

NEBRASKA

Good Life. Great Mission.

DEPT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES



2019 – 2023 STRATEGIC PLAN

Nebraska Department of Correctional Services

September 2018

A Message from the Director



Scott R. Frakes

The Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS) is a critical component of the state's criminal justice system with more than 5,300 individuals housed within the agency's 10 prisons. The work of corrections is dangerous and demanding.

A team of nearly 2,400 dedicated professionals work together every day to create a safe environment, effect change and keep people safe. Since my appointment in 2015, this team has faced every challenge head-on and with the utmost professionalism. The environment they seek to create is one in which incarcerated individuals can learn to change their attitudes and behavior to live better lives both inside and outside

of prison. We are serious about improving community safety, and we are serious about keeping people from returning to prison.

Here in Nebraska, 93 percent of the people in our system will reenter the community. Two-thirds of the population will do so in less than three years. This means we have very little time to work with many of the people who come through the prison system. We cannot afford to waste a minute of any prison sentence. NDCS has embraced the concept of 'reentry begins at intake.' The opportunity to help people change begins the moment they arrive and continues throughout their sentence. Given the right tools, the right programming and treatment, and the right opportunities, people can find success. Engaging people early will reduce misconduct, lead to better success with programming and provide for a smoother transition into the community.

Identifying and prioritizing our customers is central to a comprehensive strategic plan. The safety of our team members and the people we incarcerate is foundational to everything we seek to accomplish. Our commitment to continuous improvement is our opportunity for excellence and our responsibility to the taxpayers of Nebraska. NDCS has achieved much over the last several years, and this plan ensures forward progress. The strategies identified throughout the plan are a small representation of the work we will do to reach our desired outcomes. Evidence-based approaches, core correctional practices, validated assessment tools and careful investments in capital construction move us toward our agency's vision, 'Safe Prisons – Transformed Lives – Safe Communities.'

This is how we help grow Nebraska. I am proud to tell people what we do for a living; we keep people safe.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Frakes', written in a cursive style.

Executive Summary

Strategic planning is a continuous process, a cycle of establishing and achieving priorities then raising the bar and setting new goals.

The 2019 – 2023 strategic plan identifies the three essential priorities of our work: 1) NDCS team members, 2) incarcerated individuals, and 3) Nebraska taxpayers. Because we know “what gets measured gets done,” the plan identifies measurable outcomes within each priority area.

Strategic Priority: NDCS Team Members

Our greatest resources are the NDCS team members who have committed to serve the public and keep people safe. By prioritizing team members, we cultivate a work environment where every person feels respected and appreciated, and believes his or her opinion matters. For that growth to occur, we must focus on the following outcomes: 1) team member safety, 2) engagement, 3) employee performance, and 4) retention of the workforce.

Honing in on these four outcomes will allow NDCS to cultivate and maintain a stable workforce for the long term.

Strategic Priority: Incarcerated People

The primary role of the corrections system is public safety. Incarceration keeps people in a managed environment, but only for a certain length of time. In order to effect lasting change, opportunities for rehabilitation must be available. When someone is committed

to NDCS, he or she is assessed for risk to reoffend, risk-related needs and responsivity to intervention. This assessment ensures that we are providing the right opportunities to the right people at the right time. To best assess our future success when it comes to serving incarcerated people, we are focusing on four outcomes: 1) safety (specifically, reducing the number of people in segregated housing), 2) increased programming, 3) boosting reentry success, and 4) improving quality of life through the addition of mission-specific housing units.

Strategic Priority: Nebraska Taxpayers

Sound financial practices, appropriate use of funds and transparency are essential to maintaining taxpayer trust. Accountability is achieved through internal and external checks and balances. NDCS is accountable to state and federal oversight, including the American Correctional Association, the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the State Fire Marshal, the Auditor of Public Accounts, the Legislature’s Office of Public Counsel, the Inspector General and the Judiciary Committee. The agency has a responsibility to have an annual balanced budget, a significant portion of which is spent on human talent. We have identified four factors that play into accountability, transparency and financial responsibility to Nebraska taxpayers: 1) technology advancement, 2) process improvement, 3) resource allocation, and 4) public safety.

