



# Budget Office

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

April 20, 2023

The Honorable Darrell Clarke  
City Council President  
City Hall, Room 490  
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Dear Council President Clarke,

This letter is in response to questions raised by Councilmembers regarding the Proposed FY24 Operating and Capital Budget.

**Topic:** Retention and recruitment

**Questions:**

1. The Department of Prison's FY24 objectives include hiring a "Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Coordinator" and a "Wellness Coordinator".
  - a. What are the education requirements for these positions? Experience?

*The Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Coordinator requirement is completion of a bachelor's degree program at an accredited college or university; two years of professional human resources experience; one year of professional, full performance level public human resources experience in a departmental personnel program or central human resources agency; Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Specialty; two years of professional human resources experience analyzing and making recommendations for a diversity, equity, and inclusion initiative or program; one year of professional level human resources experience as a specialist performing project management, process improvement, performance management or program evaluation for a diversity, equity and inclusion program.*

*A master's degree in Human Resource Management, Labor Relations, Industrial Relations, Industrial Psychology, Public Administration or a closely related area of PHR or SHRM-CP certification may be substituted for one year of the required General Experience or any equivalent combination of acceptable education and experience determined to be acceptable by the Office of Human Resources, which includes possession of a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university as an educational minimum and the specific experience.*



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- b. **Wellness Coordinator:** *A Bachelor's degree in health education, public health, or a related field is required. Three or more years of experience in wellness program development; wellness certification preferred.*
  - c. *Is the Department working with the local community stakeholders in the retention of these positions? No. However, Prisons is working with the City's Office of Human Resources and Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to ensure the positions are posted and made available using various employment platforms for interested city or external individuals to apply.*
  - d. *What is the timeline for hiring these roles and how will they work within the current PDP structure? PDP anticipates these positions will be filled by the following dates: DEI Coordinator by June 30, 2023, and September 30, 2023 for the Wellness Coordinator.*
  - e. *The DEI Coordinator will be assigned to the PDP's Human Resources Office and will report to the PDP's Human Resources Manager to assist with creating DEI training, employee communication and education, serve on hiring panels, and create job descriptions or revisions in partnership with the City's Office of Human Resources when needed. The Wellness Coordinator will be assigned to the PDP Training Academy and will be responsible for surveying employees for input, creating a wellness plan and activities for employees, and report to the training academy director to implement the plan made available for city employees.*
2. The issue of guard hiring and retention is longstanding.
    - a. *Please explain how additional funds have improved recruitment and retention? The preliminary implementation of sign-on and Academy completion bonuses has resulted in a decrease in attrition for new cadets. The preliminary findings of the financial incentives for the 12-Hour schedule pilot have proven to be positive, with a decrease in attrition, improved attendance, and retention. We anticipate the expansion of the 12-Hour Schedule coupled with the wage increase and financial incentives will attract more applicants applying for the positions, ultimately graduating multiple academies to fill vacancies. Further, we expect offering hybrid 8- and 12-Hours schedules aligns with the Department's goal of creating work-life balance.*
    - b. *What incentives are you currently offering? PDP offers a \$1,000 hiring bonus of which \$500 is paid upon graduation from the Academy and \$500 is paid upon completion of one (1) year with Prisons. Existing employees receive two (2) \$1,300 retention bonuses. All eligible employees who meet attendance requirements, receive a \$500 quarterly incentive.*



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- c. How does the department emphasize diversity and inclusion in the hiring process? *PDP's sends job announcements system-wide to existing employees and uses external employment platforms to announce job opportunities. This method ensures announcements are sent to the workforce at the same time as well as external announcement to solicit interest for same positions.*
  - d. What is the current entry level salary for a guard? *Correctional officers working 8 hours' first step is \$44,165 and correctional officers working 12 hours' first step is \$57,370.*
  - e. How has this changed over time and how does it compare with peer institutions? *The wage increase was awarded January 27, 2023 as part of the Interim Arbitration Award. PDP's starting wage is comparable to the starting wages for the PA Department of Corrections' Correctional Officer 1 (\$42,667), Camden County (\$46,279) and Delaware (\$45,790) for correctional officer positions. Additionally, correctional officers working 12 hours first step is \$57,370 which exceed peer institutions.*
3. You are currently 895 positions below what you are budgeted for.
- a. How many vacancies have you filled in the last six months? *82 vacancies were filled in the last six months. PDP anticipates filling 150 positions based on our past cadet class average of 25 Academy classes each coupled with recently Arbitration awarded wage increases and financial incentives for individuals who pass background checks.*
  - b. How many positions do you think you'll be able to fill during FY24? Where do you think that will leave your vacancy level? *We anticipate filling 150 positions during FY24 based on past six (6) cadet classes of 25 each resulting in a 38% vacancy rate. We anticipate this number of applicants will increase with the advertisement of the new contracted wage increase and financial incentives for correctional officers.*
  - c. In FY22, you only had 65% of your budgeted positions filled. According to your testimony, you now have 60% of your budgeted positions filled, but your goal is for 95%. Is this a realistic goal? *We believe the goal is realistic because of the recent financial arbitration award and will use the salary and schedule for recruitment.*



