Our Mission

The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections operates as one team, embraces diversity, and commits to enhancing public safety. We are proud of our reputation as leaders in the corrections field. Our mission is to reduce criminal behavior by providing individualized treatment and education to offenders, resulting in successful community reintegration through accountability and positive change.

Our History

Pennsylvania has a distinguished reputation in penology. The commonwealth was the birthplace of the penitentiary concept, also known as the Pennsylvania System. Eastern State Penitentiary opened in 1829, on a cherry orchard outside of Philadelphia, and it was considered at the time to be “the world’s greatest penitentiary.” Known to historians as "the first true penitentiary," Eastern State operated until 1970.

The Bureau of Correction was created by an act of Legislature in September 1953. The foundation was based on a report by Retired Army Major General Jacob L. Devers and his special committee to investigate prison problems. The committee was convened shortly after riots at Pittsburgh and Rockview early in 1953. It was the committee’s mission to recommend ways to improve the correctional system and reduce unrest. Up to this point the state’s prisons fell under the Department of Welfare. Here they were governed by their own boards of trustees. The Devers Committee suggested the establishment of one agency, whose sole purpose was to manage the state prison system. Appointed by Gov. John S. Fine, Arthur T. Prasse was selected as the first commissioner of corrections, where he remained until 1970.

In 1980, the Bureau of Correction changed hands from the former Pennsylvania Department of Justice, to the newly created Office of General Counsel to the Governor. Constitutional changes resulted in an elected state attorney general, and the disbanding of the Justice Department.
In 1984, under Act 245, the Bureau of Correction was elevated to cabinet-level status, making it the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections.

Today

The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (DOC) is responsible for the operation of the commonwealth’s state prisons, state-run community corrections centers, a boot camp and a training academy. This agency also oversees -- through a 2017 Memorandum of Understanding between the agency and the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole -- the parole supervision of reentrants returning to either home plans or community corrections centers upon release from prison and reentry-related services and programs for such individuals. While the DOC has assumed parole supervision responsibility, the decision to parole an individual remains solely with the PBPP, which is a stand-alone entity.

With a 2018-2019 fiscal year budget of $2.4 billion, the agency is headed by a secretary of corrections who is ultimately responsible for the operation of the department.

Recent major accomplishments have included, but are not limited to:

- Eliminating drugs and improving safety
- Closing SCI Graterford/Opening SCI Phoenix
- Consolidating the DOC and parole supervision/reentry services of the PBPP
- Expansion of the Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) program
- Reducing the inmate population
- Building career pathways for inmates
- Advocating for the mentally ill

Future major initiatives may include:

- Improving intelligence gathering and recording
- Violence reduction
- Changes to restricted housing policy/use
- The passing of Justice Reinvestment Initiative 2 legislation
- Further expansion of MAT
- Making the entire prison system tobacco free by July 1, 2019
- Educating parole agents about child development and early learning resources
- Expansion of the agency’s leadership development program
- Staff wellness
- Higher education for inmates
Specific Areas of Responsibility

Following the executive deputy and deputy secretary descriptions, individual bureaus/offices areas of responsibility follow and are listed alphabetically by bureau/office name:

**Secretary of Corrections**

Ultimately responsible for the overall operation of the department through assignment of work to appropriate deputy secretaries and various offices/bureaus directors who have direct report to the secretary. Also advises the governor regarding prison related issues.

**Executive Deputy Secretary**

Directs the department's field operations through the supervision of the Executive Deputy Secretary for Institutional Operations and the Executive Deputy Secretary for Community Corrections and Reentry. The directors of the Bureau of Correction Education; Bureau of Standards, Audits, Assessment and Compliance; Bureau of Treatment Services; and Population Management and Sentence Commutation Office also report to the executive deputy secretary.

**Executive Deputy Secretary for Community Corrections and Reentry**

Directs and manages all departmental community corrections and reentry service operations through supervision of two deputy secretaries who provide a clear line of responsibility, authority and direction to their respective operational area.

- **Deputy Secretary of Field Services** - Oversees parole field functions of the department.
- **Deputy Secretary for Reentry** - Oversees all reentry services and operations.

