individual needs are addressed.

Towards this end, the plan also outlines steps that will be taken to achieve these outcomes. A few of the highlights include:

- **Build capacity** by improving core services in existing facilities, add additional beds to expand community custody resources, and repurpose existing beds.
- Conduct a **risk-needs assessment** that measures the individual inmate's risk to reoffend, history of violence, and criminogenic needs to determine assignment of programming resources.
- Implement **performance measurements** to drive performance improvement and create a foundation for data-driven leadership and decision making.

A copy of the full plan is attached.

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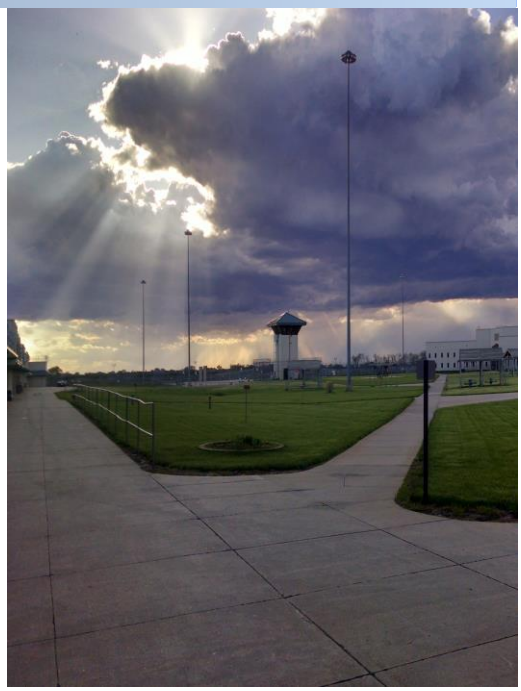
Nebraska Department of Correctional Services – NDCS

October, 2015

Strategic Plan

2015-2017

Building Systems, Improving Performance



NDCS is an agency filled with talented, passionate people. In recent years the department has fallen behind in implementing national trends in correctional science and has suffered from a number of failures that damaged public confidence. Our vision for NDCS is *to be the best in the business of corrections.* This strategic plan is the framework for transforming our agency.

We start with:

- **Capacity –** We will improve core services in existing facilities, add additional beds to expand our community custody resources, and repurpose existing beds to meet the needs of the inmate population
- **Risk-Needs Assessment –** The individual's risk to reoffend, history of violence, and criminogenic needs will determine assignment of programming resources
- **Validated Classification Process –** Classify inmates by risk of behavior within the prison, not according to available bed space
- **Evidence Based Practices –** Funded treatment and programming will be delivered with fidelity, and have data to support the effectiveness
- **Performance Measurement –** Performance improvement requires performance measurement. We will be a data driven organization
- **Leadership Development –** Successful organizations must develop leaders from within, and at all levels
- **Community Partnerships –** Reentry starts at intake, but it is our community partnerships that help people succeed upon release
- **Staff and Inmate Engagement –** All employees should have a voice in shaping the work. The men and women under our care can help us shape approaches that are safe, effective, and sustainable

Specific action plans will be developed for initiatives we will undertake to move the agency forward. Leading Goals (page 3) represent five areas of focus that support our agency mission "to serve and protect the public." This is a living document and will be revised and updated through processes that will ultimately engage staff at all levels of NDCS.

To learn more about NDCS

http://ndcs.nebraska.gov/

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We are NDCS

Mission Statement

To serve and protect the public

Vision Points

- Best Practices - *identify and implement best practices*
- Commitment to Staff – *partner with staff*
- Community Awareness and Involvement – *partner with the community*
- Credibility – *furthering public trust*
- Family Involvement – *allow families an active role (staff and inmate families)*
- Fiscal Accountability – *efficient and effective operations*
- Seamless Criminal Justice System –*collaboration with other entities*
- Offender Accountability – *environments in which offender accountability will flourish*
- Offender Programs – *sustaining meaningful program opportunities*

Inclusion and Diversity

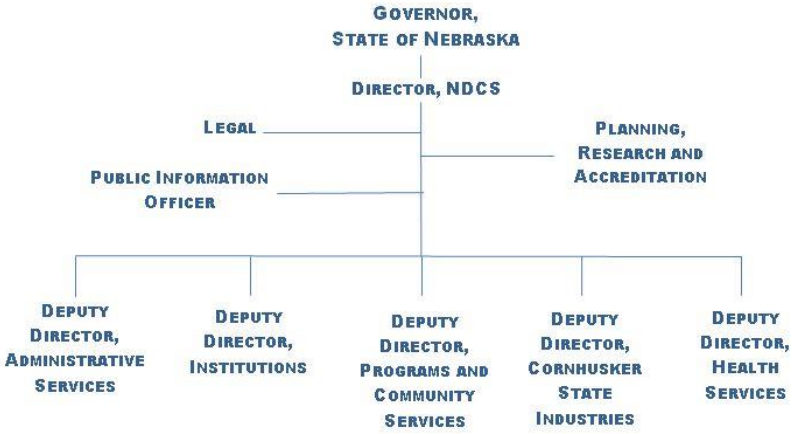
At the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services, diversity is imperative and integral to our mission. Our Department is committed to an inclusive environment where differences are accepted, valued and celebrated to foster teamwork and safety.

