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**Nashville Tn 37214**

**Jail Staffing Issues**

**Report by: Bob Bass and Tonya Stacey**  
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## **Excecutive Summary**

**The purpose of this report is to assist Sheriffs and Jail Administrators in identifying staffing issues. Understanding their root causes and how to develop stratagies to work through challenges in this ever changing environment. This report is the first step in identifying and bringing focus on how to recurite and retain officers.**

**The objective of this report is to assist all stakeholders in the decision making process with information related to why correctional officers leave and how to change negative cultures all the while creating obtainable hiring practices.**

## Foreward

Turnover rates, staff shortages, and retention of staff have always been a concern at local jails across the state. During these uncertain times the issue has exacerbated. Tennessee Corrections Institute standards refer to lack of staff.

## 07 Security

**(20) Facilities shall have sufficient staff, including a designated supervisor, to provide, at all times, the performance of functions relating to the security, custody, and supervision of inmates as needed to operate the facility in conformance with the standards. This requirement applies only to Type I, II, and III Facilities.**

When staffing levels are low a direct result could be failure to achieve some - time sensitive standard requirements. These failures will be reflected on the annual inspection report. After the initial report, any findings will need to be corrected within a 60-day time limit. It will be very difficult to correct staffing shortages within 60-days. This may require commission action. The facility may have to address salaries, additional FTE's employed, etc. Taking a pro-active approach now can assist in avoiding crisis planning in the future. Especially where there is a high probability of such an occurrence.

*As I have traveled around the state and held discussions with various agencies, I have been made aware that a real problem exists. The complaints range from "We can't find anyone willing to work" to "We*

*can't attract quality people". "If we get them hired, we can't keep them". Addressing the issue now will pay dividends in the future.*

*Bob Bass*

*Deputy Director*

*"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much".*

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## **Chapter 1 ..... Addressing staffing issues in today's environment.**

When we think about staffing our jails, we think in terms of the difficulty we will have. Administrators immediately go straight to an idea that the task is going to be difficult. This I suppose is normal. Or is it? Why shouldn't it be a welcomed task and one we look forward to with excitement? Your thought pattern whichever side of the issue you are on one thing is certain. In today's environment it's a very complex mission with many outside factors that push us towards failure rather than success. If we focus on the problem and not focus on solutions, then the rate of success is going to be low. If we focus on overcoming issues as we have identified them the success rate increases tremendously. When you ask jail administrators about their staffing levels you get varied responses.

*Such as "We can't find anyone suitable to hire." We don't pay enough to attract qualified individuals." Nobody wants to work these days". If we get them, we can't keep them.*

When we start to work through the processors open your mind to how do we make our process work that supports the agencies mission and helps us put qualified people in place that will stay for years to come. If we focus on the negative, then we are going to get negative results.

***"Taking ownership in the process as the primary stakeholder is a big first step."***

## **Why is it so hard to hire correctional officers?**

Several factors make recruiting and retention difficult. First, correctional officers have one of the highest rates of injuries and illnesses of all occupations, due to confrontations with incarcerated people and exposure to contagious diseases. The threat of violence can cause hypervigilance and anxiety.

With all the STD's, we find in the jail population and other illness from staph infections to COVID the inmate community is a melting pot of contagious diseases that staff must navigate through daily.

We train staff in universal precautions. We separate inmates to mitigate the spread. Administration provides PPE. Administration constantly reminds the staff to safeguard themselves.

We are constantly placing the challenges in front of them and reminding them where they are working at.

Threat of violence causes hypervigilance. *Definition: the elevated state of constantly assessing potential threats around you.*

Hypervigilance is one of the central features of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). It can also occur with other anxiety disorders, including panic disorder, substance/medication-induced anxiety disorder, and generalized anxiety disorder. Schizophrenia, dementia, and paranoia can also induce hypervigilance.

Inmate assaults results in officer injury and impacts the officers in negative ways. Not only physical harm but mental harm as well.

What happens in public employment practices reflects or mirrors what is happening in the government sector. Of course, often times government jobs often have more stringent requirements especially in law enforcement.

*Source: Federal Probation a Journal of correctional philosophy and practice*

*Jody L. Sundt*

*Portland State University*

## Public Attitudes About Prison Work

**Prison guards (correctional officers) are truly imprisoned:** They are not only physically confined but are locked into movie caricatures, into pejorative prophecies (sometimes self-fulfilling), into anachronistic supervision patterns, into unfair civil service definitions, into undeserved hostilities and prejudgments of their actions. Officers are imprisoned by our ignorance of who they are and what they do, which is the price they pay for working behind walls. —Hans Toch (1981)

One of the few studies to examine attitudes about correctional officers was conducted by the Florida Department of Corrections (Tully & Morris, 1998). When asked to list those words that best describe correctional officers, Florida residents referred to correctional officers as “tough,” “brave,” “underpaid,” “dedicated,” and “strong.” Moreover, when representatives of the media were asked the same question, they responded similarly with descriptions such as “tough,” “brave,” “dedicated,” “stressed,” and “underpaid.” Respondents in this survey also said that they thought correctional officers should receive the same pay as police officers.



Although limited in scope and vulnerable to social desirability response bias, this research raises questions about long held assumptions about public perceptions of correctional officers. The findings suggest that the public holds mostly positive views of correctional officers but views prison work as stressful and dangerous (officers are brave, tough, and strong). The findings also indicate that the public recognizes that COs are underappreciated (that is, dedicated but underpaid). Studies of occupational prestige provide some additional insight into how the public views the quality of correctional employment. The 1989 wave of the General Social Survey included occupational prestige ratings for hundreds of occupations, including correctional officers. The average prestige score for all occupations was 43.4. Physicians received the highest prestige score, an 86. Other highly rated occupations included lawyers (75) and professors (74). The mean prestige score given to correctional officers was 40, placing this occupation below other “protective” services such as police officers (with prestige scores of 60) and firefighters (53), and below the group mean for protective services (49). Correctional officers were ranked above other “blue collar” and service jobs, however, such as carpenter (39), receptionist (39), truck driver (30), and cashier (29) (see Hauser & Warren, 1996; Nako & Treas, 1994). Although the public may view COs in positive terms, national rankings of occupational prestige provide a more qualified view of this job.

Bob Bass

Fast forward to 2021. Take an objective look at what’s happening with public perception of law enforcement today. Consider how the media shapes a narrative. When the public opinion is reported unfavorably of

police such as the “defund the police movement” or points out the retirement rates in the industry correlates as a direct result of no one wants to serve anymore then it has a direct result on all branches, police, dispatchers, and correction officers. When correctional officers make serious mistakes like recent high profile inmates committing suicide it fosters a very negative attitude of corrections and the agencies which they work for. These types of incidents end up in the newspapers putting us above the fold. Bad news is highly marketable, it’s what sells newspapers and gives the talking heads on TV something to debate.

This has a very negative effect on recruitment. Who would want this job?

*Private and public sector share some of the same pitfalls. Taking a look at what trends are in the two sperate fields and the challenges faced by both will heighten our insight and give us more information on making sound choices while developing strategies.*

## **8 REASONS IT'S SO HARD TO FIND GREAT PEOPLE THESE DAYS**

By Carey Nieuwhof

So, like all leaders, you're trying to build your team—to hire great people and build a strong team for the future.

Why does it seem so hard to find great people these days?

As a leader who's been building teams for a few decades now, I understand the struggle.

Finding people is one thing. Finding great people is quite another. Talented people with skills, energy and character are the kind of people who build great organizations.

Making poor hires is a more costly mistake than you might think.

Some studies put the cost of employee turnover, with conservative estimates of \$50,000 every time you must replace an employee because you either terminated them or they left. That's expensive.

Better to hire a great person and create an environment they love than settle for hiring whoever and hope they work out.

So—back to the original question—why are great people so hard to find?

Well, in a changing workplace and culture, here are 8 reasons you might find yourself searching longer and harder for great people than ever.

After all, it helps to know what you're up against. Diagnosing the problem is the first step to solving the problem.

***“Finding people for your team is one thing. Finding great people is quite another.”***

## **1. THERE’S A TALENT WAR GOING ON**

It’s not just your imagination. There actually is a talent war going on.

A few things are fueling this.

First, with the unemployment rate profoundly low, it’s a full-employment economy. As a result, people looking for work can find it.

Second, there are generational shifts happening. With Baby Boomers leaving the workforce rapidly and Gen X not far behind, Millennials are by some estimates now 50% of the workforce. By 2025, Millennials will be 75% of the workforce.

Third, there appears to be a skill shortage. Colleges just aren’t pumping out qualified graduates fast enough to meet the needs of the market. Just ask any talented computer engineer, who likely gets multiples job offers a month.

In other fields, there’s simply a shortage of leaders. In the church world, for example, the average age of the senior pastor has crept up to 57, and seminaries are not producing a groundswell of young, capable leaders. As a result, it can be difficult to staff for the future.

***“Organizations that don’t have any competitive advantages simply won’t be able to compete for top leaders.”***

## **2. THE INTERNET HAPPENED**

If you go back a generation or two, people were much more likely to stay put longer because they didn't see a lot of other options available to them.

Then the internet happened. Suddenly, you could discover new careers, new cities, and new options for free anytime, anywhere.

So, people did.

If you hire someone and they're not happy, they're on their phones in minutes looking for other options.

The power that used to belong to employers has now shifted to the employee. The higher the skill set you're looking for, the truer that is.

## **3. THE GIG ECONOMY**

Highly gifted people are increasingly working for themselves.

Estimates now put say that by 2023 almost 50% of American workers will participate in the gig economy to some extent.

73% of Gen Z report already having participated in it.

While you can argue all day long about the challenges associated with the gig economy (no benefits, lack of job security), it appears to be here to stay. The gig economy gives people freedom in a way the traditional job historically hasn't.

While "self-employed" used to signal that you couldn't find a job at a company, it's now increasingly seen as a status symbol.

#### **4. ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

One study revealed that 63% of twenty-somethings either own their own business or want to one day.

This trend will likely only escalate with the next generation of digital natives coming into the marketplace who realize you can launch almost anything you want online.

Just because many new businesses and startups fail doesn't stop people from trying.

All of this means they're far less likely to want to work for you.

#### **5. YOUR WORKPLACE ISN'T NEARLY FLEXIBLE ENOUGH**

Entrepreneurialism and the gig economy give leaders flexibility that traditional employers don't.

A survey of 900 leaders I recently undertook confirmed that young leaders are increasingly tired of being chained to a desk or to set hours, or to work for a boss who's closed to change and innovation.

The future workplace is a flexible workplace.

Flexible hours, remote work and giving freedom and autonomy to talented employees isn't the exception to the rule anymore, it's the new rule.

## **6. YOUR CULTURE ISN'T DEFINED (OR HEALTHY)**

The list of expectations prospective that an employee has increasingly includes a healthy workplace culture.

That's a good thing.

It's not just toxic culture that employees (with options) are rejecting. They're also rejecting a bad culture, unhealthy or boring culture.

Creating a great culture—one with minimal politics and where people love to come to work—is going to become an ever-increasing competitive advantage.

## **7. THEY SEE WHO YOU ARE, NOT WHO YOU CLAIM YOU ARE**

It's getting harder and harder to pretend you're someone you're not as an organization.

Thanks to blogs, social media and organizations like **Glass Door**, prospective staff members have a far easier time these days seeing who you really are, not who you claim you are.

That can work against you, of course, but it can also work for you.

In 2019, Glass Door voted Life Church the #1 best place to work among small-medium sized businesses. Right underneath a profile explaining why Life Church won the top workplace award is a list of current job openings at Life Church.

**If you're a healthy employer, transparency works in your favor.**

## **8. YOUR MISSION ISN'T COMPELLING ENOUGH**

All the studies say the same thing: Millennials really do care about mission and purpose.

And no, growth or a profitable bottom line simply aren't compelling enough purposes anymore.

Even in a church or non-profit context, it's easy to lose sight of the mission. Survival isn't a mission. Neither is growth.

### **EVER FEEL LIKE YOUR STAFF ARE UNMOTIVATED AND UNDERPERFORMING?**

Effective leaders ensure their team has a healthy and productive culture. One where everyone is bought in to the mission.

