



## Overview of 2021-22 Proposed Corrections Budget

*Californians United for a Responsible Budget (CURB) is a statewide coalition of organizations working to reduce the number of people imprisoned in California and the number of prisons and jails in the state. We advocate for an investment in justice that centers care, not punishment.*

**Governor Newsom's [2021-22 proposed budget for Corrections](#) includes \$13.1 billion in the general fund and special funds close to \$3 billion, totaling just over \$16 billion of state funding for corrections.** The general fund includes \$1.4 billion to support local community corrections, nearly \$500 million for enhancing law enforcement activities and growth, and about \$1 billion to the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC), a significant increase to the amount allocated to the agency last year. This includes a one time allocation for \$12.1 million to support county probation departments with the expedited release of individuals from prison to Post Release Community Supervision as related to the COVID-19 state of emergency.

The state prison population has gone from 150% of design capacity to just below the court-ordered cap of 137.5% as of 2019. The relentless activism of the community during the pandemic freed people and saved lives, contributing to the prison population dropping another 20%. However, many of these so-called "reductions" are also due to COVID-19 safety guidelines that placed a hold on transferring people from county cages to state-owned cages. The administration continues to propose funding for relief from COVID-19 but are failing to do what will actually protect public safety- release people from prisons and jails. **Any further allocations to CDCR for COVID protections is wasteful. The awful toll of COVID-19 has shown that California can safely reduce its prison population and that doing so is cost effective and safe.** Now is the time to permanently close facilities and lock these savings in structurally for the future while continuing to review and revise the statutes to reduce the incarcerated population while investing the savings in providing community-based safety strategies and pathways to reintegration into healthy and thriving communities.

**Reductions in prison populations are advanced by reformed credit earning structures, conviction classifications and sentencing schemes via the ballot or legislation. For these reductions to be sustained, we must permanently close more California state prisons.** Decreasing the state's reliance on punitive answers to public safety has been matched with increases to the corrections budget, from \$8.9 billion (2012-2013) to this coming year's proposed \$13.1 billion. This is not our definition of a responsible budget.

In order to cut wasteful spending on Corrections (and shift investments into public health centered safety that includes housing, healthcare and community based

resources), the state should—at minimum—follow many of the cost-saving prison closure recommendations of the state's own [Legislative Analyst's Office \(LAO\)](#). The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation enacted a “warm shutdown” to Deuel Vocational Institution (Tracy, CA), to be followed by an additional prison closure by 2023. Despite these planned closures, the current budget includes nearly \$500 million over the next five years for infrastructure projects for crumbling and environmentally dangerous facilities. Instead of planning for more wasteful spending, it's time to increase releases of people from prison and close more prisons by 2026.

**CURB is calling on Governor Newsom to create a 5 year plan to close 10 state-owned prisons in response to failing infrastructure and continued public health threats—and cancel any existing prison construction and renovation.**

The trend in lower prison populations may be sustained by the retroactive implementation of sentencing reform that has been passed over the last 7 years, along with more aggressive sentencing reform over the next two years, including repealing the CA 3-Strikes Law and all other sentencing enhancements. In the interest of public health and safety, Governor Newsom may use his executive authority to grant mass releases and simultaneously propose a budget that supports reentry and community services. **CURB maintains its opposition to any and all forms of prison construction and urges the state to join Californians in setting forward a solid plan that may save thousands of lives and restore communities across the state.**

**Population Reduction:** The average daily adult population of people in prison is now projected to be 97,950 in FY 2020-21, a decrease of 20% or 24,586 people from the 2020 Budget Act which estimated a daily population of 122,536. A further <sup>1</sup> decrease is expected in 2021-22 to an average daily population of 95,324 because projections show a downward trend.

Correspondingly, the average daily population of people paroled is now projected to be 53,006 in 2020-21, an increase of just over 10 percent from spring projections. The paroled population is expected to decrease again in 2021-22 to a population of 45,924 as a result of 2020 Budget statutory changes which reduced parole terms to 24 months.

- **Implementation of Prop. 57:** Estimated to reduce the average daily adult prison population by approximately 7,300 in 2021-22, and by approximately 13,000 in 2023-24.

<sup>1</sup> CDCR notes that county intake was suspended in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. (p.173 Governor's Summary)

- **Prop 47 Savings:** An estimated net General Fund savings of \$114.8 million, an increase of \$11.9 million over the estimated savings in 2020-21. This increase is attributable primarily to increased savings resulting from the state ending its reliance on contract facilities to house people in prison.

**COVID-19 Expenditures:** Total confirmed COVID-19 cases in CDCR population: 47,458 Deaths: 192. Through mid-December CDCR has spent approximately \$408.3M during 2019-20 and 2020-21 on COVID-19 activities including testing, cleaning, tents, and PPE. By 2020-21 end CDCR expects to spend \$723.8M more, for a total of \$1.132B including:

- \$281.3M in one-time General Fund money for COVID-19 activities and purchases.
- \$51M General Fund limited-term funding increasing to \$77.6M in 2024-25 to cover increased workers' compensation associated with COVID-19 classification as an occupational injury.
- As of December 1, 2020 the state has provided a \$38.8M General Fund and is pending another payment of \$40.4M to county sheriffs and county corrections departments for housing people in prisons due to the temporary stoppage of prison intake. Current projections estimate a total of \$163.4M will be spent through June 30, 2021.