Our Agency

LB563 established statutory authority for NDCS in 1973. We are the 2nd largest cabinet agency in the State of Nebraska with a $450 million dollar biennial operating budget and 2400 employees. NDCS is responsible for managing 10 correctional facilities (prisons) housing 5400 inmates, and approximately 1000 parolees under Parole Administration. For people housed in our prisons we are responsible for providing basic care; including necessary healthcare, treatment, education, programming, and nutrition. For individuals on parole NDCS is responsible for ensuring compliance with conditions of parole, and for assisting the parolee in his or her efforts to reenter society. NDCS has been involved with the American Correctional Association (ACA) accreditation process since 1979, and was accredited agency-wide in 2007.

Our Organizational Structure

The Director of NDCS is a cabinet-level position appointed by the Governor. The Director is responsible to administer the state corrections system including; prisons, parole, Cornhusker State Industries, and the Federal Surplus Program.



Our Human Talent

The 2400 employees in NDCS are a diverse collection of people committed to providing the highest level of services to the citizens of Nebraska. We contribute to public safety through safe and humane incarceration, effective community supervision, and targeted programming. We offer a wide variety of career opportunities and career paths. Our employees come from a wide variety of backgrounds including military, law enforcement, healthcare, social services, and the private sector. A significant number of NDCS staff join the agency with two-year, four-year, and post-graduate degrees. In addition to an extensive portfolio of department training programs NDCS offers tuition reimbursement for staff seeking to further their education. We are accountable, professional, dedicated, and rightfully proud of our service to the public.

Our Plan

LB33 was passed in 2015, requiring NDCS to utilize a strategic planning process for future biennial budgets. The work of our agency must be in alignment with and contribute to meeting the priorities of Nebraska State government using performance management processes. This plan establishes leading goals, measurable outcomes, and targeted strategies that will ensure we meet our mission to serve and protect the public.

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

GROW NEBRASKA – Improve Public Safety

↑Our Mission – To Serve and Protect the Public

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

↑LEADING GOALS	← OUTCOMES	← STRATEGIES →	← MEASUREMENTS
One Team - One Vision	➢ Retaining Employees ➢ Engaged Employees ➢ Safe Employees	○ Staff Survey ○ Reduce overtime ○ Employee Councils ○ Reliable technology ○ Meaningful recognition ○ Reduce inmate idleness	• Vacancy rates • Promotions • Employee evaluations • Staff assaults • Unscheduled leave • Workplace injuries
Transforming Corrections	➢ Data Guided Approaches ➢ Justice Re-Investment ➢ Mission Specific Housing	○ IT Strategic Plan ○ Teach staff to use data ○ Accessible Dashboard ○ Program evaluation ○ Risk/Needs Assessment ○ Improve classification tools ○ Identify Mission Specific Housing needs ○ Reduce crowding	• Training completed • New admissions • Capacity • Parole eligibility • Parole revocations • Restrictive Housing population • Serious misconduct reports
Transparent and Accountable	➢ Publically Accessible ➢ Balanced Budget ➢ Externally Measured	○ Improve electronic communication systems ○ Build partnership with Ombudsman's Office ○ Make NDCS "visible" ○ Connect staff to the Strategic Plan and the budget ○ Publish audit results	• Staff access to e-mail • Rules and regulations promulgated • Public-relations releases published • Overtime • Staff training completed • Audit performance
Collaborative Community Relationships	➢ Community Corrections Focused ➢ A Criminal Justice "System" ➢ Staff As Volunteers	○ Find employers ○ Use LB605 to build partnerships ○ Educate public about NDCS – social media ○ Discharge Review Team (DRT) established ○ Make volunteering easy ○ Identify the community needs	• Parolee employment • DRT notifications • Data sharing • Volunteer activities • "hits", "likes", and "views" • Community partnerships
Culture of Reentry and Rehabilitation	➢ Reentry Focused ➢ Plan Starts at Reception ➢ Needs are Addressed	○ Utilize former inmates as a resource ○ Revise staff training ○ Risk/Needs/Responsivity tool (RNR) ○ Mission Specific Housing ○ Increased health screening ○ Allocate resources based on risk/needs ○ Behavioral health system	• Staff training completed • Parole eligibility • Parole revocations • Recidivism • Residential treatment beds • HbA1c levels (diabetes) • Resource utilization • Program completion

