



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 590

February Session, 2026

Substitute Senate Bill No. 476

Senate, April 13, 2026

The Committee on Judiciary reported through SEN. WINFIELD of the 10th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING VISITATION POLICIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION AND THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS HELD IN TRUST BY THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION TO PERSONS WHO WERE FORMERLY INCARCERATED.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 18-8100 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2026*):

3 (a) The Commissioner of Correction shall [not use the provision of
4 voice communication service or any other communication service to
5 persons who are in the custody of the commissioner and confined in a
6 correctional facility to supplant in-person contact visits any such person
7 may be eligible to receive] permit any person who is confined in a
8 correctional facility and housed with the general population of such
9 facility to have not less than three in-person visits per week.

10 (b) (1) [On and after July 1, 2022, the] The commissioner shall provide
11 voice communication service to persons who are in the custody of the
12 commissioner and confined in a correctional facility. The commissioner

13 may supplement such voice communication service with any other
14 communication service, including, but not limited to, video
15 communication and electronic mail services. Any such communication
16 service shall be provided free of charge to such persons and any
17 communication, whether initiated or received through any such service,
18 shall be free of charge to the person initiating or receiving the
19 communication.

20 (2) Each person in the custody of the commissioner and confined in a
21 correctional facility shall be eligible to use the voice communication
22 service described in subdivision (1) of this subsection for at least ninety
23 minutes on each day of such person's confinement, provided the
24 provisions of this subdivision shall not be interpreted to interfere with
25 the standard operations of the facility in which such person is confined.

26 (c) [On and after July 1, 2022, the] The state shall not receive revenue
27 for the provision of any communication service to any person in the
28 custody of the commissioner and confined in a correctional facility.

29 (d) The Commissioner of Correction shall not use the provision of
30 voice communication service or any other communication service to a
31 person who is in the custody of the commissioner and confined in a
32 correctional facility to supplant in-person visits authorized under this
33 section, including any in-person contact visit that such person may be
34 eligible to receive.

35 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2026*) (a) Upon the release of any person
36 from a correctional facility, the Department of Correction shall disburse
37 to such person the remaining balance in such person's Inmate Trust
38 Fund account. The department may make such disbursement to the
39 formerly incarcerated person in the form of cash, a check, or a prepaid
40 device, provided the department may not disburse funds by means of a
41 prepaid device unless the department also provides the formerly
42 incarcerated person with at least one alternative option of receiving the
43 disbursed funds by cash or check.

44 (b) In any situation where the department is unable to make such

45 disbursement upon release of such person because the department was
 46 not informed of the person's release date at least two weeks in advance
 47 of such date, the department shall obtain a mailing address from such
 48 person prior to, or at the time of, such person's release, and mail such
 49 disbursement to such person. In any such situation, not later than two
 50 weeks after such person is released, the department shall mail the
 51 disbursement by United States mail to the mailing address provided by
 52 the formerly incarcerated person.

53 (c) If the department disburses funds by means of a prepaid device
 54 pursuant to this section, neither the department nor the issuer of the
 55 prepaid device may impose, or cause to be imposed, any fee payable by
 56 the formerly incarcerated person. As used in this section, "prepaid
 57 device" means a card, code or other means of access to a consumer's
 58 account held by a financial institution or other financial service
 59 provider.

| | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections: | | |
| Section 1 | October 1, 2026 | 18-8100 |
| Sec. 2 | July 1, 2026 | New section |

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In Section 2, the language was reorganized as Subsecs. (a) to (c).

JUD *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

| Agency Affected | Fund-Effect | FY 27 \$ | FY 28 \$ |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Correction, Dept. | GF - Cost | 362,347 - 683,438 | 483,129 - 911,250 |
| State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits ¹ | GF - Cost | 147,623 - 183,130 | 196,830 - 244,173 |

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill, which requires the Department of Correction (DOC) to allow inmates to have at least three in-person visits per week, results in an annual cost of \$438,129 to \$911,250 to DOC and \$196,830 to \$244,173 to the State Comptroller (OSC) for fringe benefits, beginning in the second quarter of FY 27.

To meet the bill's visitation requirements, DOC will need to add posts at six of its correctional facilities. DOC will likely need to hire one to two correction officers (COs) per facility depending on the increased volume of visitation, resulting in a total of about nine COs. Initially, these positions will likely be covered by overtime shifts, resulting in an annual cost of \$911,250 to DOC and \$196,830 to OSC for fringe benefits.² As newly hired COs cover these shifts, these annual costs – not accounting for annual wage increases – may decrease to \$483,129 for DOC and

¹ The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active hazardous duty employee fringe benefit cost is 50.54% of payroll in FY 27.

² The average annual salary of a CO is approximately \$67,500 and the estimated fringe benefits rate for overtime is 21.6%.

increase to \$244,173 to OSC.³ The FY 27 cost is 75% of the annual cost due to the bill's implementation date.

The bill also requires DOC to disburse the remaining balance in a person's Inmate Trust Fund account upon release. This provision is not expected to result in a fiscal impact as DOC has the capacity to meet this requirement with existing resources.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to the number of additional posts needed and the extent to which visitation increases as a result of the bill.

³ The starting annual salary of a CO is \$53,681 and the estimated fringe benefits rate for new employees is 50.54%.

OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 476*****AN ACT CONCERNING VISITATION POLICIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION AND THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS HELD IN TRUST BY THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION TO PERSONS WHO WERE FORMERLY INCARCERATED.*****SUMMARY**

This bill requires the Department of Correction (DOC) commissioner to allow anyone confined in a correctional facility and housed with the facility's general population to have at least three in-person visits per week. As under existing law, the commissioner cannot replace in-person visits by providing voice communication service or any other communication service to individuals in the commissioner's custody and confined in a correctional facility who are eligible to receive the visits.

The bill also requires the DOC commissioner to disburse the remaining balance in a person's Inmate Trust Fund account upon release and allows the department to do so by cash, a check, or a prepaid device (card, code, or other means of access to a consumer's account held by a financial institution or other financial service provider). DOC may only disburse funds by a prepaid device if it provides at least one alternative option of receiving the funds (cash or check). If DOC disburses funds by a prepaid device, the bill prohibits the department and the prepaid device issuer from charging the formerly incarcerated person a fee or causing a fee to be charged.

In situations where DOC cannot make the disbursement upon a person's release because the department was not informed of the release date at least two weeks in advance, DOC must get the incarcerated person's mailing address before, or at the time of, his or her release and mail the disbursement to the person. It must be mailed within two

weeks after the person's release by U.S. mail to the provided mailing address.

It also makes minor changes to remove an obsolete date.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026, except the provision on the Inmate Trust Fund account balance disbursement is effective July 1, 2026.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 24 Nay 12 (03/24/2026)