Mission:
Keep people safe.

Vision:
Safe Prisons
Transformed Lives
Safe Communities

Values:
Integrity Respect Compassion
Growth Excellence

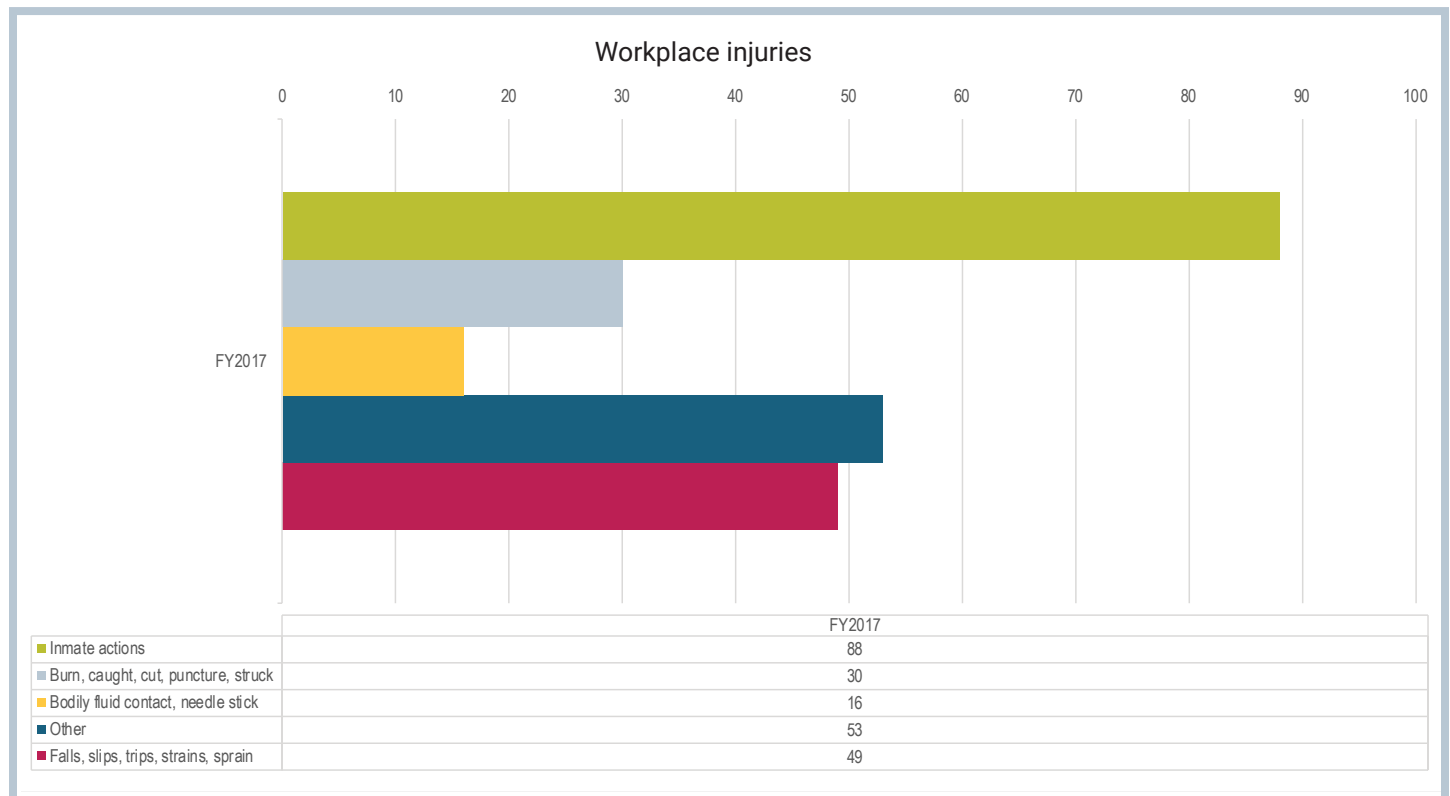


Strategic Priority: NDCS team members

SAFETY OUTCOME: NDCS will reduce the number of workplace injuries by 50%.