**Prison Capacity and Closures:** The final in-state contract correctional facility will close in May 2021 completing the process of eliminating all contract prisons (the other 6 in-state facilities had their contracts terminated in October 2020)

- Deuel Vocational Institution is set for warm shut down by September 2021, achieving a savings of \$113.5M in 2021-22 and \$150.6M in 2022-23.
- A second (unnamed) state-operated prison is slated to be closed in 2022-23.
- The executive is justifying **not** making more closures on the basis of "new considerations of use for long term use of dormitories, placements of older persons in prisons, and the need for dedicated space to isolate prisoners in the event of additional outbreaks of either COVID-19 or other airborne communicable diseases." **This is a red flag and the administration needs to prioritize releases and closures to slow the spread of COVID.**

**Rehabilitative Programming:** CURB maintains that wellness is best served in the community. People can't get well in a cell. CDCR has been historically irresponsible with rehabilitation. People should be released and the state budget should shift to support community based organizations that provide necessary wellness services.

- Youth Offender Rehabilitative Communities: \$546.9M in General Fund for rehabilitative programs, a 5.3% increase from last year's budget at \$519.2M
- \$23.2M in 2021-22 and \$18M ongoing General Fund for information technology to enhance access to rehabilitative programming (ongoing <sup>2</sup>funding (\$18M) is equal to \$236 per person (97,950))

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- Purchase of approximately 38,000 laptop computers (that is 1 laptop per 3 people in prison, 97,950 projected ADP)
- Creation of a secure online academic portal: *This is not needed - schools of all kinds already have secure online portals that incarcerated people can access if they were to be released and given support to pursue education.*

**Staff Development:** A wasteful proposal to repurpose the former Northern California Women's Facility into a hands-on training facility focused on "effective and realistic" training.

- \$21.2M in 2021-22, decreasing to \$16.1M in General Fund in 2024-25 to enhance staff development through new training for correctional officers. Ongoing funding amounts to about \$575 per employee (compared to the rehabilitative programming costs above, est. 28,000 eligible employees, e.g. prison guards)

**Infrastructure:** CURB maintains that all spending on infrastructure repairs is wasteful and will not protect incarcerated people nor the public. Closing facilities would allow the State to avoid spending billions of dollars on these projects and invest in providing care and services that people need.

- \$33.6M over two years to replace the roof at California State Prison, LA County. Roof replacement projects are projected for 14 additional institutions over the next 7 years instead of closures.
- \$6.8M in one-time funding to modernize the California Rehabilitation Center (CRC) *The estimated savings from closing a state facility is \$113.5M. The CRC should be prioritized for closure as is one of the states oldest and most dilapidated facilities.*
- \$50M in one-time funds in 2021-22 to address highest priority deferred maintenance projects. Total costs of identified deferred maintenance projects (the maintenance backlog) are \$1 billion
- \$1.8M increase in ongoing funds to maintain the current Managed Access System (which blocks unauthorized cell phone calls at prison grounds). This is a renewal of the May 2021 persons in prisons/Ward Telephone System. The increased costs to the state also result in reduced calling costs to persons in prisons and their families.
  - The costs of calls from persons in prisons to families is artificial and extractive, allowing private companies to profit off of the pain of family separation caused by incarceration. There is no technological reason for there to be an additional cost.
- Mandated reforms at the Richard J. Donovan Correctional Facility (RJD): \$13.5M in 2020-21, \$10.1M in 2021-22 and \$6.9M in 2022-23- RJD has had one of the highest COVID-19 infection issues.
- 7.5M to improve the menu at institutions and address healthy eating. This is \$0.20 per day per person in prison and hardly enough to lead to meaningful change in procurement of healthy food. Healthy food is available upon release, in the community.
- \$2.8M in 2021-22 declining to \$1.2M ongoing to develop polices pursuant to Chapter 182, Statutes of 2020 (SB 132), The Transgender Respect, Agency and Dignity Act. SB 132 requires CDCR to house and conduct physical searches of transgender, nonbinary, and intersex persons in prisons according to their gender identity and preferences.

**Medical Care for people imprisoned:** Federal Receivership includes \$4M in 2021-22

increasing to \$11.6M ongoing to enhance quality management and patient safety by providing staff to evaluate the risks and implement best practices to improve the health care delivery system. *This is \$118 per person in prison per year in ongoing funding.*

For more information go to [curbprisonspending.org](http://curbprisonspending.org) or email [amberrose@curbprisonspending.org](mailto:amberrose@curbprisonspending.org)