**Executive Deputy Secretary for Institutional Operations**

Directs and manages all institutional operations through the oversight of designated state correctional institutions (SCI) and the supervision of two regional deputy secretaries who provide a clear line of responsibility, authority and direction to facilities. Also, oversees the functions of the Bureau of Facility Security and Special Operations.

- **Deputy Secretaries for the Eastern and Western Regions** - Oversee the operations at designated SCIs.

**Deputy Secretary for Administration**

Oversees the administrative responsibilities of the department by managing and directing the functions of the Bureau of Health Care Services, Bureau of Operations, Bureau of Administration, Bureau of Correctional Industries, Psychology Office, Food Services Office, County Inspection and Services Office and Equal Employment Opportunity.
Administration (Bureau of)
Directs the department’s budget, re-budget, cost projections, procurement and fiscal functions. Also, responsible for administrative activities such as the inmate banking system, office management, purchasing, automotive services, leasing contracts, grant reporting, financial audits, inventory systems, property management and travel services.

Advocacy Office
Advocates on behalf of the department’s inmate population in identifying, monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of mental health, health care services and programming. Additionally, plans, develops and implements policies and procedures relative to the advocacy needs of the department.

Central Services (Bureau of)
Directs the operations of the Parole Services Division and Interstate Probation and Parole Services Division. This bureau operates the statewide communications center; serves as liaison with probation and parole agencies in other states; provides oversight to the institutional parole staff; and manages electronic monitoring, transports, urinalysis program and sexually violent predator treatment tracking.

Chief Counsel (Office of)
The Office of Chief Counsel provides legal representation, advice and other legal services to the Department of Corrections. The Office of Chief Counsel reports to the Governor’s Office of General Counsel.

Communications (Press) Office
Responds to news media requests for information about department policies, procedures, programs, employees and the inmates it incarcerates. Provides guidance and instruction to facility staff charged with the responsibility of serving as public information officer. Also, maintains the department’s social media pages and accounts, serves as the agency webmaster for its internet site, issues press releases and produces the department’s online newsletter. Office staff also report to the Governor’s Communications/Press Office.

Community Corrections (Bureau of)
Oversees residential and non-residential facilities located throughout the state that house individuals who have been granted parole by the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole (PBPP) and those under the State Intermediate Punishment program. While at these facilities, individuals obtain employment, attend treatment programs and educational opportunities. This bureau also contracts with private vendors to provide specialized treatment and supervision, many in the area of substance use disorder programming.
Correction Education (Bureau of)

Directs, monitors and assists facilities in the delivery of educational, vocational and library services. Ensures that inmates are provided with an opportunity to receive instruction in basic skills and special education that can lead to a General Education Diploma or a Commonwealth Secondary Diploma.

Correctional Industries (Bureau of)

Operates factories within the department’s facilities to provide inmates with vocational training and work experience in order to reduce inmate idleness while incarcerated, to assist with an inmate’s successful reentry following release from prison and to reduce inmate recidivism by providing them the work skills to find and keep meaningful employment. Correctional Industries operates without support of the state general fund and is financially self-supporting through the sale of its products to commonwealth agencies, other public-sector entities, educational and non-profit organizations.

County Probation and Parole Officers’ Firearm Education and Training Commission

Develops, establishes and administers minimum courses of study, training and competency standards for firearms training for county probation and parole officers.

County Inspections and Services Office

Maintains a statewide program of independent field inspections of all county prisons. Provides interpretations of state law and regulations, best practice suggestions and training assistance. Also, reviews citizen and inmate complaints to determine proper resolution.

Equal Employment Opportunity Office

Establishes and monitors the overall policy and procedures for the department’s Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) program while ensuring federal and state compliance and program implementation. It provides administrative oversight; monitoring tools; training; investigation; and ensures diversity and inclusion recruitment, retention and promotion. Also, provides technical assistance and guidance on the management of EEO programs to the secretary and executive staff, ensuring fair and equitable treatment for all employees, applicants for employment and those doing business with the department.