But it isn't easy to achieve that. It's something that many leaders spend years figuring out. To get those results, you need a mindset and strategy that will help you:

- Delegate and engage your team members
- Lead both in-person and virtual staff effectively
- Create meaningful team values
- Let your team know you're for them (not against them)



**Chapter 2..... Turnover rate percentages (staffing data)**

**Average Turnover Rate**

<b>County</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Anderson	32%	45%
Bartlett Police Department	23%	15%
Bedford	54%	14%
Benton	35%	52%
Bledsoe	48%	15%
Blount	10%	21%
Bradley	54%	57%
Campbell	25%	71%
Cannon	50%	43%
Carroll	19%	21%
Carter	21%	55%
Cheatham	37%	14%
Chester	39%	22%
Claiborne	29%	119%
Clay	39%	15%
Cocke	53%	83%
Coffey	76%	69%
Collierville Police Department	23%	23%
Crockett	38%	36%
Cumberland	69%	26%

Davidson-Female, Male, Downtown, and CDC	11%	13%
Decatur	50%	39%
Dekalb	35%	27%
Dickson	40%	17%
Dyer-Jail	63%	33%
Dyer- Annex	0%	0%
Fayette	58%	43%
Fentress	36%	52%
Franklin	19%	29%
Gatlinburg Police Department	22%	44%
Germantown Police Department	22%	36%
Gibson	36%	26%
Giles	26%	37%
Grainger	59%	67%
Greene	20%	26%
Grundy	35%	30%
Hamblen	79%	54%
Hamilton	32%	Closed
Hamilton County Sheriff's Office Silverdale Detention Facility	N/A	56%
Hancock	16%	22%
Hardeman	118%	57%

Hardin	25%	13%
Hawkins	40%	89%
Haywood	23%	45%
Henderson	29%	14%
Henry	8%	12%
Hickman	35%	30%
Houston	157%	64%
Humboldt Police Department	29%	14%
Humphreys	119%	61%
Jackson	81%	47%
Jefferson	24%	35%
Johnson City Police Department	83%	28%
Johnson	122%	50%
Kingsport Police Department	38%	38%
Knox- Roger D Wilson, Downtown Jail, and Workhouse	28%	17%
Lake	17%	36%
Lauderdale	31%	30%
Lawrence	21%	18%
Lewis	58%	50%
Lincoln	32%	24%
Loudon	45%	18%
Macon	56%	113%
Madison-Jail	27%	14%

Madison-Annex	0%	0%
Madison- Penal Farm	0%	0%
Marion	12%	24%
Marshall	24%	24%
Maury	75%	38%
McMinn	60%	58%
McNairy	44%	38%
Meigs	33%	6%
Milan	29%	29%
Millington	40%	30%
Monroe	71%	28%
Montgomery- Jail	15%	15%
Montgomery- Workhouse	4%	0%
Moore	67%	20%
Morgan	68%	92%
Obion	26%	41%
Overton	68%	19%
Perry	13%	19%
Pickett	20%	60%
Polk	18%	55%
Putnam	26%	13%
Rhea	57%	50%
Roane	7%	42%
Robertson	46%	9%
Rutherford-Adult	35%	13%
Rutherford- Workhouse	42%	12%

Scott	52%	48%
Sequatchie	46%	58%
Sevier	18%	14%
Shelby-East, Annex, and CJC	2%	2%
Shelby-Division of Correction	7%	5%
Silverdale	48%	*Consolidated with Hamilton
Smith	61%	78%
Stewart	7%	50%
Sullivan	36%	22%
Sumner	32%	4%
Tipton	35%	14%
Trenton	0%	0%
Trousdale	48%	16%
Unicoi	100%	64%
Union	74%	142%
Van Buren	88%	30%
Warren	41%	26%
Washington	16%	45%
Wayne	74%	30%
Weakly	38%	16%
White	53%	45%
Williamson	43%	13%
Wilson	25%	8%

## **Methodology:**

TCI captures the number of new officers hired as well as new positions at each inspection cycle. The numbers recorded above came from that data. This means in a cycle an inspection could have taken place on September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019 and then the 2020 inspection cycle done March 18, 2021. This is a time period of 6 months not 12 months. Using the same formula, you can understand that it could also be January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019 and the October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020. This means a cycle of 22 months. A more precise method could be applied by polling each department and asking them to provide an exact 12-month time frame. Our method does apply to an inspection cycle occurring on an annual cycle.

## Vacant Positions both Full and Part Time

County	2020	2021
Anderson	2	17
Bartlett Police Department	0	1
Bedford	28	15
Benton	5	6
Bledsoe	1	0
Blount	3	4
Bradley	11	3
Campbell	2	7
Cannon	0	4
Carroll	0	1
Carter	16	21
Cheatham	2	2
Chester	0	0
Claiborne	6	8
Clay	2	2
Cocke	1	2
Coffey	4	31
Collierville Police Department	2	2
Crockett	2	1
Cumberland	0	1
Davidson- CDC, Male, Female, and Downtown	314	99
Decatur	11	1

Dekalb	1	0
Dickson	14	5
Dyer-Jail	0	0
Dyer-Annex	0	0
Fayette	3	13
Fentress	3	1
Franklin	18	16
Gatlinburg Police Department	2	1
Germantown Police Department	0	23
Gibson	0	2
Giles	4	3
Grainger	7	9
Greene	0	0
Grundy	0	0
Hamblen	5	15
Hamilton	68	Closed
Hamilton County Sheriff's Office Silverdale Detention Center	N/A	33
Hancock	2	1
Hardeman	0	3
Hardin	2	2
Hawkins	5	5
Haywood	0	2
Henderson	1	6



Henry	0	0
Hickman	0	1
Houston	1	0
Humboldt Police Department	0	1
Humphreys	2	4
Jackson	8	19
Jefferson	3	9
Johnson City Police Department	4	7
Johnson	4	5
Kingsport Police Department	0	1
Knox- Roger D Wilson, Downtown Jail, and Workhouse	115	132
Lake	3	3
Lauderdale	3	4
Lawrence	4	4
Lewis	4	2
Lincoln	0	7
Loudon	4	3
Macon	2	2
Madison-Jail,	12	20
Madison-Annex	0	3
Madison-Penal Farm	0	4
Marion	2	4
Marshall	1	3

Maury	1	12
McMinn	2	0
McNairy	0	0
Meigs	0	0
Milan Police Department	0	0
Millington Police Department	1	4
Monroe	11	20
Montgomery-Jail	27	18
Montgomery- Workhouse	0	0
Moore	1	0
Morgan	5	3
Obion	2	4
Overton	0	5
Perry	2	1
Pickett	0	0
Polk	0	1
Putnam	2	2
Rhea	0	2
Roane	5	8
Robertson	9	12
Rutherford-Adult Detention Facility	5	33
Rutherford- Correctional Work Center	4	9

Scott	2	0
Sequatchie	4	0
Sevier	10	3
Shelby-East, Annex, and CJC	147	160
Shelby- Division of Corrections	57	158
Silverdale	45	*Consolidated with Hamilton
Smith	2	0
Stewart	0	0
Sullivan	5	22
Sumner	29	28
Tipton	4	5
Trenton	0	0
Trousdale	1	3
Unicoi	2	1
Union	2	5
Van Buren	1	1
Warren	10	5
Washington	15	18
Wayne	3	4
Weakly	1	0
White	4	8
Williamson	12	12
Wilson	7	11

## **Methodology**

TCI gathers data on annual inspection. The takeaway here is that there are positions which may be funded. Various reasons for the vacancies exist. In some cases, just not filling the position becomes a budget issue. In some cases, current staffing studies have not been conducted and staffing plans not updated.

### **Chapter 3..... Root Causes**

Tennessee Corrections institute sent out a questionnaire to 45 agencies as outlined below. The purpose was to identify some key reasons for officers leaving.

How to conduct effective exit interviews (and why they matter)  
**Conducting exit interviews to find out why people quit is key to addressing the issues that cause good employees to leave.**

Source:

*By James Careless, C1 Contributor*

About 500,000 people work in all levels of the U.S. corrections profession. Corrections officers are highly trained individuals. At local and state levels, a high school diploma is required plus extensive on-the-job training. Federal corrections officers require a college degree plus 200 hours of training during their first year.

With this kind of investment at stake, it makes sense for correctional institutions and their respective government overseers to do their best to retain qualified staff. When some of these staff do quit, it also makes sense to ask them why during an exit interview.

“Exit interviews are a powerful tool when conducted correctly,” said Roni Reiter-Palmon, PHD, professor and director of the industrial organizational graduation program at the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO). “They help organizations identify the main reasons employees are leaving, as well as the reasons that do not cause them to leave. That information can be used to help recruit and hire the right people, make organizational changes that would improve the

organization and help retain employees, while allowing the organization to focus on what are the real issues, not what management believes are the issues.”

## **EXIT INTERVIEWS EXPLAINED**

The job website Monster.com defines an exit interview as, “Your employer’s last chance to ask for formal feedback from you. They’d love to know why you’ve opted to leave, and what you really think about them. That way they can strive to reduce future turnover and fix internal problems.”

In the corrections industry, the questions associated with an exit interview understandably focus on the challenges and conditions associated with working in a jail and dealing with inmates. But the fundamental drivers remain the same as any other profession as far as management is concerned. They need to know if good employees are leaving due to problems that can be fixed by providing staff with better-trained supervisors, safer working conditions, and improved personnel policies, and even quality uniforms at the employer’s expense.

Conversely, if employees are quitting because they can’t deal with inmates and the inherent difficulties of corrections work, then management needs to know this – and to determine if people prone to such objections can be screened out during the hiring process.

Comprehensive, scientifically formulated exit interviews are not a top priority for the U.S. corrections industry. But some valuable research as to why they should be has been done by the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (DCS) in association with the Center for Applied

Psychological Services (CAPS) at the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO). Their collective efforts were documented in *Making Exit Interviews Useful to a Correctional Agency*, a UNO publication of which Dr. Reiter-Palmon was a co-author.

The project started by evaluating the DCS exit interview process in use at the time. It had two main sections for employees to answer:

A list of reasons for leaving, in which individuals selected three reasons that most closely matched their decisions for quitting.

A section asking departing staff to rate 17 statements about their jobs in terms of how closely these statements aligned with their own perceptions (pro and con).

The researchers noted in the UNO report that, “CAPS identified several problems in the exit interview system that may have limited the department’s ability to identify reasons underlying employees’ decisions to leave. First, a frequently marked option was ‘other’ (i.e., reasons not listed on the exit interview), indicating the current exit interview was not sufficiently evaluating major reasons for departure. Second, the portion of the exit interview that assessed perceptions of work did not provide detailed statements for determining reasons for leaving. Third, the exit interview was administered by the department immediately following employment termination” rather than by a neutral third party sometime after the employee has left their job.

In response to these shortcomings, the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services improved its exit interview process so that it provided management with useful, actionable information.

For instance, “CAPS created a new exit interview comprising ratings of 54 statements assessing perceptions of various aspects of work and written responses to three open-ended questions,” as noted in the UNO research paper. “Statements were grouped by subscale: the job itself, limited opportunity for growth/advancement, supervisor/management, problems with people, wages and benefits, working conditions, company policies and practices, and personal. Each subscale included more specific reasons for leaving, so results indicate particular areas for improvement to reduce turnover.”

A case in point: Rather than asking a departing employee if they left because of overall supervisor problems, “the specific supervisor problems were probed, such as poor communication, lack of guidance/feedback and failure to recognize good performance. Individuals rated each statement using a five-point scale, indicating the importance of the issue in their decision to leave (1 = not an issue; 5 = major issue),” noted the UNO research paper. Open-ended questions were also used to assess the factors influencing an employee’s decision to leave, the factors that contributed to an employee choosing to remain with the department and what would have been necessary to convince them to stay.

Correctional facilities can use this kind of enhanced exit interview data to make tangible changes to improve staff morale and employee retention, thus proving the importance of exit interviews in corrections.



**This is the questionnaire sent out to facilities.**

Employee turnover rate questionnaire:

1. Does your agency complete an exit interview? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

2. Please provide the number one reason officers cite for leaving.

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Please provide in your opinion the number one reason for leaving.

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Do you have an active recruitment process? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

If so, what are the recruitment techniques used?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Have you conducted salary comparison studies in your area with pay scales of neighboring agencies? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

If so, what was the outcome?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Please list benefits offered:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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7. Please list the number of COs per years' experience:

1 year or less \_\_\_\_\_

2 years \_\_\_\_\_

3 years \_\_\_\_\_

5 years \_\_\_\_\_

10 years \_\_\_\_\_

15 years \_\_\_\_\_

20 years \_\_\_\_\_

25 years or more \_\_\_\_\_

8. Do you have a rank-and-file structure? Example Corporal, Sargent, Lieutenant. Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_

If somethings else please explain.

