

OFFICE OF FISCAL ANALYSIS

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sHB-5567

AN ACT CONCERNING HEALTH CARE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF
CORRECTION FACILITIES.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 27 \$	FY 28 \$
Correction, Dept.	GF - Cost	At least 21.3 million	At least 21.1 million
Higher Ed., Off.	GF - Cost	Up to 1 million	Up to 1 million
State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits ¹	GF - Cost	231,000	288,500
Governmental Accountability, Off.	GF - Cost	138,000	276,000
Policy & Mgmt., Off.	GF - Potential Cost	See Below	See Below
Legislative Mgmt.	GF - Potential Cost	Minimal	Minimal
Governmental Accountability, Off.	GF - Potential Savings	Minimal	Minimal
Correction, Dept.; State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits	GF - Potential Savings	Indeterminate	Indeterminate

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill results in the fiscal impacts described below.

¹ The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 41.82% of payroll in FY 27. The estimated active hazardous duty employee fringe benefit cost for overtime is 21.6% of payroll in FY 27.

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Section 1 requires the Office of the Correction Ombuds (OCO) to hire two staff, a Correction Patient Advocate and a Correction Mental Health Care Clinician. This results in an estimated General Fund salary cost to OCO of \$138,000 in FY 27,² with an associated fringe cost of \$58,000, and beginning in FY 28, an estimated annual salary cost of \$276,000 with an associated fringe cost of \$115,500.³ The two additional staff will support inmate access to care and medication management.

Additionally, this section specifies that OCO can recover costs associated with filing and defending a subpoena if the subpoena is unsuccessfully challenged in court, resulting in potential minimal savings to OCO beginning in FY 26. The potential savings will depend on the number of subpoenas brought by OCO, the number that are challenged, and the reimbursement awarded to OCO. Any savings is expected to be minimal as subpoena power has only been used three times to date.

Section 2 results in a one-time cost to the Department of Correction (DOC) of up to \$200,000 in FY 27. It requires DOC to modify their current electronic health record (EHR) system and/or inmate tablets to (1) allow inmates to digitally request medical care through a secure messaging system, (2) allow inmates to access certain medical records, (3) include a digital, time-stamped log of medical care request. Contract costs to modify their current systems to effect these changes are not expected to exceed \$200,000.

Section 6 results in an estimated cost of up to \$1 million annually beginning in FY 27 to the Office of Higher Education (OHE). It requires OHE to administer a student loan reimbursement program for licensed nurses and licensed clinical social workers employed by DOC. Eligible employees who choose to participate can receive up to \$5,000 annually in reimbursement for student loan payments, and up to \$20,000

² The FY 27 figure represents the half-year cost, anticipating a January 1, 2027 start date as required by the bill.

³ The salaries of the new positions are estimated to be \$150,000 annually for the Patient Advocate and \$125,725 annually for the Mental Health Care Clinician based on the qualifications prescribed by the bill.

cumulatively over their lifetime.

DOC currently employs about 385 licensed nurses and 45 licensed clinical social workers (totaling 430 employees). The cost will vary based on the number of nurses and social workers who participate, and the amount of outstanding debt they carry. If 30% of nurses and 80% of social workers⁴ DOC employs receive the maximum \$5,000 reimbursement, the annual cost would be about \$758,000.

The section additionally allows OHE to use up to 5% of program funding for administration and promotion of the program.

Section 9 requires annual correction officer training to include instruction on (1) communication and implicit bias awareness and how that bias may affect decision making and (2) de-escalation methods and crisis prevention, resulting in a cost of \$1.1 million to DOC and \$173,000 to the State Comptroller (OSC) for fringe benefits in FY 27 and FY 28. It is anticipated that the completion of these training units will require approximately 16,000 hours of overtime, resulting in an annual cost of about \$800,000. Additionally, DOC is required to contract with an outside provider to give these trainings, resulting in an annual cost of up to \$300,000.

Section 10 requires DOC to contract with a federally qualified health center (FQHC) to provide comprehensive medical, behavioral health, and care coordination services at York Correctional Institution (CI), resulting in an annual cost of at least \$20 million—assuming the negotiated contract price is comparable with current health expenditures at York CI⁵—and an indeterminant potential savings to DOC and OSC in FY 27, FY 28, and FY 29, or beyond depending on if

⁴ A study by the University of Michigan published on 1/26/26 indicated between 28% and 33% of licensed nurses carry student loan debt. The "2024 Social Work Workforce Study Series" completed for the Association of Social Work Boards indicated that about 80% of licensed clinical social workers carry student loan debt at graduation.

⁵ The state currently spends approximately \$22.3 million annually to provide health services at York CI. This amount includes wages, medical services, supplies, pharmaceuticals, and fringe benefits.

the pilot program lasts longer than three years.

Any savings from a reduction in staffing expenditures to DOC and OSC from this pilot program depends on whether current health-services employees at York CI remain employed by DOC.

Section 10 also results in a potential cost to the Office of Policy and Management to the extent additional resources are required to support the pilot programs.

Section 11 establishes a Correction Medical and Health Commission resulting in a potential minimal cost to the Office of Legislative Management. The bill specifies that commission members serve without compensation but can be reimbursed for necessary expenses resulting in a potential cost to the extent reimbursements occur.

The remaining sections and subsections of the bill not mentioned do not result in a fiscal impact as the affected agencies have the capacity and expertise to meet the requirements of these sections.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation, employee wage agreements, the number employees that participate in the loan reimbursement program, and the length and terms of the comprehensive healthcare pilot program at York CI.