The NDCS mission: 'Keep people safe' starts with our most valuable resource – our team members. On-the-job injuries range from simple accidents like slips and falls to more serious incidents involving incarcerated individuals. An injury can affect someone's

ability to attend work, perform work and his or her overall sense of well-being. Additionally, other team members can be impacted if they must cover for the injured person. The chart below reflects workplace injuries recorded during FY 2017.



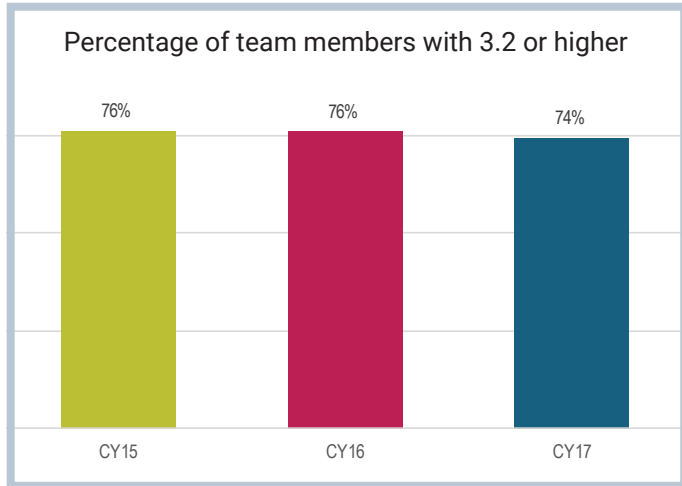
ENGAGEMENT OUTCOME: One-third of process improvement projects will originate from QDIP boards.

An important tool in process improvement is the QDIP board, which provides teams the opportunity to review and chart daily progress with regard to Quality, Delivery, Inventory and Production. The use of QDIP boards allows front line-staff to identify issues within processes in their particular areas. Selecting projects from QDIP boards can help leaders better define the work they do daily and help their teams achieve goals that can transform corrections.



PERFORMANCE OUTCOME: 100% of NDCS team members will achieve 3.2 or higher on performance evaluations.

The State of Nebraska recently initiated SMART Goals – a quantitative method for measuring and rewarding employee performance. Over the last three calendar



years, 75.3 percent of the NDCS workforce achieved a 3.2 or higher on their employee evaluations. That means they are doing slightly better than simply “meeting” expectations laid out in the program (CY 15: 76%, CY 16: 75.9% and CY 17: 74.3%). At the beginning of 2018, we introduced ‘While You Were Working’ cards to influence the engagement of team members department-wide through employee recognition. Utilizing these cards makes meeting this SMART Goal much simpler and helps transform our culture through appreciation.

RETENTION OUTCOME: Agency turnover will be reduced to 18%.

Maintaining an experienced workforce enhances safety and improves work culture. If you examine the chart below, you will note that the percentage of turnover increased nearly four percent from CY 2012 through CY 2014. While total turnover has climbed since CY 2012, the rate of increase has slowed.

Agency Turnover

| Year | FTE | Turnover | % Turnover |
|-------|---------|----------|------------|
| CY 12 | 2295.5 | 401 | 17.47% |
| CY 13 | 2265.5 | 405 | 17.88% |
| CY 14 | 2331.5 | 500 | 21.45% |
| CY 15 | 2367.5 | 568 | 23.99% |
| CY 16 | 2421 | 613 | 25.32% |
| CY 17 | 2354.50 | 650 | 27.61% |

Practical strategies, identified here, provide direction as we strive toward our goal to fully engage each team member in carrying out the mission: ‘Keep people safe.’