Facility Security and Special Operations (Bureau of)

Manages the operations of the department’s special response teams, Critical Incident Management program; and develops, monitors, assesses, coordinates and revises the security procedures used for maintaining the secure, safe and orderly operations of the facilities.
**Field Region Offices** - Coordinates and manages the activities of all districts and sub-offices in:


**Eastern Field Region Office** - Chester, Delaware, Philadelphia, Montgomery and Bucks Counties.

**Food Services Office**

Plans, develops, implements, directs, oversees and monitors department policies, guidelines, menus, diets, training, purchases and procedures pertaining to the food service operations throughout the department. These services are provided at a level consistent with community standards through continuous quality improvement processes and coordinating services with other bureaus and state agencies. Ensures compliance with state and federal laws as they pertain to food safety.

**Grants, Standards and Court Services Division**

Manages the grants-in-aid program and audits county probation/parole departments for compliance with service standards established by the Board.

**Health Care Services (Bureau of)**

Supervises and monitors the delivery of all medical and dental care services throughout the department. These services are provided at a level consistent with community standards through continuous quality improvement processes, coordinating services with other department bureaus and offices and through networking with support services from applicable community and state agencies.

**Housing Office**

Develops and implements comprehensive plans to connect reentrants to affordable, integrated, accessible and supportive housing and focuses on reentrants’ transition from department facilities into stable long-term housing.

**Human Resources Delivery Center (Public Safety)**

Establishes overall policies and procedures for implementing the department’s comprehensive human resource program while ensuring compliance with federal, commonwealth and department policies and initiatives.
Information Technology Delivery Center (Public Safety)

Provides Information Technology (IT) project management, applications systems development and support services, including desktop and infrastructure services and support to the department.

Institutional Parole Office - Oversees all institutional reentry activities of these institutional parole offices:

Western Institutional Region 1 Office – SCIs Albion, Cambridge Springs, Fayette, Forest, Greene and Mercer.

Western Institutional Region 2 Office – SCIs Houtzdale, Huntingdon, Laurel Highlands, Pine Grove, Smithfield and Somerset and Quehanna Boot Camp.

Eastern Institutional Region Office – SCIs Chester and Phoenix.

Central Institutional Region Office – SCIs Benner Township, Camp Hill, Coal Township, Dallas, Frackville, Mahanoy, Muncy, Retreat, Rockview and Waymart

Interstate Probation and Parole Services Division

Serves as a liaison with probation and parole agencies in other states. Requests the supervision of Pennsylvania adult reentrants in other states and facilitates the supervision of other states’ reentrants in Pennsylvania. Also, arranges for the return transport of probation and parole violators to Pennsylvania.

Investigation and Intelligence (Bureau of)

Conducts investigative operations regarding the internal affairs of the department upon the order of the secretary and upon referrals from the Office of the Attorney General (OAG), Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) and the Office of the Inspector General (OIG). Also, manages and directs the statewide Drug Interdiction, Security Threat and Prison Radicalization and Analytics Units.

Offender Reentry Coordination (Bureau of)

Directs the statewide development, deployment, implementation, assessment and program evaluation activities of all reentry initiatives and programs. Also, oversees the operations and activities of the Specialized Services and Community Outreach Division and the Transition Services and Staff Liaison Division.

Operations (Bureau of)

Works cooperatively with the Department of General Services and the Department of Labor & Industry in the planning and administration of facility and land use maintenance, construction, renovation, capital projects, surplus property and safety and environmental program. Oversees ongoing projects completed by each facility for the Department of Transportation under the Agility Program and provides annual facility inspections to ensure compliance with appropriate policies and state and local codes while monitoring the safety practices of staff and inmates.
Parole Services Division
Manages the 24/7 Communications Center that provides communications between field staff and central office in order to monitor parole operations and coordinate transports, manages the Global Positioning System program that monitors and reports parolees’ movements outside of established perimeters, manages the urinalysis program and sexually violent predator treatment tracking.

Planning, Research and Statistics (Bureau of)
Directs all planning and research activities within the department and provides detailed data analysis to assist in decision-making and short and long-term efforts.