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9. Do you pay longevity pay? Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

10. Do your officers work 12-hour shift's or 8? \_\_\_\_\_

11. Does your facility have incentives within the organization such as Correctional Officer of the quarter or employee of the month?

Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

If so, what incentives do you have?

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Do you think they are beneficial and why?

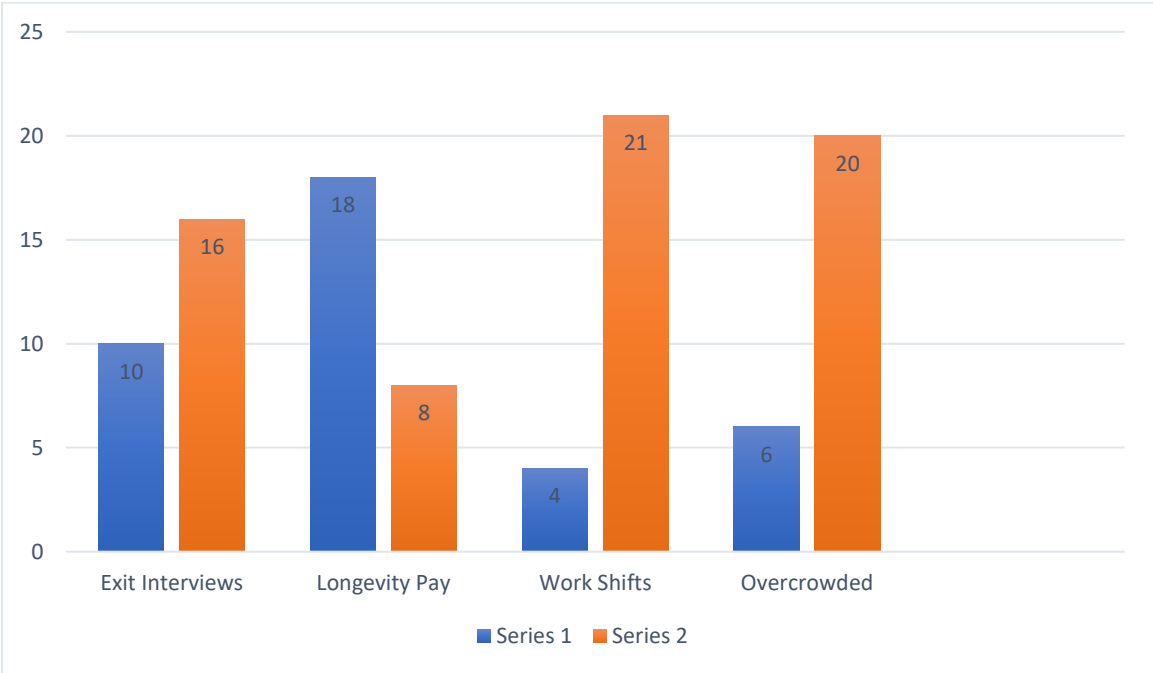
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12. Is the facility overcrowded on a consistent basis? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

**Questionnaire results:**



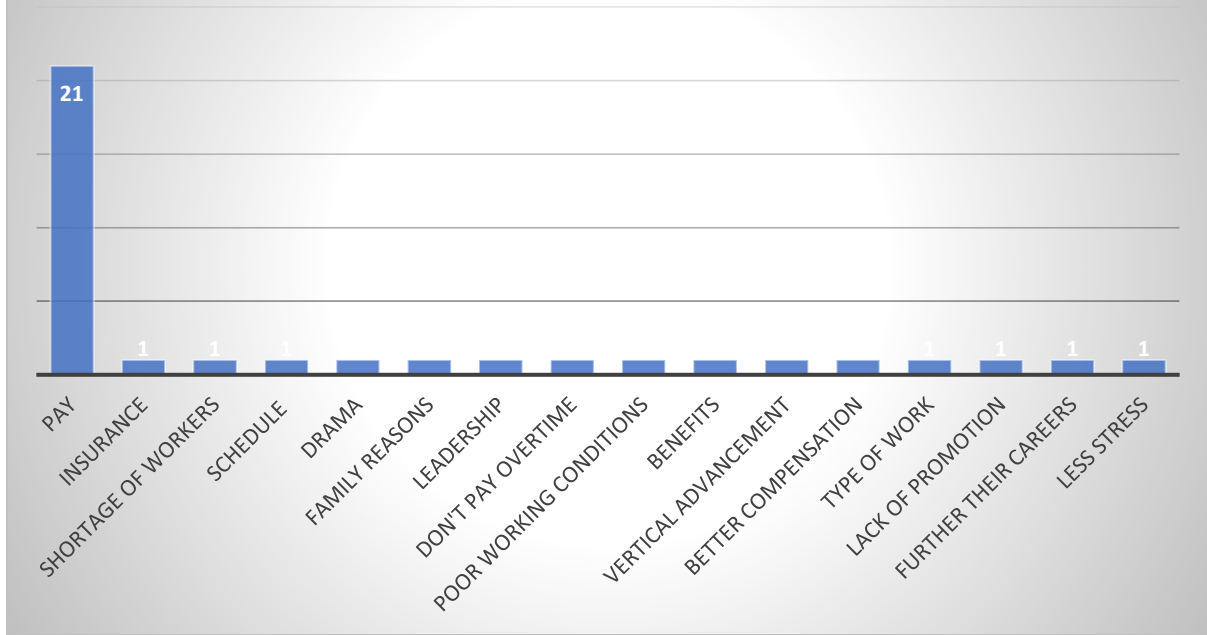
**Guide for Chart:**

**Exit Interview and Longevity Pay- Yes in Blue, No in Orange**

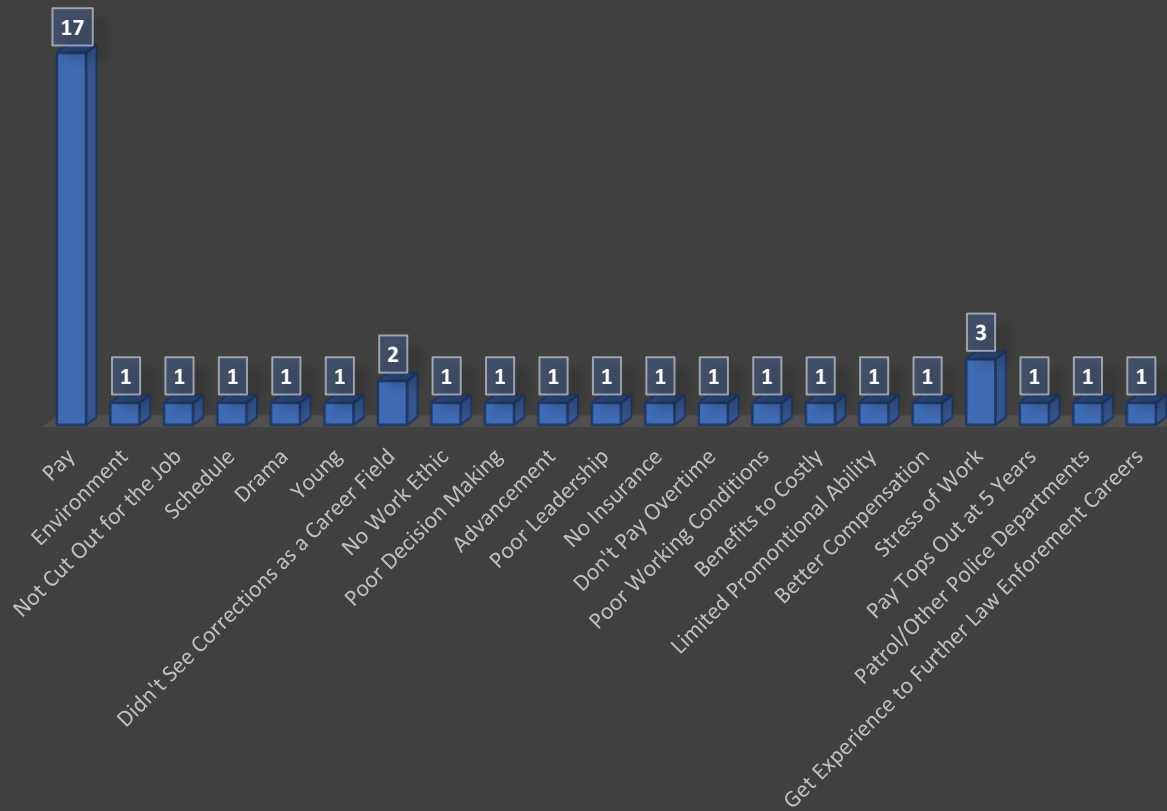
**Work Shifts- Blue 8 Hour Shift, Orange 12 Hour Shift**

**Overcrowded on Consistent Basis- Yes in Blue, No in Orange**

## Reasons Officers Site for Leaving



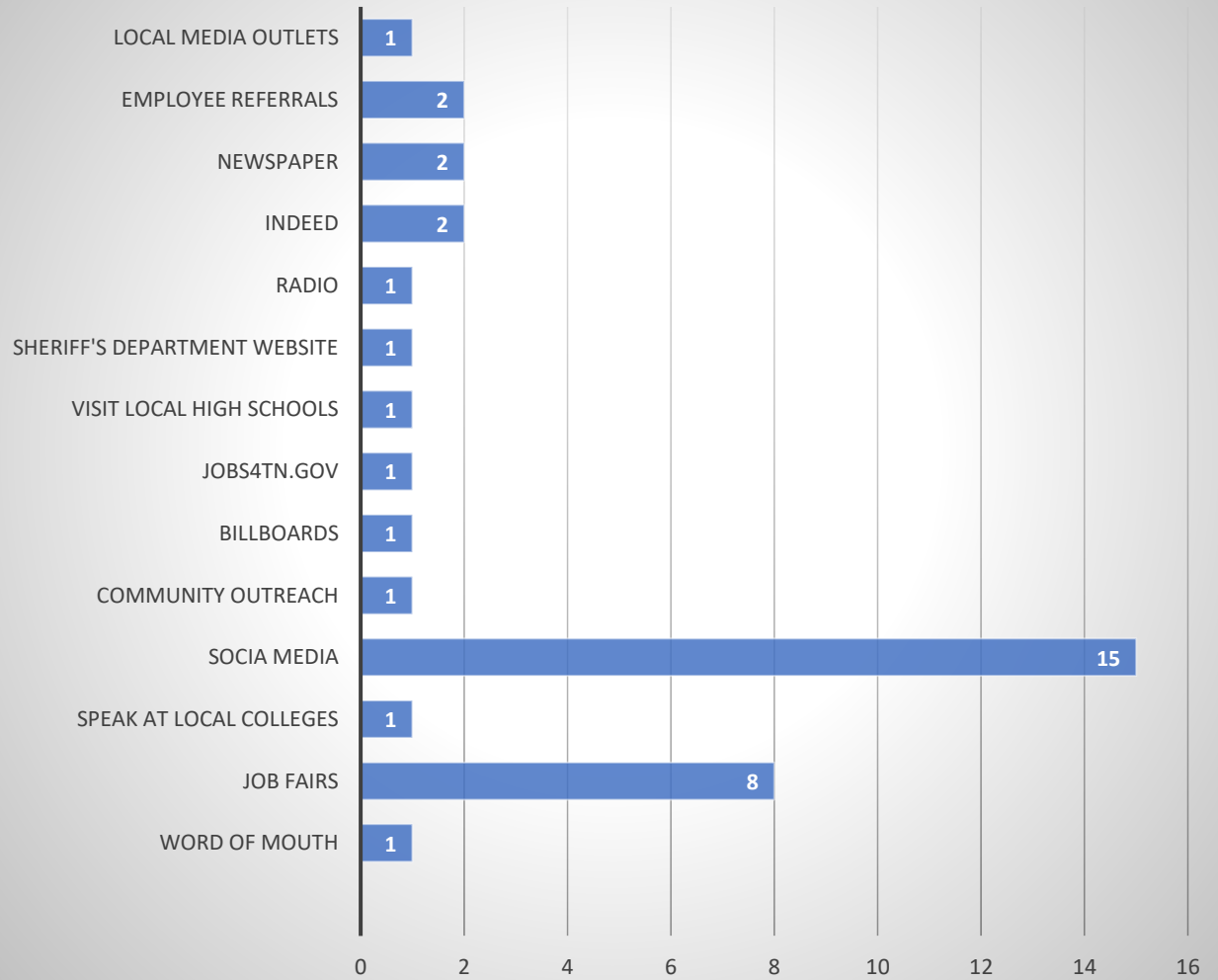
# FACILITY'S OPINION OF WHY OFFICER'S LEAVE





**Guide for Chart- Yes in Blue, No in Orange, Grey-looking to implement**

## Types of Recruitement Used





## **Other Types of Rank Structure:**

- Jail Administrator and Supervisors Only
- Jail Administrator, Supervisors, and Correctional Officers
- Administrative Lieutenant, Lieutenant, Sergeants
- Lead Jailer, Jailers

## **Types of Incentives for Correctional Officers:**

- Recognized on Social Media and Citizens Academy gives them 50.00 Check.
- Usually, a cookout for the whole department and Correctional Officer receives money or gift cards.
- Officer of the month and shift of the month
- Recognition and a \$25.00 gift card
- Jailer of the year
- Officer of the quarter, Officer of the year, and Supervisor of the year. We give out various awards during our employee picnic.
- Equipment awards for above and beyond performance.