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- d. How many vacancies are in your restorative and transitional services unit?  
*Restorative and Transitional Services vacancies are eleven (11) social work service managers; one (1) social work supervisor; two (2) psychologists; and one (1) education director.*
4. You are requesting an additional \$13m in Class 100 funds for FY24.
- a. With nearly 1,000 positions unfilled, how much of your Class 100 funds for FY23 have been allocated? *Total funds allocated in FY23: \$154,757,117: (Total Class 100) \$119,048,395; (OT) \$31,591,422; (Shift) \$2,071,000; (sick) \$2,046,000*
- b. You spent nearly \$30m on overtime in FY22. How much are you spending on overtime this fiscal year? *Prisons is projected to spend \$32M. What percent of your class 100 for FY23 is currently spent on overtime? 20% Q2 overtime spending.*
- c. Can you please explain why you are budgeted for over 2100 positions when you were only at 1300 filled positions as of November 2022? *We have been challenged filling budgeted positions due to the changing and competitive labor market. Additionally, the Federal Judge overseeing the ACLU litigation ordered PDP to hire an additional 180 correctional officers above the budgeted positions. PDP will continue to work with City's Office of Human Resources to increase the number of job announcements from 4 to 6 announcements per year and expedite onboarding of individuals who meet requirements and background checks.*
- d. When is the last time you reached 95% budgeted positions filled? *In June of 2020, PDP's budgeted security positions were 1,586, and 1,519 were filled which reached 95.8% budgeted positions filled.*
5. You note in your testimony that you want to expand professional development opportunities and training to maintain the highest level of professionalism. Please detail what types of professional development opportunities you will be offering. *The Philadelphia Department of Prisons (PDP) offers mandatory and new professional development and training yearly and the calendar for 2023 includes the continuation of several training courses as well as newly developed trainings and workshops. In 2022, more than 120 PDP staff participated in wellness programs and trainings.*
- 2023 upcoming professional development training include the following:*
- *First-Year Correctional Officer Mentor Program (new)*
  - *Crisis Intervention Training One-Day Refresher (new) for existing certified staff*
  - *Inter-personal Communication (new)*
  - *Introduction to Mindfulness (new)*



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- *Performance Excellence*
  - *Thinking for a Change, cognitive behavioral program*
  - *Crisis Intervention Training for de-escalation practices*
  - *Wellness Training: Addiction & Connection to Treatment for First Responders and selfcare*
  - *Mental Health First Aid*
  - *Implicit Bias Training*
- a. How will this help current staff move into higher level positions? *Offering training helps prepare PDP staff with modern correctional practices to better perform their duties and assume supervisory duties, which require mentoring and modeling for direct reports; and improves interaction and service delivery to the incarcerated population.*

**Topic:** workforce reentry

**Questions:**

- a. In your testimony, you note that you work closely with the office of reentry partnerships to help those released from custody find success post release. Which workforce development programs are you currently working with that serve both those still serving their sentences and those who are preparing for release?

*PDP partnered with the Jewish Employment Vocational Services (JEVS) for a Department of Justice Second Chance Act grant funded at \$399,000 per year for three (3) years; The Philadelphia Urban League Pathway Home grant from the Department of Labor at \$530,000 for three and a half (3 1/2) years. PDP has partnered with two (2) local employers slated to offer training/interview opportunities for the incarcerated population (Shop Rite and Southern Flames BBQ) which will lead to post-release employment. The city's Senior Office of Reentry Partnerships partners with PDP and the providers to provide support and pre- and post-release engagement for incarcerated/released participants to improve reentry outcomes, thus reducing recidivism.*

*PDP also works with New Leash on Life (NLOL) which is a canine rescue program that teaches incarcerated people to become canine handlers resulting in early release from PDP for gainful employment and canine adoptions. PDP resumed partnership with Temple University for the Branching Up agriculture and organic garden program for incarcerated participants to consideration for early parole to paid internships. PDP resumed the Back 2 Work program, safe serve certification program with a contracted food vendor, GD Correctional Services, and participants who pass the certification are released with industry recognized food safety certification as required by food establishments. Lastly, PDP partnered with the Reclaim-U program which provides our population with home health aide training and certification coupled with case management and job placement opportunities post release.*