Transforming our agency

Transformation comes through a combination of strategic thinking, strategic planning, and being prepared to take advantage of opportunities that arise. A number of initiatives are currently underway:

- **Repurposing Project –** Housing inmates by custody classification and needs will increase safety and delivery of services
- **Mission Specific Housing –** Providing housing opportunities for inmates that address needs and improve quality of life
- **Intelligence Network –** Building an intelligence network across the agency as part of a proactive security system
- **Staff Culture Survey –** Using research to determine employee needs
- **Sentence Calculation Automation Project –** Electronic calculation of sentences to ensure accuracy
- **Justice Reinvestment Initiative –** LB605 brings substantial changes designed to reduce the rate of incarceration
- **VERA Institute, Restrictive Housing Reform –** LB598 outlines significant changes to the use of Restrictive Housing within NDCS. The Vera "Safe Alternatives to Segregation" project will help guide our work
- **Risk/Needs/Responsivity tool for case management –** Contract awarded and staff training underway by March, 2016
- **Justice Program Assessment –** Council of State Governments project to assess inmate/parolee programming and make recommendations for improvements
- **Validated Classification Tool –** Revisions to the existing tool are nearly completed. Independent validation to be conducted by UNO
- **Inmate Health Care Plan –** Establishing the level of health care services for inmates consistent with the "community standard of care"
- **Recruitment and hiring –** Addressing the staff vacancy issues by hiring a diverse, qualified workforce using data driven processes and by reducing turnover
- **Custody Staffing Analysis –** Establishing a custody staffing model and the appropriate staffing level for each of the facilities
- **Performance measurement, data guided improvements –** A culture of operational excellence depends on metrics to guide strategies. NDCS is quickly becoming a data driven organization

NDCS has been collecting data for many years and is one of ten state correctional systems to be in full compliance with the Association of State Correctional Administrators (ASCA) *Performance-Based Measures System* – a national effort to collect standardized data for important corrections metrics.

Operational excellence is a culture where principles, methodologies, and tools enable continuous process improvement in every area of the organization: Incremental change that increases quality and efficiency and reduces waste – simpler, easier, faster, better!

Over the next two years the agency will build an organizational system that relies on measurements to both guide our work and demonstrate our outcomes. We will accomplish this through staff training, expansion of the Research and Planning division, and learning as we go.

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

Evidence Based Practices:

The department is undergoing significant reorganization and adopting new approaches. This work will continue through the remainder of FY2016, and will shape fiscal requests for the next two biennial budgets. Past practices have allowed bed space to dictate custody classification assignments using overrides of the classification scoring tool. Until NDCS completes a thorough review of the existing population using the revised and validated classification tool, the capacity needs at various custody levels remains in question. The Risk/Needs/Responsivity (RNR) process will be used to determine the agency's programming needs. The allocation of our programming resources will be determined by risk to reoffend and propensity for violence. Inmates with a high risk to reoffend and a history of violence will get the greatest access to evidence based programming. The Justice Program Assessment project will take approximately six months to complete. By the summer of 2016 we will have staff trained in our revised classification process, be using the RNR process to assign programming, and we will know our programming capacity/needs.

Operational Capacity, not "design":

The wisdom of investing money into existing facilities rather than building a new prison is captured in the Master Plan document. Many of the existing facilities were constructed during a period of time when programming and core support space were not seen as necessary or beneficial. Relocating a percentage of the population to a new facility will not address the need for improvements in most of the existing NDCS facilities. Reducing the number of inmates in our existing facilities will drive up the overall cost of operations, without significant improvement to the quality of operations. The right answer is to improve core support services and make small adjustments to bed space in existing facilities. This will provide operational capacity consistent with our population needs.

Behavioral Health:

Our Behavioral Health staff has the talent and passion needed to create an exceptional behavioral health program within NDCS. The number of secure mental health beds has been expanded at LCC, and beds for transition from residential mental health will be repurposed from beds currently housing inmates on protective custody status. The Discharge Review Team is actively reviewing all inmates with serious mental illness and/or a history of violence prior to their release to the community – making appropriate referrals and notifications. Under the care and leadership of Dr. Martin Wetzel, Chief of Psychiatry and Dr. Lisa Jones, Behavioral Health Administrator the quality and range of services for the mentally ill offenders will continue to improve.