Policy, Grants and Legislative Affairs Office
Assists the Governor’s Policy and Legislative Affairs Office with department-related issues. Works closely with legislators and tracks legislation with potential impact on the department and criminal justice matters; as well as addresses all department-related concerns from constituents of legislators. Works with outside agencies to advance the governor’s criminal justice policy agenda, as well as developing and promoting the department’s initiatives and policy agenda. Also, oversees all department grant activity, including letters of support to outside agencies, grant writing and coordinating and researching funding opportunities. Additionally, serves as the final appeal level for all incoming inmate publications.

Population Management and Sentence Computation Office
Manages the placement of the department’s inmates by ensuring that such placements, transfers and separations from diagnostic centers, reception centers and facilities are in accordance with approved facility capacities; security policies; and inmate medical, psychological and drug and alcohol treatment needs. Oversees the operation of the Central Transportation Services Facility to ensure its operation is efficient, safe, secure and in compliance with applicable department policies and procedures. Also, develops and supervises the maintenance of standards, guidelines and procedures for the acceptance and release of inmates entering and leaving the system, including county and federal transfers and inmate exchanges through the interstate compact agreement. Additionally, computes and reviews sentence computations; and analyzes population trends and proposed or new legislation impacts on population management, programmatic changes and sentencing modifications.

Probation Services (Bureau of)
Maintains, expand and improves adult probation and parole personnel and program services through the grants-in-aid program. Also, audits county adult probation/parole departments for compliance with adult probation and parole field service standards established by the Board.
Psychology Office

Provides oversight to the facilities' psychology departments and other departments in the delivery of mental health services. Works with executive and management staff, facilities, community corrections centers, community contract facilities and parole staff throughout the state to ensure psychological services, policies and procedures are conducted ethically, efficiently and effectively.

Staff Development and Training Office

Oversees the department's staff training program and operates and manages the department's Training Academy. Implements and provides pre-service, in-service and out-service training to all department employees. All levels of training are provided to state and county employees including basic training, management-level, instruction and specialized courses. Also, hosts conferences, seminars and courses sponsored by other state and public agencies.

Standards, Audits, Assessment and Compliance (Bureau of)

Directs, manages and implements statewide policies and procedures designed to maintain appropriate accreditation of department facilities; ensures compliance with PREA; advises and counsels inmates and reentrants on parole processes, assesses reentry plan progress and reports parole violations; coordinates pardons and commutation applications; ensures compliance with policies, procedures and applicable laws; and serves as liaisons between institutional and parole staff.

Treatment Services (Bureau of)

Monitors policies and procedures regarding the implementation of standardized and specialized inmate and reentrant treatment programs; religion and volunteer services; inmate recreational and therapeutic activities; inmate employment; offender classification, assessment and correctional planning; and reentrant assessment protocols. Also, assists the facilities through annual operational audits.

Victim Services Office

Represents, protects and advances the individual and collective rights and interests of crime victims. This office can be contacted toll-free at 1-800-563-6399, and its website is www.ova.pa.gov
PENNSYLVANIA’S STATE FACILITIES
(Listed in order of their openings)

SCI Huntingdon (Huntingdon County) opened in 1889, was modeled after the Elmira Reformatory in New York. Originally the Huntingdon Reformatory for Young Offenders, it was later used for "defective delinquents" until 1960. Today, SCI Huntingdon houses adult male inmates.

Construction of SCI Rockview (Centre County) was begun in 1912, and it opened in 1915. Originally planned to replace Eastern and Western Penitentiaries, it became instead the branch prison for Western Penitentiary, housing lesser security risk prisoners, most of whom were employed in Rockview's extensive farm program outside the gates. Today, this facility houses adult male inmates.

SCI Muncy (Lycoming County) is the diagnostic and classification center for the state's female inmates. It was originally opened in 1920 as The Muncy Industrial Home, a training school for female offenders between the ages of 16 and 30. Incorporated into the Bureau of Correction in 1953, SCI Muncy houses adult female inmates.

SCI Camp Hill (Cumberland County) opened in 1941 as the Industrial School at White Hill for Young Offenders and received Huntingdon Reformatory's juvenile population en masse. In 1975 it was ruled that SCI Camp Hill was not an appropriate place to house juvenile offenders, and in 1977 the institution began housing adult male inmates. It now serves as one of the DOC’s reception centers and is the main diagnostic and classification center for men entering the DOC.