## **Do you think Incentives are Beneficial?**

- Yes, because unless something goes wrong, they are mostly a forgotten workforce.
- It shows appreciation for the hard work and dedication of their work.
- Gives the employees and shifts something to work for each month.

- Yes, I believe publicly recognizing your employees lets them know that you care.
- The program just started. We do believe it will help with morale.
- Not sure if beneficial or not.
- No, because it causes animosity among the jailers because everybody feels like they have done a good job.]

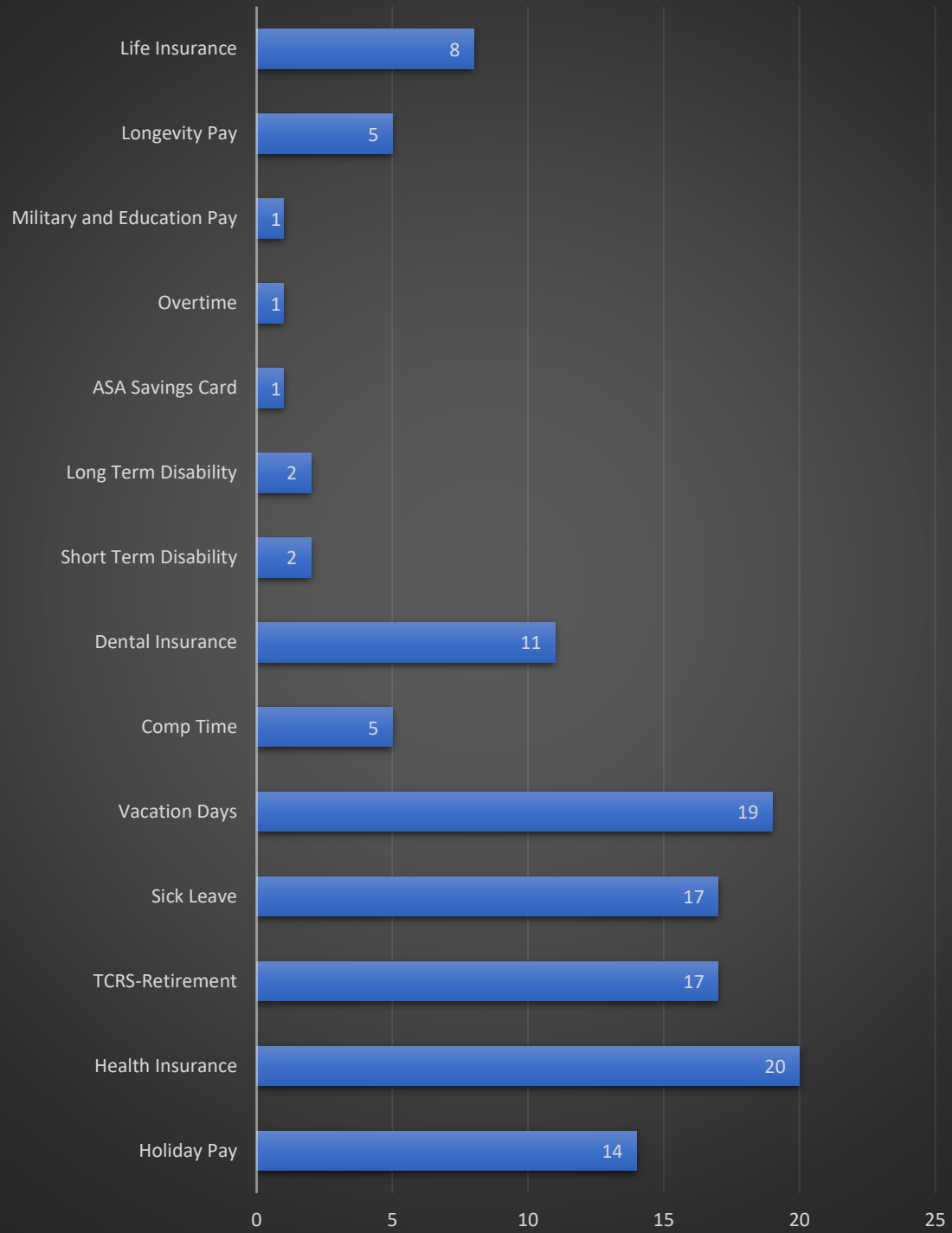
### **Outcome of Salary Comparison**

- Pay was low.
- Pay close to surrounding counties.
- Currently going through pay study.
- \$4 less than most counties.
- Pay the same but better benefits.
- On the lowest side of the spectrum with no insurance.
- Cannot compete with surrounding agencies due to revenue and population.
- Currently going through pay study.
- Lowest paid in Northeast TN.
- County Commission voted on a raise, but it wasn't enough for some.
- We are the lowest paid agency within our area.
- There are many agencies that pay more and offer more benefits.
- Falls near the bottom of the scale.
- Pay study in 2018 two stage pay raise from \$13.58 to \$17.08.

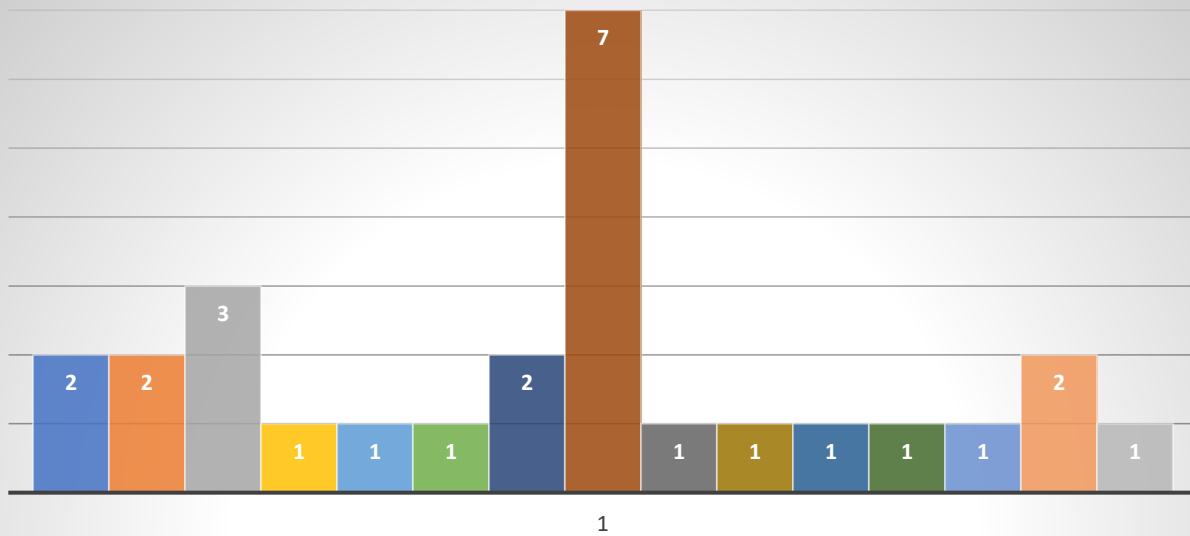
- We were a little lower than others, but our benefits were better than other agencies in our area.
- Found to be below average pay scale. Study was redone 9/1/21.
- Paid less than some counties or even.
- Next county over, pays more.
- Mixed- more than some, less than most.
- Nothing.
- Most other counties have higher pay.



## Benefits Provided by Agencies



## Benefits Provided by Agencies Continued



- Equipment and Uniform Provided
- Free Medical Clinic-Employee Only
- Free Medical Clinic- Officer and Family
- Tuition Assistance
- Voluntary Benefits
- Health Savings Account
- 12 Hour Shifts-Works 7 Days Every 2 Weeks
- Vision Insurance
- Bonus Once a Year
- Regular 3 Day Weekends
- Full Time
- Employee Sick Bank
- Supplemental Insurance
- Personal Days
- Ability to Excel in Corrections or Law Enforcement in General

## **Chapter 4 .....Crisis Mode**

Crisis Mode definition: Crisis mode is a state of high alertness and changed priorities that we use to manage extremely volatile challenging and threatening situations.

The backbone of corrections is its workforce. The corrections sector relies on qualified, trained, and dedicated staff for effective, professional operations. But today, correctional administrators, particularly those running prisons and jails, are grappling with severe workforce challenges that directly impact mission performance. Those challenges include staff recruitment, selection and retention, training, and agency succession planning.

Hardly a new issue, the ongoing difficulty finding and retaining good staff has intensified to the point where many jurisdictions are now in full crisis mode.[1] For example, Kansas and West Virginia have recently issued state of emergency declarations in response to understaffed institutions.[2] Correctional officer vacancy rates in some prisons approach 50% as of late including two Mississippi institutions.[3] Although community supervision agencies typically fare better, probation and parole officer vacancy rates have been reported as high as 20%.[4] And in some state prisons, annual correctional officer turnover rates as high as 55%, test the system's essential functionality.[5]

Given the shrinking pool of qualified workers, agencies often compete for candidates, and the sector, for a variety of reasons, appears to be losing the competition for talent.

To address the corrections workforce shortage, the RAND Corporation, and the University of Denver (DU) analyzed insights from a work group of agency executives and academics who have researched the correctional workforce. This work, sponsored by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), identified a series of 64 systemic needs, with 13 top-tier needs associated with the following five themes, described in more depth below:

**Clarify the mission of the corrections sector.**

**Improve staff competencies.**

**Improve staff training.**

**Improve work environment and conditions.**

**Develop future leaders.**

### **Nature and Scope of the Problem**

Corrections is fundamentally a “people profession,” where interpersonal skills and effective face-to-face interactions are keys to effectiveness. Staff, both within institutions and in community supervision, must protect the public from individuals accused or convicted of crimes. At the same time, staff must prepare those under correctional control for successful, law-abiding lives in the community and support these individuals through the re-entry process. The task facing corrections staff, then, is complex. Staff are in a unique position to have a significant impact not only on the lives and prospects of the

offenders with whom they interact, but also on the larger communities where these individuals reside or where they will return.

These complexities point to the critical importance of building a high-quality correctional workforce. However, attracting and retaining qualified corrections staff has historically been a difficult task, particularly in institutions.[6] Though for many it has proven to be a rewarding career, a variety of factors can deter individuals from entering or remaining in the field of corrections. The work is inherently dangerous, given the characteristics of the offender population.[7] Beyond the risk of physical injury, there are extraordinary stressors associated with corrections work that can seriously affect the well-being of staff.[8] Beyond risk of injury and actual injury, common stressors are exposure to crisis situations and secondary trauma as well as work overload, overtime demands and role conflict. Moreover, work environments, particularly in institutional settings, can be physically harsh. For example, correctional institutions are often very noisy, many lack air conditioning and most officers work primarily indoors with little access to natural light.