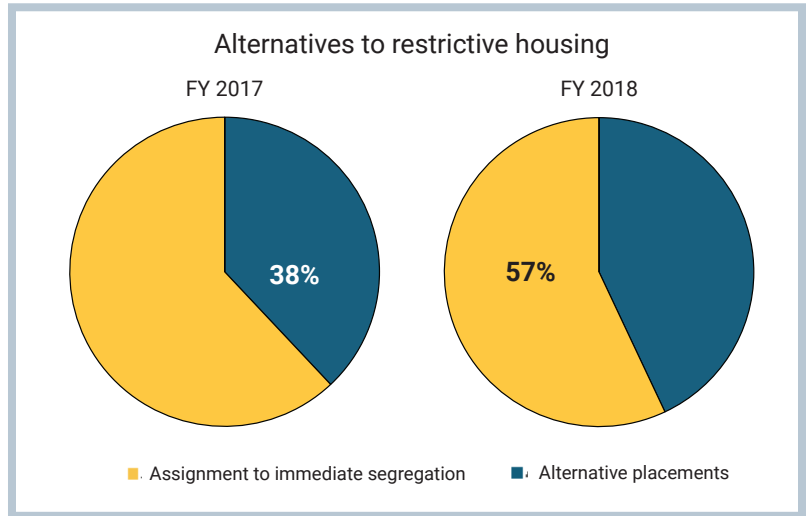
Strategies:

- Reduce mandatory overtime
- Provide opportunities for professional growth
- Focus on appreciation
- Provide resiliency training and support
- Enhance field training
- Increase team member engagement
- Increase first-year retention
- Eliminate staff assaults

Strategic Priority: Incarcerated people

SAFETY OUTCOME: Placements to immediate segregation will drop 50%.

In recent years, NDCS has made a serious examination of the types of situations that warrant placing an incarcerated individual in restrictive housing or segregation. Use of segregation is counterintuitive to the goal of providing incarcerated individuals with programming support that could increase their chance for behavior modification and improvement. However, that desire must be balanced with the need to maintain safety and prevent violent situations from occurring. As the pie chart indicates, progress has already been made in the past year to reduce the number of placements to immediate segregation. In FY 2018, there were more than 4,300 incidents which required an assessment of risk and included the potential

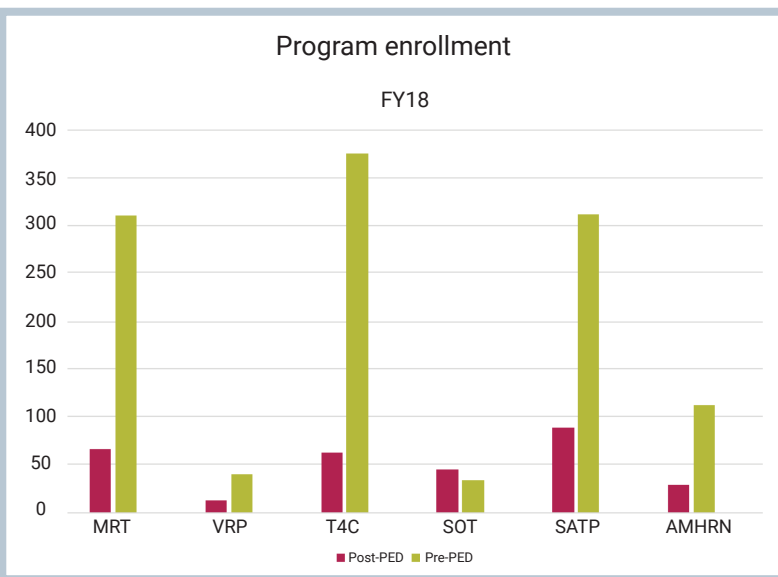


for restrictive housing placement. Of those, 43 percent were diverted to other less restrictive placements.