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- a. What additional resources are needed to expand workforce development opportunities? *PDP will work with the City Office of Human Resources, Department of Labor, and Office of Economic Opportunity to explore pathway employment opportunities with School District of Philadelphia, local labor unions and training opportunities for the incarcerated population that lead to viable employment opportunities. PDP envisions its population as the training ground for filling much needed positions in the city for various industries. This vision will require committed employer partnerships. PDP previously participated in establishing a 311 call center for the female population when housed at RCF, but the program did not materialize. Incarcerated women who participated would receive increase compensation above incarcerated work-pay and those who completing the training would be permitted to take the Civil Service exam upon release and if they met requirements would be hired. PDP engaged potential employers to create training opportunities onsite, but this did not yield the intended results. Employers were looking to contract for services, but were not interested in training their future workforces.*
  - b. How have these programs been limited throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and how quickly are you resuming normal programming? *PDP reduced class sizes, cohorting populations at the height of the pandemic to mitigate spread inside our facilities. PDP invested infrastructure to implement virtual education instruction. PDP has not fully resumed programs due to staffing levels which require uniform staff to provide security. PDP will gradually resume programs as staffing levels increase.*
2. You note in your testimony that you are requesting an additional \$500,000 to offer a 50% increase to inmate wages. Can you please tell me what the new wage will be with that increase? *PDP increased incarcerated pay by \$.50 from \$1.50 to \$2.00 per day. Correctional Industries hourly pay is \$.25 to \$.65. Incarcerated people can increase their hourly wage by demonstrating skillset via test after the first six weeks of the curriculum.*
3. In FY22, only 56% of inmates were enrolled in programs or work assignments. Why is this percentage so low? What additional support is necessary to reach the 70% goal? Why is the goal not higher? *Per policy, sentenced incarcerated people are required to work and are given priority for work assignments. Pretrial incarcerated people are not required but are encouraged to participate in work assignments and assigned to work. During COVID-19, PDP only assigned vaccinated incarcerated people to work assignments to mitigate the spread inside our facilities. PDP has since resumed assignment for both sentenced and pretrial people regardless of vaccination status to work assignments and we anticipate meeting our participation goal.*
4. You set a goal to create a certified barbering program and a CDL license program. What is the timeline to establish these programs? *PDP engaged the PA Department of Corrections to glean information about their certified barber program. PDP will use information to submit an*



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application to the PA State Board of Barber to request licensing. PDP expects to implement by mid FY24 (Fall/Winter) if granted approval. PDP researched the CDL program regarding simulators that are available for purchase for population to practice for the test. However, location is required for actual CDL test which is required to receive operator license. Partnership with a school that offers simulator training and actual CDL vehicle testing is required to implement the training. PDP plans to offer a Request for Proposal and upon selecting a vendor anticipates offering mid/late fall FY24.

5. How many inmates leave with certifications, and can you please provide a list of the certifications that are currently offered?

- New Leash on Life (NLOL) resumed September 2022 and issued twenty (20) certifications
- Branching Up resumed February 2in 023 session and the number will be reported upon completion of cohort
- Reclaim-U which started March 2022 during the pandemic and issued twenty (28) certifications
- Back 2 Work, resumed September 2022 to March 2023, issued eight (8) certifications

**Topic:** climate

**Questions:**

1. You note in your testimony that the prison is within the 100-year flood plain and in the event of a severe weather event, the population may need to be moved.
  - a. Have you created emergency plans for this type of event? *Yes. PDP has a Continuity of Operations Plan.*
  - b. What would the associated costs be? *Our previous contracted cost for outside housing rates for 17<sup>th</sup> and Cambria in 2017-2018 was \$2.9 million per year. The current cost including inflation for the same housing is upwards of \$5 million for today's rates.*
  - c. Does PDP have a climate action plan or climate adaptation plan? If not, why? *Yes. PDP has a compost program and orchard program reducing Prisons footprint for greenhouse gases and introduced electric vehicles to our fleet. PDP participates with the City's Strategic planning framework for measuring, planning, and reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and related climatic impacts.*
  - d. What additional resources are necessary in order to ensure that PDP is prepared for any climate impacts or weather-related emergencies? *Funding is needed for a new facility to house the population closer to State Road, away from the Flood plain. In the interim, additional funding will be necessary to contract for 17<sup>th</sup> and Cambria and other viable locations in the city should an emergency arise that requires relocation of population.*