Many corrections agencies operate in a paramilitary structure, which is inflexible by nature.[9] Workloads can be overwhelming because of increasing demands, limited resources and difficulties maintaining sufficient staffing levels. In institutions, mandatory overtime is common. In many states, compensation is simply not competitive with other industries and criminal justice occupations.[10] Finally, the field is challenged by the reality that the public does not consider corrections to be a high-status occupation.[11]



These internal factors have been consistent over time, but recent economic, societal, and demographic changes affecting the larger workforce have exacerbated many of these challenges. For example, a record-low unemployment rate combined with a smaller labor force has created an increased competition for talent.[12] Younger employees are more willing to change jobs than their predecessors, and turnover is expensive in both dollars and loss of experience.[13] In order for the corrections sector to perform its important mission, it must critically evaluate current human resources strategies and practices and make necessary adjustments to compete for the best talent.

### **Research Purpose**

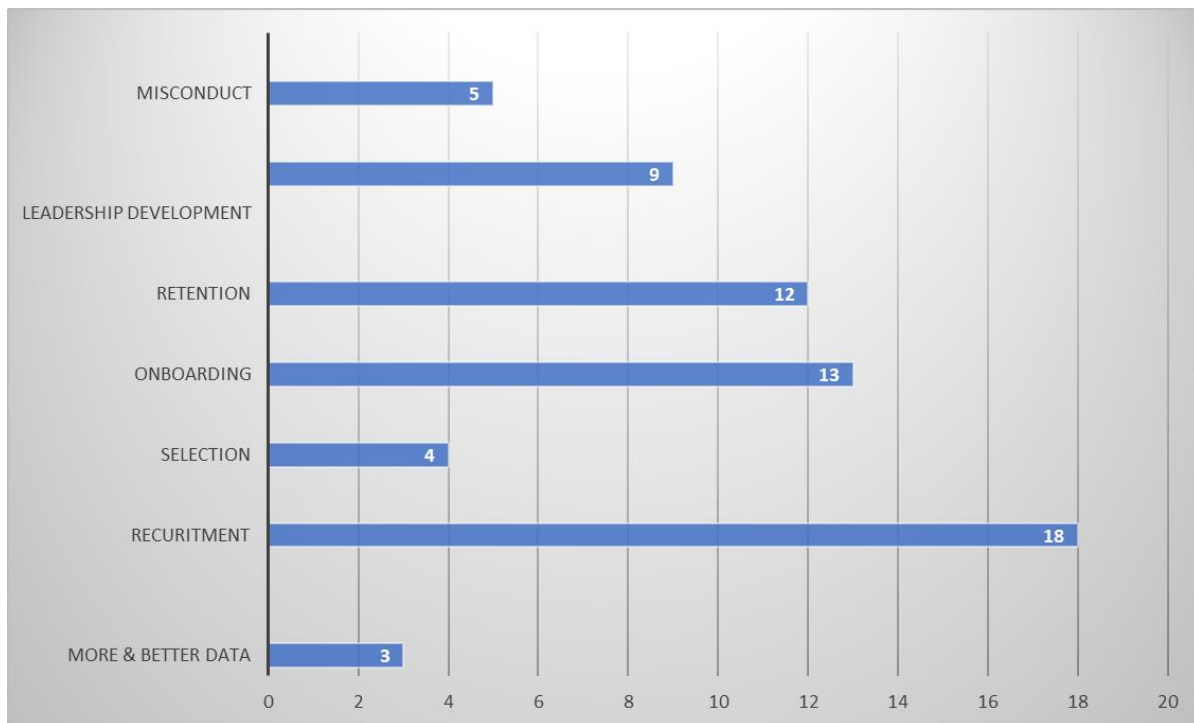
The joint RAND-DU collaboration, “Building a High-Quality Correctional Workforce: Identifying the Challenges and Needs,” is part of a multiyear research effort, the Priority Criminal Justice Needs Initiative, to identify innovations in technology, policy and practice that benefit the criminal justice sector.<sup>14</sup> In response to the significant workforce challenges discussed above, this work aimed to produce a better understanding of factors contributing to the challenges of the corrections workforce and identify key needs associated with improving outcomes such as recruitment, retention and development of high-quality staff. Findings from this work will help inform NIJ’s research agenda moving forward.

### **Methodology**

The RAND-DU team assembled a group of 13 individuals to participate in a two-day workshop. Participants included correctional agency

executives, representatives of correctional associations and academics. Care was taken to include participants with experience and expertise in institutional and community corrections (or both), recognizing that each setting is unique. Before the workshop, participants were provided copies of relevant literature on the correctional workforce as a resource and discussion guide. During the workshop, RAND-DU staff conducted highly structured exercises with the group to help identify and to elicit information about the most pressing problems and to assess how these problems could be addressed. Discussions focused on several major areas relevant to a corrections staff member's life cycle within an agency: recruitment, selection, onboarding, retention, and leadership development. Issues related to staff misconduct were addressed last as it is not a distinct stage of the workforce process; rather it is a behavioral factor that can be influenced by deficiencies elsewhere in the process.

From these discussions, the research team identified a set of discrete "needs" — a term used to describe a specific area to be addressed, tied to either solving a problem or taking advantage of an opportunity for better system performance. This process yielded a total of 64 needs. (See Figure 2)



## Needs and Themes

To provide structure to the large set of identified needs, participants ranked each need in terms of expected benefit (relative importance of meeting that need) and probability of success of meeting that need. These ratings were multiplied to produce an expected value score, and that score was used to group the needs into top, medium, and low tiers.

In the final analysis, 13 of the 64 identified needs were ranked in the top tier and are listed in Figure 1. The following key themes emerged:

## **Clarify the mission of the corrections sector**

Participants reported that the corrections sector operates in a rapidly changing environment and would benefit from a clear, cohesive, and common vision for the future. This vision can help provide a road map for agencies with respect to workforce requirements tied to mission accomplishment. Overall, institutional corrections generally prioritize their custodial or surveillance objectives over their behavioral change objectives. Participants theorized that a shift in orientation might be key to reversing the long-standing difficulties the sector has faced in recruiting talent for corrections officer positions. They called for research to determine whether a shift toward an increased human-services role, along with a corresponding change in the competencies sought would help the sector attract a broader base of new talent.

## **Improve staff competencies in corrections environments**

The corrections sector currently suffers from low levels of professionalism. This condition is most evident in corrections officers. The participants called for the reevaluation of existing, or the creation of new, competency standards for various correctional positions. These competencies should better align with the sector's vision. With respect to probation and parole officers, greater emphasis should be placed on desired competencies (e.g., ability to deliver evidence-based interventions) as opposed to a particular level of education. Furthermore, agency processes for evaluating staff performance should be focused on these competencies.

## **Improve staff training**

Overall, the participants articulated that the level of funding dedicated to corrections workforce training is insufficient, particularly when compared to other criminal justice professions. To quantify the impact of this disparity, participants called for an assessment of the relationships between funding levels, substandard training, and key outcomes. The participants also noted that significant jurisdictional variations in the curricula (content and length) and training modalities yield uneven training across the sector. Therefore, there is a need to assess and validate the training approaches used by the sector and to develop national curriculum standards for correctional education.

## **Improve work environment and conditions**

Several needs were identified as essential to improving the work experience, which could positively impact recruitment and retention. Workload standards and ratios — coupled with strategies to allow agencies to meet them — are needed to ensure staff can function in a safe environment with adequate discretionary authority to fulfill their responsibilities and without undue stress. The participants noted that younger employees are most attracted to positions that allow them to actively participate in decision-making processes, particularly with respect to issues that directly affect them. The participants recognized that traditional operating structures do not mesh well with this desire; thus, they called for the development of best practices for pushing decision-making authority down to the lowest possible levels.

## **Develop future leaders**

Leadership development is critical to all organizations, but the participants reported that the corrections sector generally does a poor job of preparing staff for supervisory and management roles. The participants called for the creation and promotion of best practices for leadership development. The participants also recommended assessments of the adequacy of training for new supervisors, the development of strategies for improvement and the compilation of best practices for leadership development. Finally, although leadership development resources exist, such as the Correctional Leadership Competencies for the 21st Century report (see Campbell et al., 2006), there is a need for publishers to review and revise these documents to maintain their relevance.

## **Shifting the paradigm**

Many correctional agencies are facing a workforce crisis. They struggle to recruit, retain, and develop high-quality staff. Although there was consensus among the participants that improved compensation is necessary, this is only a partial solution. Moreover, decisions requiring new resources are essentially beyond an agency's direct control. Therefore, emphasis should be placed on the needs that these agencies, and the sector, can influence.

Many of the top-tier needs identified in the RAND-DU report support an argument for a paradigm shift on many levels. For example, the participants argued that a shift in orientation from a punitive/surveillance model to more of a human-services model may

attract recruits in larger numbers, mitigating vacancy issues. Such a model may also result in more manageable workloads, a less stressful work environment, and ultimately, better offender outcomes, which can all help mitigate turnover issues. Although some agencies are beginning to reap benefits from such a shift, empirical data is needed to support the case for widespread change.

According to the participants, as this shift essentially redefines the role of many staff, recruitment and selection strategies will need to change accordingly. Further, changes will be needed to attract younger employees to corrections staff. Additionally, the paramilitary structure of corrections should be reexamined. Where possible, staff should be offered more flexibility as well as input into decisions that affect their work experience.

Finally, the participants argued that to build a high-quality workforce, there must be sustained investments in training, nurturing, and developing staff with an emphasis on grooming future leaders.

*Source:*

About the Author

**Joe Russo** *is the corrections technology lead at the Justice Technology Information Center, an NIJ program funded through a grant to Leidos Innovations Corporation. Russo is a co-author of the report that is the subject of this article.*

Problem or Opportunity	Need
<p>The role of corrections staff, particularly in institutions, is generally viewed to be custodial or surveillance-oriented, which limits the sector's ability to attract new talent</p>	<p>Research the implications that a human-services approach and culture would have on recruitment.</p>
<p>Increasingly, new generations of employees have expectations that they will be able to actively participate in policy and decision-making.</p>	<p>Develop best practices for pushing decision-making authority down to the lowest level.</p>
<p>The general level of professionalism in the correctional workforce is relatively low, particularly among corrections officers.</p>	<p>Reevaluate or create competency standards for various correctional positions.</p>
<p>The sector lacks a coherent vision. Because agencies operate in a rapidly shifting environment, they are struggling to keep pace both in general and with respect to their workforces.</p>	<p>Develop a national vision and strategy for corrections, like those developed for other criminal justice sectors.</p>
<p>Funding levels dedicated to educating and training the correctional workforce that lag behind those for other comparable fields, most notably law enforcement.</p>	<p>Assess the impact of inadequate training funding on the sector's ability to accomplish its mission.</p>



<p>There is significant variation in the curricula and approaches agencies use to train and educate the correctional workforce, as well as the duration of preparation before assignment.</p>	<p>Develop minimum national standards for correctional professional education and training including curriculum and training hours.</p>
<p>Training is often impractical and unrealistic, and there is incongruity between how officers are trained and what they will experience on the job.</p>	<p>Assess and validate the evidence behind the various training methods and curricula in use, as well as the timing of delivery.</p>
<p>After dedicating significant resources to recruit and train staff, agencies often fail to recognize the value of retaining them.</p>	<p>Promote evidence-based best practices proven to improve job satisfaction, engagement and other factors related to low turnover intention.</p>
<p>Excessive workloads and high inmate-to-officer ratios are related to a variety of negative outcomes and can hinder an organization's ability to retain staff.</p>	<p>Assess and validate existing standards for staffing ratios and examine such strategies as capped caseloads to allow agencies to meet these standards.</p>
<p>Correctional agencies do not place sufficient emphasis on leadership and management training.</p>	<p>Evaluate and promote best practices for leadership development within the sector.</p>

Existing resources that support leadership development are often out-of-date.	Reevaluate and update these resources as necessary.
The staff evaluation processes used by most agencies do not focus on the most important competencies.	Examine the most appropriate performance measures by which to evaluate each position.
Line and mid-level supervisors lack the skills needed to mentor new hires effectively.	Assess the adequacy of training for new supervisors and develop strategies for improvement.



## **Chapter 5..... Hiring Practices**

5 principles to include in your hiring process to set your correctional facility apart. The messages correctional facilities send to potential candidates are a critical part of the recruitment process.

*Jan 25, 2018*

Source:

Barry Reynolds Corrections 1

### Leadership Issues

Many, if not most, correctional facilities use a recruitment and hiring policy to guide the selection process of new personnel. This policy can be found within the agency policy manual or is part of a larger human resources policy for the state, county or city that oversees hiring for the organization.