PROGRAMMING OUTCOME: 100% of entrants to clinical and core risk-reducing programs will be enrolled prior to their parole eligibility date (Pre-PED).

Each person committed to NDCS receives a comprehensive assessment of their risk to reoffend, their needs and their level of responsivity to intervention. This ensures that we are providing the right oppor-

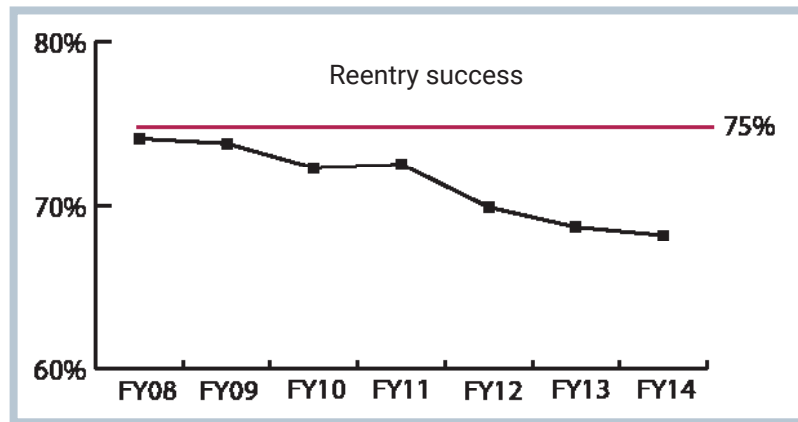
tunities to the right people at the right time. The bar graph indicates the number of participants taking part in the following programming in FY 18: Moral Recognition Therapy (MRT), Violence Reduction Program (VRP), Thinking for a Change (T4C), Sex Offender Treatment (SOT), Substance Abuse Treatment (SATP) and Anger Management (AMHRN). When people get programming Pre-PED, it increases the likelihood they will be paroled at the earliest opportunity.



REENTRY OUTCOME: NDCS will have in- creased the three-year reentry success rate to 75%.

Reentry starts at intake. That is more than a motto. That is the mindset at NDCS when it comes to carving out a path of success for incarcerated individuals. We

want those who want to achieve, to have the opportunities to do so. Approximately 66 percent of the people in our facilities will be released within three years. The work we started in 2015 and continue today will begin to be reflected in FY19 releases. Reentry success is measured when an individual remains in the community for at least three years following discharge.



This graph reflects the percentage of reentry success based on the year that individuals were discharged. Success is defined as an individual not re-offending and returning within three years.

Practical strategies, identified here, provide direction as we strive toward our goal of reentry and rehabilitation and contribute to safer communities through effective programming, reentry planning and transitional partnerships.

Strategies

- Offer vocational training programs in all facilities
- Conduct formalized reentry planning as individuals near release
- Increase involvement in volunteer-led programs
- Ensure clinical assessments occur within 30 days of admission
- Increase intensity of programs, and decrease program length
- Increase contact with clinical providers prior to treatment
- Increase alternative placements to restrictive housing

QUALITY OF LIFE OUTCOME: NDCS will de- velop and establish 10 additional mission specific housing units.

Mission-specific housing houses individuals with common demographics, interests, challenges and/or needs together in safe and effective living environments. The overarching goals include: 1) more effectively addressing the needs of special populations; 2) reducing the use of restrictive housing for special populations; 3) providing risk- and needs-responsive and behaviorally-targeted interventions; and 4) focusing services, resources and programming in a more efficient manner. Some examples include housing units for older incarcerated individuals, veterans and those with physical challenges, as well as spaces designed for people convicted of sexually-based crimes and those with mental health needs. With mission-specific units, providing appropriate assessment, counseling and programming are all part of a targeted plan to provide appropriate levels of care and facilitate a return to the community when possible.



Strategic Priority: Nebraska taxpayers

TECHNOLOGY OUTCOME: NDCS will fully implement electronic health records.