SCI Dallas (Luzerne County) was opened in 1960 as an institution for defective delinquents. After the state Supreme Court decision of 1966 voided the concept of "defective delinquents," Dallas, like Huntingdon, became an adult institution. Today, this facility houses adult male inmates.

SCI Mercer (Mercer County) opened in September 1978. It originally opened to offer programs to county prisoners with minimum sentences of six months and maximum sentences of two years. When the prison’s mission changed in the mid-1980s, it became a prison for adult male inmates.

SCI Frackville (Schuylkill County) opened in 1987 and houses adult male inmates.

SCI Retreat (Luzerne County) opened in 1988. Formerly a state hospital for the mentally ill operated by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, Retreat now houses adult male inmates.

SCI Smithfield (Huntingdon County) was constructed on the reservation surrounding SCI Huntingdon. Opened in 1988, this facility houses adult male inmates.
SCI Waymart (Wayne County) is located in a building complex that was formerly part of Farview State Hospital. Pressed into operation ahead of schedule to help deal with the aftermath of the October 1989 riot at SCI Camp Hill, the joint on-site operation of a state prison and state mental health facility was unique in Pennsylvania at that time. In October 1995, Farview State Hospital was transferred from the Department of Public Welfare to the Department of Corrections and renamed the Forensic Treatment Center. The Department's Forensic Treatment Center houses mentally disabled male inmates who require inpatient psychiatric care and treatment. SCI Waymart also operates an Intermediate Care Unit, which is a step-down unit from the Forensic Treatment Center, as well as a Personal Care Unit to meet the needs of elderly inmates and those with chronic medical issues.

SCI Cambridge Springs (Crawford County) opened in 1992, was formerly the Polish National Alliance College before being purchased by the Commonwealth in 1990. The campus was converted into a facility for female inmates.

Quehanna Motivational Boot Camp (Clearfield County) opened in June 1992 as the Department of Corrections' first military-style motivational boot camp. Inmates assigned to the boot camp undergo a rigid six-month disciplinary and training program. In addition to the boot camp program, the facility accommodates individuals sentenced to State Intermediate Punishment, and it accommodates both male and female inmates.

SCI Somerset (Somerset County) opened in May 1993 as a state prison for men, the prison specializes in seriously mentally ill inmates.

SCI Coal Township (Northumberland County) opened in May 1993 and houses male inmates. The construction of SCI Coal Township was part of Governor Casey's Operation Jump Start Program. SCI Coal Township was one of five institutions (including SCIs Somerset, Mahanoy, Albion, Greene) constructed and financed through county or municipal authorities and one of five prototypical state prisons dedicated in 1993.

SCI Mahanoy (Schuylkill County) originally opened in July 1993 as an 1,800-bed male facility, housing unit expansions in 2012 have increased its population to accommodate 2,400 inmates. In addition to a robust offering of treatment, educational and recreational programs available to the population, specialty units operated at SCI Mahanoy include a residential treatment unit, a therapeutic community, a transitional housing unit and a diversionary Treatment Unit.

SCI Albion (Erie County) opened in July 1993. The facility houses male inmates and specializes in seriously mentally ill inmates. It has several specialized housing Units to include: DTU, RTU, SNU, THU, Honor Unit, and Co-occurring TC Unit. SCI Albion has also been involved with Canine Partners for Life (CPL) since 2005. This program provides highly-trained service dogs for individuals with physical, cognitive and developmental disabilities.

SCI Greene (Greene County) is a maximum-security facility that opened in November 1993 and houses adult male inmates to include a majority of the state's male capital case inmates. The facility is comprised of several different specialized units for the seriously mentally ill inmates inclusive of a residential treatment unit (RTU), a diversionary treatment unit (DTU), and a secure residential treatment unit (SRTU). The facility also operates a Security Threat Group
Management Unit (STGMU) to address institutional gang violence and operates as an initial reception center for the western region.

SCI Houtzdale (Clearfield County) opened in January 1996 and houses male inmates.

SCI Laurel Highlands (Somerset County) opened in July 1996, is the former Somerset State Hospital. This institution houses adult male inmates. SCI Laurel Highlands serves as the Commonwealth's provider to inmates with special needs; namely, long-term care, personal care, wheelchair, dialysis and geriatric inmates, as well as general population inmates.