The actual policy itself is often procedural in nature, outlining the requirements for consideration of employment, and the necessary and exact steps taken through the hiring process to ensure the most qualified applicants receive consideration. Often there is a statement of non-discrimination advocating diversity within the hiring process.

These are all great policies to have and follow, but in an era of greater transparency, many organizations are including a statement of principles within their recruitment policy. This statement of principles outlines the philosophy and values within which the recruitment and

selection process operates, as well as the hiring process expectations for both the agency and the potential candidates.

Some items in the statement of principles might seem obvious, while others may also be included in the police department's values statement. However, the inclusion of expressed and transparent principles in the recruitment and selection process can be vitally important to the process itself, sending an important message to potential candidates considering your organization among their employment options.

Here are five principles to consider adding to your recruitment and selection process policy:

## **1. RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY**

Even with the presence of similar statements or clauses within the hiring procedures themselves, a clarified statement on the value of diversity in organizational personnel takes it beyond a mere policy statement to a philosophical statement of inclusion. This principle should clearly state that the organization not only respects diversity, but it also actively pursues a diverse workforce through the recruitment and selection process.

## **2. SERVICE**

This principle outlines the organization's philosophy regarding community service. Regardless of the correctional philosophy the organization employs, service to the community remains the foremost goal. To perpetuate that philosophy, an agency's recruitment principles must emphasize service to the community, and actively seek

correctional staff candidates who place community service as a priority in their personal approach.

### **3. INTEGRITY**

This principle requires the agency instill integrity and honesty as the twin pillars of credibility in the recruitment and selection process. This applies to both the agency and the candidate. If an honest mistake is made in the process, the agency may resolve the issue on the side of the candidate.

However, an agency should be clear that dishonesty or a lapse in moral integrity results in the immediate and permanent disqualification of the candidate. The social contract we hold with our communities demands we expect nothing less from current and future employees.

### **4. MERIT-BASED SELECTION**

The recruitment and hiring process of police officers can be extensive and lengthy, or it can be streamlined with an eye toward on-boarding at the earliest opportunity. Regardless of the process, the principle of merit-based selection in law enforcement requires the most qualified applicant receive the highest consideration. A merit-based selection process utilizes multiple evaluations of a candidate's qualifications with each evaluation being objective and independent from the others.

There will always be some form of subjective evaluation, but the goal of the merit-based system is to reduce subjectivity to the highest extent possible to assure candidates that their qualifications and performance are the primary considerations for advancement.

## **5. RECRUIT FOR VACANCIES AND HIRE FOR THE FUTURE**

The philosophy behind this principle recognizes that the recruitment and selection process is the first and most important step an organization takes in acquiring and retaining career employees. While the immediate goal of the hiring process might be to fill current or imminent vacancies, the department is looking toward the sustainment of a stable and professional workforce. As such, consider those intangible traits and values that lend themselves to a long-standing employment relationship.

### **CONCLUSION**

Too many agencies find themselves repeating their recruitment process because the first process failed to result in enough qualified candidates, or the candidates chosen failed to successfully transition to permanent employment status. Implementing a set of organizational principles into your recruitment and selection process helps market your agency to the type of candidates who are most likely to be successful in your hiring process, thereby increasing the chances that your next hire will be a member of your organization for decades to come.

## Chapter 6..... Retention

*The retention of correctional officers is essential for balance, diversity, and the various skills they bring into an organization. Their task is twofold; they are to ensure the public's protection while maintaining order in a closed environment.*

Source:

*Management & Training Corporation (MTC) is an international corporation dedicated to helping people realize their learning potential. MTC creates nurturing environments in which education is encouraged and rehabilitation is recognized.*

### PREDICTORS OF TURNOVER

Many agencies define employee turnover differently. The definition used in this report supports an operational staff perspective: turnover is a separation of the employee from the agency/company. High turnover is a potentially serious problem for all employers. Growing costs associated with turnover have led researchers to look towards predicting what circumstances or situations will likely result in an employee choosing to terminate. The predictors of turnover discussed below include:

- Turnover intention.
- Low organizational commitment.
- Lack of job satisfaction; and
- Poor supervisory relationships and lack of communication.



*“20 to 30 years ago, the types of behaviors we rewarded and promoted people for, are the behaviors we sometimes discipline people for today. We value treating people, the right way; that is not a function of gender.” Patricia Caruso, Director, Michigan Department of Corrections.”*

## **WHY CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS LEAVE**

Employees give many reasons for leaving correctional agencies or companies. In a study by Workforce Associates, Inc., for the American Correctional Association, correctional administrators and human resource managers in 47 states and the District of Columbia were surveyed about their difficulty retaining workers. Lommel indicates that the four most prominent responses related to retention difficulty was:

- Demanding hours and shift work.
- Inadequate pay and benefits.
- Stress and burnout; and
- Wrong initial selection; employee not suited to the job.

*Source: CBS News by Tyler Kendall August 31,2019*

*Last year in Pennsylvania, there were 702 assaults by inmates on staff, which included landing at least 60 correctional officers in an outside hospital for treatment. Rates of violence are credited as being one of the largest contributors to understaffing.*

A study by Development Dimensions International found that employees consider an organization's ability to provide a good work/life balance, trust, a good relationship with the boss, and meaningful work as paramount in their decision to continue employment. That same study found three quarters of the employees surveyed believed the quality of supervisory relations as very important for retention. A simple, cost effective, and evidence-based practice of first-line supervisors caring about CO's improves job satisfaction, which "is paramount in addressing retention.

Table below shows the results of a Salary.com survey of human resource representatives and employees. It contains the top five reasons employers and employees think that employees might leave their jobs in **2008**. (what's changed?) As noted in a variety of circumstances, employers continue to believe that inadequate compensation is behind employees leaving, when the facts are that employees leave when they see limited career development opportunities. Though results from studies and surveys mention how employees value pay highly, not all groups of employees respond the same way. Workforce.com makes it clear in their research on best practices that "the key is that the policies are fair, consistently followed, controlled, and subject to review and oversight" and they also point out that retention can be improved by pay-for performance by up to 27 percent. McKeown points out that a fair compensation plan is important, but it does little to improve retention.

Employee reasons	Employer	Employee	Employee reason
Inadequate compensation	36%	30%	Lack of career development
Insufficient recognition	19%	27%	Insufficient Recognition
Boredom	7%	11%	Inadequate professional development opportunity
Inadequate professional development Opportunity	12%	11%	Boredom

Chart 12

## Chapter 7.....Jail Culture

The phrase jail culture can have many interpretations. When describing the values and norms of a belief system by employees of an agency. This transcends into how the facility deals with inmates from every aspect. The compliant and non-compliant. When you search out articles in corrections about agency culture your search will take you in three directions. The organizations culture. The officers culture. The inmates culture.

I have read over the years many articles on the subject. I have both attended and conducted training on the subject. I prefer to rely on my personal experiences and firsthand accounts more than some of the information available through articles and written opinions. There is a lot of good information available on the subject however most don't separate out the real issues. One thing which is constant however and it is the mentality that its (**us against them**). My definition of a good culture is one whereby the staff manage style of inmates is fair, firm, and consistent. My definition of a bad culture is one where the staff do not suspend judgement. Expect non-compliance from every inmate. General rules in life do apply. Have you ever gone to a dinner party your wife set up for you both to attend and you didn't want to go? Your expectations are you're not going to enjoy it. Guess what, you're right you want. If officers cannot approach their job without suspending judgement and treat inmates fair, firm and do it consistently then it will be contagious for all. The inmate they are working with as well as the

rest of the population and it will affect how other officers deal with inmates as well.

Fostering a good culture in your jail is beneficial in many ways. Control of the facility, less inmate disturbances and more efficiently managed facility. A bad culture will result the opposite effect. This will mean officers **leaving** because they don't want to be a part of a bad culture. They don't like the constant controversy. They don't like continually having to discipline inmates they would rather manage inmates.

Solutions:

Perform a health check. Do your own internal surveys. Gather data. Look at cause and effect. Do data mining and if it supports a negative culture then act. If it supports a positive culture expand on it. Start the training. Educate staff and show them the benefits of having a good jail culture. The old saying was true in its time as it is today. One bad apple spoils the whole barrel. Give officers with the negative attitudes a chance to change and if you can't then take the appropriate actions. Revisit policies and protocols and look hard at leadership.

Make sure you have the right message being conveyed. Changing  
Culture - Part I

By Carl ToersBijns, former deputy warden, ASPC Eyman, Florence AZ  
Published: 07/24/2017

Without a doubt, the very first vibration you feel as a new employee is an element or the assemblage of the employer's culture. Almost without exception, you can pick up the vibes the moment you step into the thick of things and realize where you ended up is sometimes between a rock and a hard place or quite the opposite, perhaps a Shangri-La or utopia of some kind. Keep in mind, culture is an inference and not always a factual realism or dynamic.

It can be represented from many different views of how you act and how they expect you to act or speak when working for a business that has a strong internal culture that reveals itself almost immediately. How you handle the culture depends on how you view it to be in your own mind. There are two definite ways to change an organization's culture. The first is just to do nothing and second is do something. Once you understand that culture is not static or passive and stands by at an idle, you begin to understand that culture is always evolving because it is a product of living breathing things in your surroundings whether it be at home or at work.

Culture has been called a 'living creature' with its own dynamics and personality. To completely understand the culture, you must realize that it is shaped or created by shared beliefs, customs, practices, values and morals, experiences, and most of all circumstances. It is a morphically type of creature that can change as often as the dynamics allow it to happen. What we should stress at this point is that culture being a change agent at times does not always morph into something positive or something that is a desired quality.

It is totally depended on the moods, values, and collection of individual qualities contained within people and since it is shaped by people, it could change or morph into something good or bad and be either better or worse than it was before. Almost one thing is always guaranteed, it never stays the same so there are always 'gotcha' or 'wow' moments that may give you a clue that no matter how much it changes, it is never a done deal. It can never be done changing. It is in fact, a constant dynamic that sometimes grows or declines in value or importance. In some cases, it stretches and other times it contracts to give and take things from the surroundings.

Much compared to a relationship, it has its own ups and downs and it develops over time with constant and never ending awareness that it exists. Keep in mind, like a relationship, without giving it any care, it can stop growing and decline in value or importance. It needs constant care because when it stops growing, it begins to die as it starves from the nutrients that it needs to grow or exist. Hence the word culture is associated with the same root word 'cultivate.' If you use the analogy of growing plants, there are many kinds of produce, flowers and other living things that grow with practical use and beauty but often die if you let the weeds choke the life out of them.

It really does work that way. Hopefully, your eye is on the growth of new things and positive things that make you committed to sowing new seeds or good seeds. That is how you make a positive difference. Keep

in mind – culture is how people behave, thinks, act and do things without being told to do something.

This obviously borders on ethics but for the moment, culture is what you do from moment to moment without being told to do it. I am sure you can see how your own morals, training, ambitions, and creativity plays into the culture and then combined with others, how it fits or doesn't fit in the organizational circle and how you [either individually or as a group] want it to be.

This is the real culture of the organization – not what is posted on the website or employee handbook but who and how people discuss matters at the cooler or closed meetings and correspond via emails or talk on the phone. Often, the real culture is rarely politically correct, and caution must be expressed that one can easily misunderstand intent by not filling in the gaps between what you want people to actually see or what you expect them to do or perform.

Thus, we have two cultures – the real culture and the espoused valued culture. One is real and the other is superficially created. You can see how the espoused culture is easier to represent as it is in so many ways, the things you want it to be. We can all come up with the things we value at work and collaborate such efforts to present a positive kind of culture based on honesty, integrity etc. a good person can see what it will take to fill the gaps between the real culture and the desired or advocated culture.



Surely, this must be a collaborative process that must be achieved to attain the right environment for the business or workplace. Keep in mind, one person cannot establish culture on a positive balance or create a consistent dynamic that all can adjust to or agree with. Anything less is despotic or tyrannical in nature and defeats the entire process of changing the culture for the good. The more the culture lives out your expectations as a group, the better the balance.

If employees are involved in defining the culture, you are doomed to fail from the beginning as you have no buy-in on the end product that you expect them to be happy with or satisfied in as they are involved in the most crucial factor to bring those values and dynamics alive creating a living culture desired. What is important to remember is that many companies, businesses or organizations, government or non-government are 'mission' oriented and shape their culture accordingly.