Similar to a major hospital, NDCS maintains health records for thousands of incarcerated individuals. Just as hospitals have made the transition to Electronic Health Recordkeeping (EHR), our agency must do the same. Ultimately, the change to EHR will be much more cost-effective compared to maintaining and storing paper charts. Additionally, it allows for improved tracking of transfers both within the agency and outside of NDCS. We will be able to provide data on county safe keepers as well as monitor and share our records with other hospitals for improved continuity of care. Implementation of EHR will allow NDCS to provide a more holistic approach to healthcare.



PROCESS IMPROVEMENT OUTCOME: 180 QDIPs will be in operation agency-wide.

QDIP stands for Quality, Delivery, Inventory and Productivity. QDIP boards help team members generate project ideas, make executive decisions, and visually track progress. In terms of taxpayer benefit, QDIPs help to identify areas where funding is lacking and where money should be reallocated to help offset rising operational costs. By the end of CY18, the department expects to have 50 process-improvement QDIPs in operation agency-wide. By FY23, 180 QDIPs will be implemented.



Practical strategies, identified below, provide direction as we strive toward our goal of accountability and excellence as we use process improvement, sound fiscal practices and transparency to optimize organizational performance.

Strategies:

- Engage team members in daily huddles and process improvement projects
- Achieve expectations as identified by ACA, Fire Marshal, security audits and internal and external incident reviews
- Decrease mandatory overtime
- Enhance quality assurance throughout the agency
- Utilize technology
- Increase program capacity

RESOURCES OUTCOME: The custody staffing audit will be fully implemented.

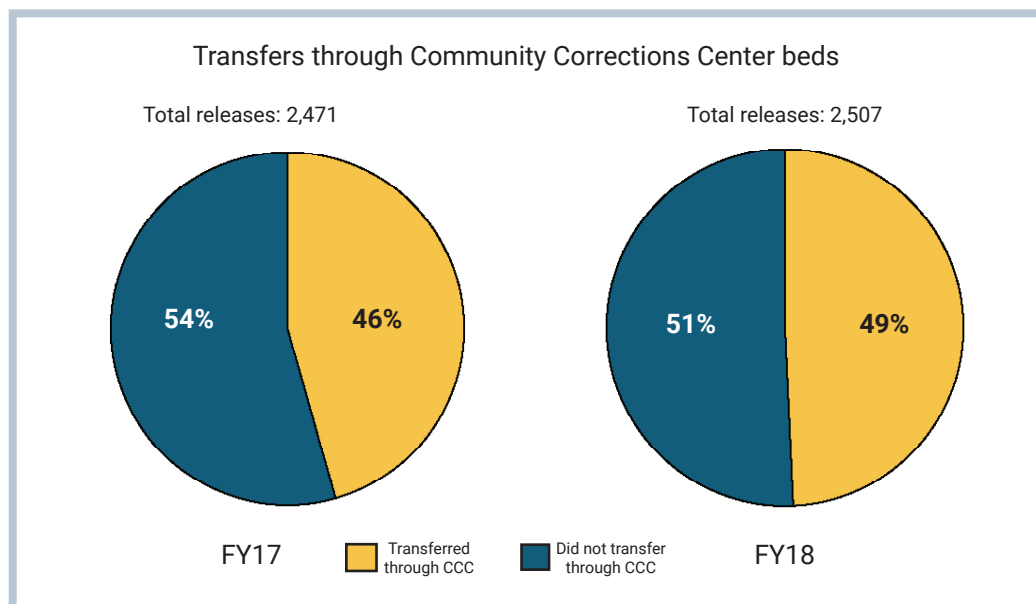
In July of 2016, NDCS completed a significant project: establish a defensible model for protective services (custody) staffing and an audit of the 10 correctional facilities. The audit identified the need for an additional

138 positions across the agency. Staffing increases of this magnitude are typically implemented over several bienniums. Forty-eight positions were funded across the FY 2018-2019 budget, and additional positions will be requested during the next two bienniums. As the agency grows through new construction, so do staffing requirements. This requires us to balance our funding requests between addressing the custody staffing audit and staffing newly opened areas.