Capital Construction: 6 year plan

The 2014 Master Plan Report document created by the firm of Dewberry provides a ten year, two phase plan for prison construction projects within existing NDCS facilities. A third phase (10+ years) proposes construction of a new 600 bed facility, as well as "Re-Entry Service Centers" located in Lincoln and Omaha.

Dewberry created the Operational Stress Index (OSI) to assess the level of crowding within NDCS facilities. The OSI is the relationship between the Average Daily Population (ADP) and the core support services in a facility. The report established the total operating capacity for NDCS at 4477 beds (108% of capacity), with an OSI of 1.26. Based on the current prison population levels NDCS is at 120% of operational capacity, and an OSI of approximately 1.34. There is a need to gradually increase both the operational capacity and the core support services to ultimately attain an OSI below 1.20.

The Master Plan document was used in the development of a six (6) year plan to address immediate needs, and prepare for future needs. Planned improvements to the Community Corrections Center – Lincoln (CCCL) will support the designated operating capacities for the facility. Further study of the proposal to combine Lincoln Corrections Center and the Diagnostic and Evaluation Center into a single facility (Regional Treatment Center) is required. The ongoing repurposing work is projected to be completed during FY2016 increases operational capacity by 100 beds at TSCI. The population at TSCI will not be increased until the facility is fully ready to manage the additional inmates.

Usable data from the impacts of LB605 will be available by the summer of 2016, allowing us to better predict future population levels. Implementation of the revised classification scoring tool and the RNR assessment process will provide the information required to make additional recommendations for future needs.

Commencing FY 2016-2017

Community Corrections Center – Lincoln (CCCL): 160 female community custody beds will be constructed utilizing gender responsive approaches. This will consolidate all female community custody beds at CCCL, repurposing the beds at the Community Corrections Center – Omaha (CCC-O) as male beds. Repurpose 24 existing female beds at CCCO into 12 beds for male inmates. Increase core services to support an operating capacity of 400 male beds and 160 female beds at CCCL. Program statement will explore the viability of moving the Nursery Program at Nebraska Correctional Center for Women (NCCW) to the new female unit at CCCL. Net increases in community custody bed space: 48 female beds, 100 male beds

Regional Treatment Center (RTC): The Master Plan calls for the consolidation of the Lincoln Correctional Center and the Diagnostic and Evaluation Center, and the addition of over 300 beds for behavioral health, geriatric, and long-term medical needs. The program statement describes a $186 million project. There is a need for elements of the proposed RTC project, but not at the level described in the February, 2015 program statement. A new program statement for the proposed RTC will be completed, and will include options for a phased approach to construction. No design or construction funds are requested for the FY2016-2017 biennium.

For future consideration, FY 2018-2021

Work Ethic Camp (WEC): Consider addition of 100 minimum custody beds and reduce the existing dormitory capacity to 160 beds (from 200 beds). Increase core services to support an operating capacity of 260 minimum custody beds.

Nebraska Correctional Center for Women (NCCW): Consider separate housing for female juvenile inmates. Increase core services to support an operating capacity of 360 beds, all custody levels.

Nebraska State Penitentiary (NSP): Consider reduction of existing dormitory capacity from 600 to 480 beds, as well as the addition of 120 minimum custody beds. Replace existing segregation unit with a functional Restrictive Housing Unit that includes programming space. Increase core services to support an operating capacity of 1350 beds.

Community Corrections Center – Omaha (CCC-O): Site could support an additional 100 male community custody beds. Increase core services to support the increased operating capacity of 250 beds.

Omaha Correctional Center (OCC): Expand and improve core services to support an operating capacity of 792 beds.

Tecumseh State Correctional Institute (TSCI): Potential for addition of 100 new maximum custody beds if the overall population custody levels warrant the need for higher custody beds.

Parole Offices: Provide space for parole hearings, parolee services, Parole Administration, and the Parole Board adjacent to the largest NDCS community reentry center, CCC-L.

Central Power Plants:

The central utility plants at NSP, DEC/LCC and CCC-L are at or near the end of their life spans. Expansion of usable space at any of the three facilities will require upgrades/replacement of the existing plants. Proposals from the District Energy Corporation would cover the capital costs of constructing the plants and all operating costs in exchange for a 25 year fee for service agreement.

The capital funding to provide a new centralized utility plant for DEC/LCC/CCC-L is estimated at over $17.0 million. The annualized cost over 25 years is $2.1 million per year if NDCS constructs and operates, and $2.3 million per year under a fee for service agreement with DEC. Under the fee for service agreement DEC assumes liability for all repairs, equipment failure, and maintaining required staffing levels. The DEC fee for service arrangement has been utilized at the State Capitol building, and the Pinnacle Arena. Operational funding for the fee for service agreement would begin during the FY2020-21 biennial budget cycle.

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