This is not just for competitive purposes but to also have a segment in their organization that creates higher levels of innovation and at the same time, retain a much higher percentage of employees that other businesses. Mission oriented workplaces actually have a culture that is shaped by the employees' personalities and thereby creating an organizational personality. If done right, a culture can be created that is customized into an identity personality that grabs their company's beliefs about the company's purpose while fostering trust, accountability and enjoying their work coupled with arduous work and tenacity that is shared and demonstrated openly and vigorously.

*Source:*

Corrections.com author, Carl ToersBijns, (retired), has worked in corrections for over 25 yrs He held positions of a Correctional Officer I, II, III [Captain] Chief of Security Mental Health Treatment Center – Program Director – Associate Warden - Deputy Warden of Administration & Operations. Carl's prison philosophy is all about the safety of the public, staff and inmates, "I believe my strongest quality is that I create strategies that are practical, functional and cost effective."

## **Part II**

One of the most common expectations is the fact that employees expect their leaders to create or cultivate their culture. Although it is a collective process, it must come from a source that has authority, power, control, and influence in the business. The most important question posed is "what does the right kind of culture look like and why?"

Honestly speaking, this is where the values must be shared and collectively expressed and desired. Let's say for example your organization has values of 'winning' – that's a very common goal and value so it is often expressed and created as a strategy to win whether it be in sports or in business. Every sport or business needs to win over potential athletes or clients to have a winning combination. Basically speaking, what that company seeks out is people and their shared values with the business or organization. That is what it looks like from their own perspective as they sought those best suited to win in either a sport or a business marketplace.

Here is the downside of winning – placing such a high value on 'winning' can and often does create a culture of greed. It also creates a situation where you lower your standards and devalue what was

once a reasonable standard to live by or to work with. Do you get the picture? When you place such a high value on winning – you forget about people. A culture for winning could cause you to lose focus on the things that were important before.

It may create leaders who will turn a blind eye to all sorts of misdeeds or allegations that normally would not be culturally acceptable under any circumstances. See how the selection or choice of your leaders is the key to setting the right kind of culture? The leader must be in tune with the intent of the mission and the collective values of the organization as well as its vision. He or she must model it and stand by to support it no matter what the alignment must be perfectly in line with the dynamics of the real culture and do otherwise forces a sub-culture to be created hence, the espoused or advocated culture. Here is the most crucial element of changing cultures – a leader cannot force a culture to change but they can model the desired values, ethics, behaviors, or actions.

If you want people to change to a new set of values or standards, be the role model it takes to show them what you expect from yourself as well as others. Work with a passion if you want your employees to work with passion. Make sure you have a high visibility factor so they can see your values, passion, or creativity on the job. Your personal enthusiasm can be contagious and if you take risks, then they will step out of the box and take risks as well. Let them know you have taken risks and failed. Show them it adds to the overall experience and learning curve when you do so.

Give them the confidence they need to do their jobs with risks and give them a safe work environment. A safe workplace is a hallmark sign of healthy cultures. It provides and breeds trust, transparency, reduces gossip and fosters the truth. It allows others to be themselves and provide genuine service and passion to the mission.

A safe workplace promotes growth – either team growth or individual growth. Your career will experience all kinds of challenges because a safe environment leads to risk taking and taking risks is essential to creativity and innovative ideas. Do an audit of internal policies and procedures and see if it promotes a healthy environment. Are the middle and upper-level managers accessible and is the communication transparent and clear enough to avoid any errors or misunderstandings and do your employees feel safe? This kind of positive interaction promotes both professional and social connections and collaboration.

When you review policies are you asking people what is working and what isn't? Can you or your employees identify your structure weaknesses and if it is weak what does it produce or unintended consequences and how to you make things better? In some cases, the hiring and selection of new employees are often compared to a good, bad, or ugly experience. Regardless how it starts, the employer is all upbeat and makes many promises and at the same time, you are accepting those promises at full face value because you are trying hard to please the recruiter or employer. Both sides working hard to come to an agreement before the deal is sealed.

Then in time, reality sets in and you soon find out that the relationship has conditions that weren't set in before. Often times, you wonder if the relationship will last or if the promises are kept. For some, it has real staying power and for others, it's a sign to leave and let it go. When you are recruiting a highly talented or robust potential producing employee, there's a strong temptation to gloss over the realities of the culture that might not fit with the would-be star. Or an eager would-be employee might pretend everything is fine and role play just to get the job. Once hired, that may change for the good or the bad.

Remember the promises made that there would be no overtime? Remember how the recruiter said the company value work and your personal life balance? Remember they said you could flex your time and set your own hours to some extent? Sounds great. But the unspoken reality often includes, "You know, once you've put in 60 hours a week instead of the usual 40 hours." The smart play is to be transparent about expectations and to value cultural fit even over talent because a talented worker who hates his or her job ultimately causes more harm than good.

Without a doubt, you know some of these employees or perhaps, that maybe you. Likewise, if employees on the team are destroying the culture because they aren't a fit – they don't share the values, they don't buy into the culture – then it's often best to help them find a great job at some other organization. This is especially true of cultural serpents, those back-biting snakes who gossip and actively work against

the values you are building or advocating for the work group. These often are the highest performers and, thus, the hardest to counsel or fire. But the longer they stay, the more they poison your cultural waters. The warning here is to be sure you don't build a culture of 'me, me, me' or in an environment of 'entitlement' that can ruin a work group or a team faster than anything you can imagine.

This is where leadership steps in. Getting rid of cultural snakes in the grass not only removes a source of cultural poison, but it also sends a message to everyone on the team that your espoused or advocated values are important and that there's a sense of accountability. That type of accountability is vital even when the violations of cultural conduct are less nefarious. A good leader or team of leaders have the ability to infuse energy into the culture and keeps the culture alive and growing while at the same time, align this with desired outcomes. If the leader of the organization or the workgroup did an excellent job of ensuring a sound alignment of values in coordination with organizational mission, vision, and values most employees will buy-in and live it out making it a synchronized effort.

This is where role-modeling yourself is important as the people can see you. It will result in others joining you and thus gather around a common bond or commitment that is critical to growth and success. Personally, and professionally. In any culture, recognition and rewards need to be considered and thrived for as a way of life – a matter of routine but with sincerity and respect. It should never be a one-time thing and awards ceremonies should be invested in as something

special and not with a 'going through the motion' kind of attitude or behavior. Good leaders know who they are and how important it is to do this kind of activity throughout the year, formal and informal, to show appreciation for those who are living out the advocated or espoused culture. Remember that real culture and espoused culture are dynamics you must pay attention to at all times. Keep in mind, culture grows or declines with time.

The more effort that is given the better the growth while neglect will bring the culture to an end or worse, steer it in the wrong direction. People will come on board to take the place of those who have moved up or on. The competition changes. The world changes and every employee will play a role in the culture you, as a leader, are cultivating. It requires a lot of attention to details and care and definitely some critical adjustments along the way, but if you keep working at it, keep cultivating your garden, the organizational results can be productive, meaningful, and spectacularly self-fulfilling for you and the others who benefit from a healthy workplace environment.

Corrections.com author, Carl ToersBijns, (retired), has worked in corrections for over 25 yrs. He held positions of a Correctional Officer I, II, III [Captain] Chief of Security Mental Health Treatment Center – Program Director – Associate Warden - Deputy Warden of Administration & Operations. Carl's prison philosophy is all about the safety of the public, staff, and inmates, "I believe my strongest quality is that I create strategies that are practical, functional and cost effective."

*Source:*

<http://www.corrections.com/news/article/46420>

## **Chapter 8 ..... Leadership**

Source:

<https://nicic.gov/projects/leadership-development-in-corrections>

### **Leadership Development in Corrections**

NIC believes it takes visionary leaders to improve correctional practices and outcomes. We believe leadership development is a process that requires dedicated effort. We believe effective leadership development programs align with agency operational and strategic needs.

To that end, NIC developed Correctional Leadership Competencies for the 21st Century, a compendium of the characteristics that result in the best performance of correctional executives, senior level leaders, managers, and supervisors. For each leadership profile, key skills, knowledge, and attributes of effective and successful leaders are linked to a set of specific behaviors.

The Academy Division's programmatic offerings are designed using NIC's competency model targeted to four profiles, which are research based in content and delivery modes.

- First Line Supervisors
- Essential Skills for New Supervisors
- Mid-Level Managers
- Management Development for the Future (MDF) Series
- Leadership Development for Mid-Level Managers Virtual Instructor Led (VILT) Series
- Senior Level Leaders
- Correctional Leadership Development (CLD) Series



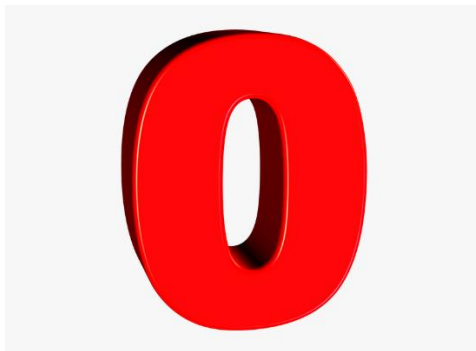
- Executives
- Executive Excellence
- Leadership Organizational Development
- Leadership Development Partnership Initiative

### Minimum Qualifications

- a. After July 1, 2006, any person employed as a jail administrator, jailer, corrections officer, or guard in a county jail or workhouse shall:
- b. Be at least eighteen (18) years of age.
- c. Be a citizen of the United States.
- d. Be a high school graduate or possess its equivalency, which shall include a general educational development (GED) certificate.
- e. Not have been convicted of, or pleaded guilty to, or entered a plea of nolo contendere to any felony charge or to any violation of any federal or state laws or municipal ordinances relating to force, violence, theft, dishonesty, gambling, liquor, controlled substances, or controlled substance analogues.
- f. Not have been released or discharged under any other than honorable discharge from any of the armed forces of the United States.
- g. Have the person's fingerprints on file with the Tennessee bureau of investigation.
- h. Have passed a physical examination by a licensed physician.
- i. Have a good moral character as determined by a thorough investigation conducted by the sheriff's office; and

- j. Have been certified by a Tennessee licensed health care provider qualified in the psychiatric or psychological field as being free from any impairment, as set forth in the current edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) of the American Psychiatric Association at the time of the examination, that would, in the professional judgment of the examiner, affect the person's ability to perform an essential function of the job, with or without a reasonable accommodation.

What are the qualifications to be designated as or perform the duties as a Jail Administrator in the State of Tennessee?



Answer:

Open Discussion:

The study group needs to have an open and honest discussion about how this is achieved. One would hope and in most all probability it would be true that anyone serving in a leadership role as a Jail Administrator would have come up through the ranks and paid their dues. If they are going to supervise inmates in any form or fashion, they

must be TCI certified. But no state law prohibits the hiring of someone outside of the industry coming into a facility and managing it after appointment of the Sheriff. Let's not dismiss that this has been done and with mixed results some being excellent others not so much. Leadership is very important and having employees in these important positions who can perform is vital to the success of the operation. Often times officers give their reason for leaving as leadership. An open and honest discussion should occur and thought processes on how to improve on this important topic. Leadership training is abundant as referred to above and by several agencies. TCI is in the development stages of developing such a course and have conducted training in the past.

Ground rules for discussion:

What can be done on the local level?

What can be done on the state level?

What can be done in heighten awareness?

Is there a need for any additional state laws?

Should there be any laws mandating testing for advancement?

Succession training defined as:

Succession planning is a strategy for passing on leadership roles—often the ownership of a company—to an employee or group of employees. ... Succession planning involves cross-training employees so that they develop skills, company knowledge, and a holistic understanding of the company.

Often times in the frantic busy day to day operation of jails we miss the opportunity to plan for succession planning. Where do our next leaders come from? How are we planning for the future? One Jail Administrator told me that when he gets a good officer the Sheriff steals him away from him for the road. Often enough that it depletes his pool and leaves hiring gaps.

How do you start a succession plan?

- Here are seven tips for kick-starting the succession planning process at your company.
- Be proactive with a plan. ...
- Pinpoint succession candidates. ...
- Let them know. ...
- Step up professional development efforts. ...
- Do a trial run of your succession plan. ...
- Integrate your succession plan into your hiring strategy.

General George S. Patton said this once about experience,

*“Some men have 100 experiences, and some men have the same experience 100 times”.*

## **Chapter 9..... State of Tennessee Employment Stats**

The unemployment rate in Tennessee peaked in April 2020 at 15.8% and is now 11.2 percentage points lower.