PUBLIC SAFETY OUTCOME: All inmates deemed appropriate will transition through a community custody center (CCC) prior to release.

Community custody centers offer people the opportunity to reenter the community gradually and safely. Individuals are allowed limited, indirectly-supervised access to the community to work, participate in recreational activities and attend pro-social programming and activities. Progression to living in less restrictive security conditions provides incarcerated people opportunities for easier access to programming,

greater freedom of movement, and the ability to make more decisions – increasing individual responsibility and accountability. This allows them to be better prepared for their return to the community, while reducing the overall cost to the taxpayer. Community custody center beds have the lowest operating costs. Additionally, some costs associated with incarceration can be recouped when people are assigned to the work release program. Of the 2,507 people who were released from NDCS custody in FY18, 1,300 were appropriately classified to community custody. Increased programming opportunities and other enhancements to population management will lead to more people being prepared for and classified to community custody. The goal is to get all of them to a community center before release.



These pie charts show the number of people who released from NDCS in FY17 and FY18 and who transferred through a community corrections center at any point during their sentence prior to their release.

Capital Construction

Physical space and security measures are key to achieving the agency's mission. Governor Ricketts and the Nebraska Legislature continue to invest in capital construction projects that address capacity and infrastructure needs. As identified in the 2015-2018 Strategic Plan, NDCS' capital construction needs include expanding support services, addressing capacity and maintaining and replacing an aging infrastructure. The 2019-2023 Strategic Plan reflects efforts to address known construction needs and forecast future needs.

Currently Underway:

Community Corrections Center – Lincoln (CCC-L):

The facility expansion at CCC-L, including a 160-bed female living unit, is on-schedule to open in the spring of 2019. A 100-bed dormitory was opened at CCC-L in 2017.



CCC-L Expansion

Nebraska State Penitentiary (NSP): The addition of a 100-bed unit at NSP was announced in early January. This new construction will add minimum custody beds, which will allow individuals to transition out of maximum and medium security areas, through the system and ultimately into the community. The addition will also provide greater flexibility to move individuals between facilities and open up higher custody beds for new admissions.



NSP 100-Bed Unit

Lincoln Correctional Center/Diagnostic and Evaluation Center (LCC/DEC): Phase 1 of the Reception and Treatment Center (RTC) project funded in the 2018-2019 biennium will consolidate the two facilities, address core infrastructure needs and provide bed space for inmates with serious mental illnesses. This project is targeted for completion in 2021.

FY20-21 Request:

Nebraska State Penitentiary (NSP): A program statement has been completed to address food preparation and dining needs and an infrastructure that has been in continuous use since 1982. Programs, education and support space will replace inadequate "temporary" structures erected 30 years ago.

Future Considerations:

The projects below have been identified as possible future priorities. The agency will continue to evaluate both the necessity and priority of these projects.

Nebraska State Penitentiary (NSP): Construction of an 80-bed high security restrictive housing unit could replace the existing 36-bed Control Unit (opened in 1955).

Lincoln Correctional Center/Diagnostic and Evaluation Center (LCC/DEC): A program statement for two living units, each housing 192 maximum security inmates (384 design beds), has been completed. This project could address agency needs for high security housing, allow for the conversion of LCC to full medium custody and contribute to meeting agency capacity needs.

Omaha Correctional Center (OCC): Future needs include expanding the family visiting area, medical services area, food service and programming space.

Work Ethic Camp (WEC): A program statement has been completed to address essential services such as intake/medical/recreation. Adding to the warehouse could provide adequate storage of supplies needed to operate the facility. Completion of these projects could allow for expanded bed space in the future.

Nebraska Correctional Center for Women (NCCW): Remodeling living units, expanding programming space and upgrading security may be needed.