SCI Chester (Delaware County) opened in April 1998 as a non-smoking facility for men. It provides therapeutic services to inmates with drug and alcohol histories.

SCI Pine Grove (Indiana County) opened in January 2001. This facility houses, in addition to regular adult male inmates, Young Adult Offender males and Youthful Offender males. The Young Adult Offender Program (YAOP) is primarily designed for those inmates between the ages of 18-20 adjudicated as adults due to the nature of the criminal offense committed. The Youthful Offenders are male inmates under the age of 18 and are afforded the same opportunity for programing, but are housed in a separate unit in the Young Adult Offender program unit. Once they turn 18 they are moved to mainstream Young Adult Offender program. When Youthful Offenders are outside of their housing unit the facility will maintain sight and sound separation between youthful inmates and any inmates over the age of 18 to provide direct security staff supervision when youthful inmates and any inmate over the age of 18, have sight, sound or physical contact. The YAOP meets the special needs of the Young Adult Offenders, as well as the Youthful Offenders in providing them with education, adolescent development and recreational activity while providing a safe environment for those inmates.

SCI Fayette (Fayette County), which opened in September 2003, houses adult men. It is located on a 258 tract of land in Luzerne Township. Fifty-three of these acres are located inside the perimeter’s fence, with 692,000 square footage under roof.

SCI Forest (Forest County), which opened in October 2004, houses adult men.

SCI Benner Township (Centre County), opened April 2013, houses adult men serves as the DOC's hub for the inmate transportation system.

SCI Phoenix (Montgomery County), opened July 2018, houses adult men.
Closed Facilities

SCI Waynesburg (Greene County) -- Originally a youth development center operated by the state Department of Public Welfare, Waynesburg was converted to a minimum-security facility for adult females in July 1984. It operated as such until 1992, when the prison was converted to an adult male facility. At that time all females were transferred to SCI Cambridge Springs in Crawford County. The prison remained open, housing about 450 inmates and employing 220 individuals, until 2003. In July 2005, Governor Rendell signed a bill that transferred ownership of the 117-acre prison to Basalt Trap Rock Co. for $990,000.

SCI Cresson (Cambria County) opened in 1987. It is a former center for the mentally ill, operated by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare. It was converted into a facility for adult male inmates. This facility was closed June 30, 2013.

SCI Greensburg (Westmoreland County) opened in 1969 as the first regional correctional facility, holding mostly short-term inmates. On May 1, 1986, the State Regional Correctional Facility at Greensburg was re-designated "SCI Greensburg" by Governor's Proclamation. The purpose of the change was to permit housing of a greater number of state-sentenced inmates -- a necessity with the growing inmate population. Today, this facility houses adult male inmates. This facility was closed June 30, 2013.

SCI Pittsburgh (Allegheny County), opened in 1882. Known to locals as “Western Pen,” the prison was put into “mothball” status in January 2005, when the final group of inmates was transferred to other prisons in the state. The administration building was renovated to serve as a community corrections center for approximately 80 residents. The building also houses community corrections offices. The prison was reopened in June 2007 to help the department deal with its ever-increasing inmate population. It houses adult male inmates. It now serves as one of the DOC’s three diagnostic and classification centers (reception centers) for men entering the DOC and houses adult male inmates. This facility was closed June 30, 2017.

SCI Graterford (Montgomery County), opened in 1929, performed the same branch function for Eastern State Penitentiary until Eastern was closed in 1970. Today, this facility houses adult male inmates. It also houses capital case inmates. It now serves as one of the DOC’s three diagnostic and classification centers (reception centers) for men entering the DOC and houses adult male inmates. This facility has a transitional housing unit for men close to release from prison, along with a licensed mental health unit, a diversionary treatment unit and a secure residential treatment unit. The facility benefits from relationships with Villanova University, Temple University and St. Joseph’s University, who provide educational and other program opportunities to inmates, in addition to DOC-provided educational/vocational programs. This facility was closed in July 2018, when the entire inmate population and staff was moved to SCI Phoenix, which was built on the grounds of SCI Graterford.

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