

Decision Package

INCREASE FUNDING TO SUPPORT CAREER PROGRESSION FOR DOC PROBATION AND PAROLE SERVICES

Overview

Agency	Department of Corrections (799)
Biennium	2024-2026
Budget Round	Amended Bill
Bill Version	Regular Session
Category	Salary increases and regrades
DPB Initiated	No
Exclude from Bud Doc	No
Source of Request	Agency
Region	Multiple Regions
Approp. Act Language Required?	No
Legislation Required?	No
Enterprise Strategy	
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Agency Narrative

Agency Description

The Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC) is a nationally and internationally recognized leader in corrections providing lasting public safety to the Commonwealth. Playing a crucial role in frontline public safety within the Commonwealth, Probation Officers (POs) enhance public safety in their local communities by helping probationers and paroles lead more pro-social lives and by assisting those who have been incarcerated with their transition back into society after release. As of July 31, 2024, the DOC supervisee caseload in Community Corrections was 61,863.

The VADOC is experiencing significant increases in vacancy and turnover rates of Probation and Parole Officers. Combined with recruitment challenges, this turnover jeopardizes the agency's ability to fulfill our mission of public safety and fulfill the duties outlined in the Code of Virginia. As of July 31, 2024, VADOC had a PO vacancy rate of 14.46%, with 118 positions unfilled.

To address this issue and attract talent across the Commonwealth, the Agency is seeking compensation funding to overcome barriers posed by current salaries of both existing and prospective employees. The introduction and implementation of a comprehensive skill-based, progressive pay program which considers employee tenure alongside skill development and deployment, could significantly improve employee engagement and retention within this career group. A career progression program would provide prospective applicants with a clear understanding of the financial value of a career as a VADOC Probation Officer, enabling the VADOC to compete for a diverse and qualified applicant pool against those agencies offering higher salaries and similar career progression programs.

Historically, the VADOC has lacked funding for a skill-based pay system that compensates Probation Officers for progression in their role. Many officers have acquired advanced skills that support the VADOC business practices and public safety mission however, they are not receiving any additional compensation for utilizing those skills. By implementing a career pathway program, Probation Officers would have the opportunity to advance through tiers with each linked to a target salary level. Providing funding to upskill employees in these public safety roles would enhance individual contributions and commitment while better supporting the Commonwealth's public safety efforts. Additionally, the difference in target salary levels would address and mitigate salary compression issues which would support both retention and engagement efforts.

Consequences of not funding/Justification

The VADOC will continue to face rising vacancy and turnover rates among Probation and Parole Officers which places a strain on its ability to meet public safety goals and statutory requirements. The lack of competitive compensation and a structured career progression program will continue to contribute to ongoing recruitment challenges which places a heavier burden on remaining staff often resulting in higher turnover.

Alternatives considered (must list at least one)

The Department is not currently funded to adjust salaries of Probation and Parole staff. All compensation alternatives would require additional funding. Implementation of programs focused on mentorship and peer support can enhance job satisfaction and reduce turnover without requiring significant financial investment. This alternative is difficult in areas experiencing staffing shortages and only offers partial solutions that do not fully address the underlying issues of salary competitiveness, which remains a key driver of recruitment and retention challenges.

Explanations and Methodologies

Working Papers available upon request

Summary Grid

Object Type	FY 2025 Req	FY 2026 Req	FY 2027 Req	FY 2028 Req	FY 2029 Req	FY 2030 Req
General Fund Dollars	\$0	\$1,565,351	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Nongeneral Fund Dollars	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
General Fund Positions	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Nongeneral Fund Positions	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
General Fund Transfers	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
General Fund Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Layoffs	0	0	0	0	0	0
Additions to Balance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Total Service Grid Summarized By Program and Fund Detail

More Details

Program Code	Program Name	FY 2025 Req	FY 2026 Req
351	Supervision of Offenders and Re-entry Services		\$1,565,351
Totals		\$0	\$1,565,351

Fund Code	Fund Name	FY 2025 Req	FY 2026 Req
01000	General Fund		\$1,565,351
Totals		\$0	\$1,565,351

Position Planning Grid Summarized By Program

More Details

Program Code	Program Name	FY 2025 Req	FY 2026 Req
351	Supervision of Offenders and Re-entry Services	0.00	0.00
Totals		0.00	0.00

Supporting Documents

File Name	File Size	Uploaded By	Upload Date	Comment