Tennessee Unemployment History.

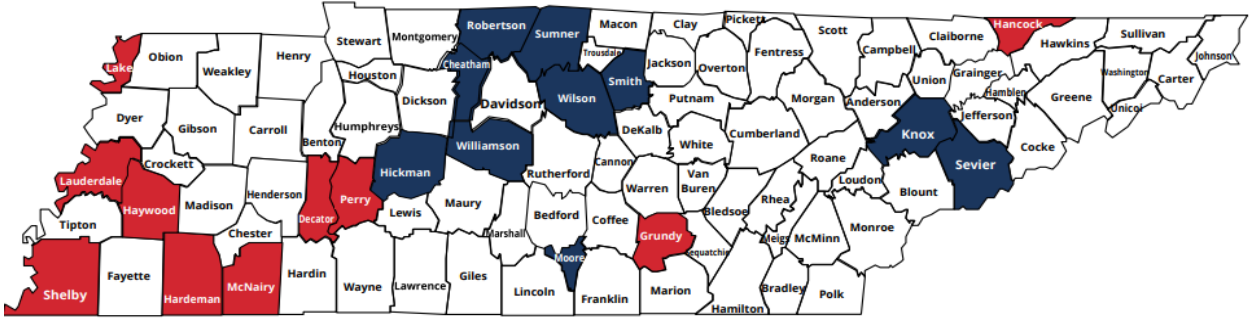
Date June 2021

National Unemployment Rate 5.9%

Tennessee Unemployment Rate 4.9%

Tennessee Unemployed 164,663

Qualified Tennesseans are only eligible for a maximum of 26 weeks of unemployment insurance in a year. If you exhaust your benefit, no extensions are available. In order to be eligible for unemployment again, you will have to meet several requirements: You must have additional earnings from a "covered employer."

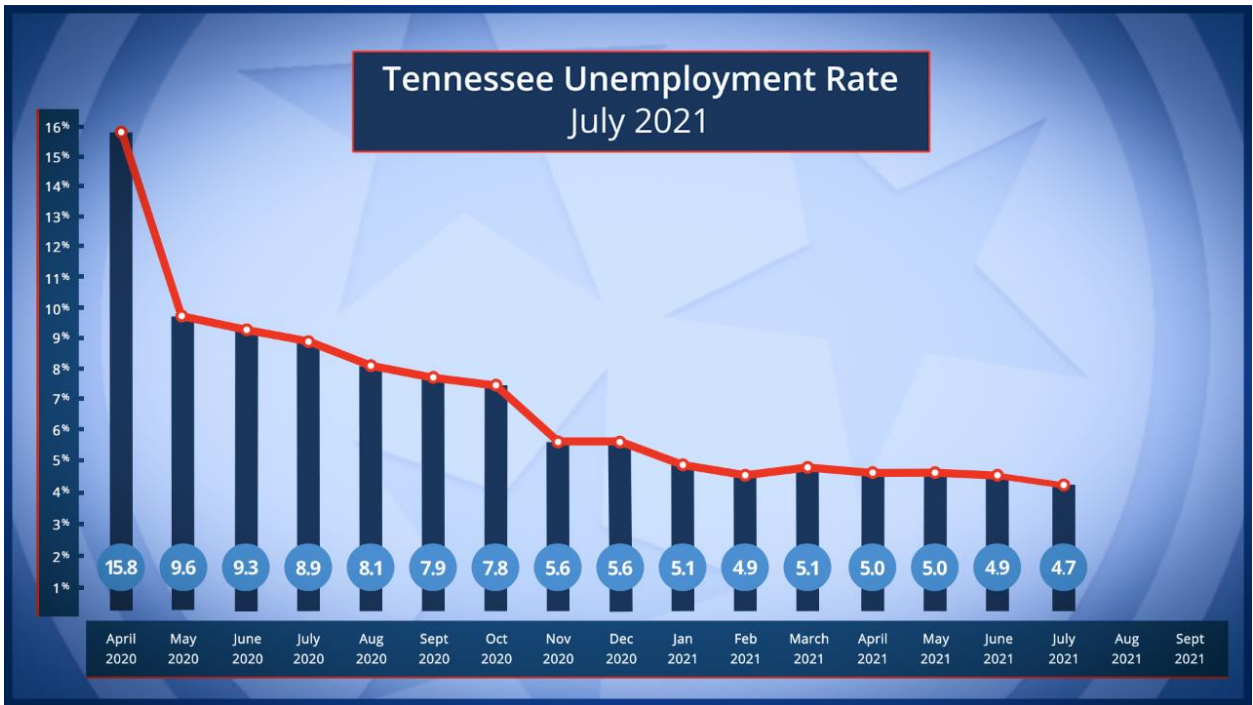


**Lowest  
County Unemployment Rates**

<u>Rank</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Aug 2021 Pre. Rate (%)</u>
1	Williamson	2.6
2	Moore	2.7
3	Cheatham	3.0
4	Wilson	3.1
5	Sevier	3.2
6	Knox	3.3
7	Robertson	3.3
8	Sumner	3.4
9	Hickman	3.4
10	Smith	3.4

**Highest  
County Unemployment Rates**

<u>Rank</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Aug 2021 Pre. Rate (%)</u>
95	Shelby	6.7
94	Perry	6.6
93	Lauderdale	6.3
92	Lake	6.3
91	Haywood	6.1
90	Hardeman	6.1
89	McNairy	5.8
88	Hancock	5.8
87	Grundy	5.5
86	Decatur	5.4



Thursday, July 01, 2021 | 07:30am

Total Claims Paid: 110,889

Total Payments: \$63,458,330

TN Payments: \$8,934,935

Federal Payments: \$54,523,395

New Claims Filed: The number of individuals filing new unemployment claims for the previous week.

Continued Claims: The number of claims continued with weekly certifications.

<b>Weeks</b>	<b>Week Ending Date</b>	<b>New Claims Filed</b>	<b>Continued Claims</b>
10	March 14, 2020	2702	16,342
11	March 21, 2020	39,096	16,098
12	March 28, 2020	94,492	34,570
13	April 4, 2020	116,114	112,438
14	April 11, 2020	74,772	199,910
15	April 18, 2020	68,968	267,053
16	April 25, 2020	43,792	324,543
17	May 2, 2020	37,319	321,571
18	May 9, 2020	29,308	325,095
19	May 16, 2020	28,692	314,487
20	May 23, 2020	26,041	310,126
21	May 30, 2020	22,784	302,260
22	June 6, 2020	21,417	292,234
23	June 13, 2020	19,925	280,593
24	June 20, 2020	21,155	266,596
25	June 27, 2020	22,256	262,224
26	July 4, 2020	25,843	256,645
27	July 11, 2020	22,431	251,924
28	July 18, 2020	25,794	243,405
29	July 25, 2020	19,461	242,397
30	August 1, 2020	11,690	224,093
31	August 8, 2020	10,036	208,810
32	August 15, 2020	13,806	204,726
33	August 22, 2020	10,998	191,204
34	August 29, 2020	12,035	184,781
35	September 5, 2020	11,706	176,388



36	September 12, 2020	10,771	163,791
37	September 19, 2020	11,313	152,195
38	September 26, 2020	9,802	138,727
39	October 3, 2020	9,839	125,238
40	October 10, 2020	10,145	90,507
41	October 17, 2020	9,873	77,740
42	October 24, 2020	7,770	70,982
43	October 31, 2020	6,992	64,188
44	November 7, 2020	7,221	58,298
45	November 14, 2020	6,182	53,976
46	November 21, 2020	6,873	51,624
47	November 28, 2020	5,789	46,665
48	December 5, 2020	6,886	46,404
49	December 12, 2020	7,464	44,215
50	December 19, 2020	7,411	43,482
51	December 26, 2020	10,198	45,226
52	January 2, 2021	16,554	51,816
1	January 9, 2021	21,954	58,945
2	January 16, 2021	18,237	49,270
3	January 23, 2021	12,050	48,996
4	January 30, 2021	11,497	54,280
5	February 6, 2021	9,498	51,660
6	February 13, 2021	8,116	49,964
7	February 20, 2021	12,077	48,015
8	February 27, 2021	10,355	54,972
9	March 6, 2021	7,407	47,763
10	March 13, 2021	7,580	44,428
11	March 20, 2021	7,332	41,033

12	March 27, 2021	7,598	41,310
13	April 3, 2021	10,847	41,505
14	April 10, 2021	10,869	45,113
15	April 17, 2021	13,291	46,285
16	April 24, 2021	8,702	51,055
17	May 1, 2021	7,872	49,271
18	May 8, 2021	8,194	50,376
19	May 15, 2021	7,405	50,901
20	May 22, 2021	6,006	50,443
21	May 29, 2021	6,695	49,280
22	June 5, 2021	7,841	50,054
23	June 12, 2021	6,112	51,883
24	June 19, 2021	4,736	50,671
25	June 26, 2021	4,970	49,909

**New Claims Since March 15, 2020                    1,212,195**

**The federal poverty line for a family of three is just under \$22,000.**

**If jails are paying minimum wage at \$7.25 per hour that equates to \$15,080.00 annual gross salary with no deductions.**

**\$10.00 per hour nets annual income \$20,800.00.**

**Where are counties at with pay?**

## **CONCLUSION:**



**TCI Jail Summit Staffing Issues  
Group Opportunity Discovery and Solutions  
October 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> 2021**

The following pages contain 5 key identifiers which affect officer turn over in local jails and solutions. Group participants identified 37 points both primary and secondary which act as drivers which contribute to hiring difficulties such as officer low pay. Retention issues such as burn out leading to officers exiting contributing to the failure of producing legacy employees.

The 5 key points are noted in this presentation by presenting the opportunity and desired solutions which need to take place.

All identifiers and strategies are subject to changes for improvement purposes.



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**Opportunity:**

Increasing Corrections Officer pay.



**Solution:**

Committee assigned to explore pay incentives and examine wage and hour laws for occupation salary regulations.

Sheriff Jeff Box TSA

Jail Administrator Jerry Scott Sumner County S.O.

Jail Administrator Frank Rezac Carroll County S.O.

Bob Bass TCI



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**Opportunity:**

County Commissioners and stakeholders overview of corrections and daily challenges faced by officers.



**Solution:**

County Commission Training Course designed to educate and inform the stakeholders about the daily challenges of Correctional Officers. This information developed by TCI and formatted in an easy share point that can be used statewide.

i.e. Power points, handouts, and video





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**Opportunity:**

Recruitment and retention coalition utilizing assets in a joint effort to inform the public about correctional careers.



**Solution:**

Work in a joint effort with state agencies to produce media which will capture large audiences. i.e. TCI, TDOC, and other state agencies. Develop training curriculum and recognition for officers who achieve advanced certification.



**Opportunity:**

Leadership:

Address TCA and update requirements for position of Jail Administrator.

Increase training opportunities for future leaders.



**Solution:**

Through efforts of T.S.A. and help of TCI to develop amendments to current law.

TCI to develop Jail Administrators course to be offered statewide.  
(entry level and advanced)



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**Opportunity:**

Improving Correction Officer's work life balance.



**Solution:**

Conduct a study on how to improve officers work life balance. Requesting the Tennessee Department of Health's participation and guidance on requested information by TSA and TCI. Utilizing one large facility from each grand division.

Partner with Austin Peay University by participating in a study on turnover intentions and examinations of work-related determinants.



The previous pages contained opportunities and solutions offered by participants in a round table discussion on a report titled Hiring and Retention (Jail Staff the Other Inmates)

Tennessee Corrections Institute wishes to thank all the professional participants who are committed to improving the lives of Correctional Officers in the State of Tennessee.

**Attendees:**

Sheriff Karl Jackson- Obion County

Sheriff Russell Barker- Anderson County

Sheriff Tommy Jones- Monroe County

Sheriff Jack Stockton- Roane County

Sheriff Eddie Farris- Putnam County

Sheriff Jeff Box- Dyer County

Curt Vokoun- Putnam County

Tonya Fisher- Haywood County

Frank Rezac- Carroll County

Andrew Howdeshell- Blount County

Jerry Scott- Sumner County

Lee Carswell- Sullivan County

Bob Bass- TCI

William Robert Kane- TCI

Will Wall- TCI

Shari Scott- TCI

Tonya Stacey- TCI





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