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As the mission statement of the Volusia County Division of Corrections (VCDC) indicates, the Division is committed to providing a safe and secure facility for the benefit of the community and the individuals who are housed at the facility. One of the primary responsibilities of the Division is to maintain the physical facilities that it manages. These facilities include the Volusia County Branch Jail (VCBJ) and the Volusia County Correctional Facility (VCCF).

The Volusia County Branch Jail (VCBJ), opened in 1987, had an original design-rated capacity of 899, while the Volusia County Correctional Facility (VCCF) opened in 1977 and had a design-rated capacity of 595. Combined, VCDC had an original design-rated capacity of 1,494. Since then additional permanent bed space has been added to both facilities when the dorm replacement occurred in 2013 and through adding double occupancy in select units bringing the total current capacity to 1,658. While efforts are continually made to manage the size of the jail population, there are times that the population can exceed the design rated capacity due to the variety of external influences on the jail population. In those cases temporary beds are added.

To maintain a manageable jail population, VCDC staff pays close attention to a multitude of statistics regarding various aspects of the jail population and respond as needed by working closely with other stakeholders in the criminal justice system to include local courts and pre-trial services as well as the State Department of Corrections.

Additionally, VCDC meets quarterly with the Public Safety Coordinating Council (PSCC) to share data and information with other stakeholders in the Volusia County Criminal Justice system, including judges, county council members, and the Volusia County Sheriff’s Office, among others.
The primary indicator of the size of the jail population throughout the year is the average daily population, which is an average of the actual number of inmates recorded at a specific time each day. The average daily population (ADP) in 2023 was 1309. Figure 1 demonstrates the trend in ADP by month from 2020 through 2023. The ADP is monitored closely throughout the year to identify trends and allocate resources appropriately.

The annual ADP is used to calculate the incarceration rate for the County of Volusia. In 2023, the incarceration rate continued its downward trend with a rate of 2.24 incarcerated persons per 1,000 in Volusia County. Please note that in the below graph the dramatic increase in incarceration rates for 2021 is likely due to an increased ADP resulting from increased numbers of state inmates awaiting transfer due to COVID restrictions.

Incarceration Rates, 2020—2023

Inmate Demographic Profile

Consistent with prior years, the largest demographic group at VCDC was white males (53%) with the next largest group represented by black males (19.9%). In 2023, almost 73% of inmates booked were male, while approximately 26% were female.
Managing the nearly 18,000 inmates that come through the doors of VCDC each year involves a team of people, many of whom are non-sworn, civilian employees. One area comprised entirely of civilian employees is Administrative Services. As the organizational chart on page 6 indicates there are several unique areas of responsibility. Each area is crucial to the day-to-day operations of the facility.

Staff members in this area have responsibilities which include budgeting, payroll, purchasing, inmate account management, and central supply, to name a few. Without the work of administrative services staff, security staff could not focus as closely on the task of managing inmates.

One vital area of administrative services is inmate accounts. VCDC manages all inmate commissary accounts, which can include money that are deposited upon intake (i.e., the inmate had cash on them when they were booked) or that family or friends have deposited into their accounts from outside of the jail. Online resources such as accesscorrections.com make it easy for family and friends to do so. Staff in administrative services manage several million dollars of deposits and charges every year.

Inmates may spend this money on phone time or commissary items which can include food or hygiene items. Family or friends can also purchase care packages to send to inmates directly without having to deposit money into their accounts. VCDC earns commission on the items purchased for or by inmates which goes directly into an inmate welfare fund. This account may only be spent on items or programs that are for the direct benefit of inmates.

Accomplishments for Administrative Services staff in 2023 included:

- Streamlining the onboarding process to decrease the time it takes to hire an officer.
- Increased recruiting efforts with full time recruiter that expands our reach and provides applicants with a single point of contact.
- Additional cross training of staff to provide support for a 24 hour operation.
Identification and Receiving

Officers in the identification and receiving area processed 17,976 people in 2023. While many of these individuals are released soon after intake (through bond or pre-trial release), everyone that comes into the Volusia County Branch Jail is fully processed through the ID and receiving area.

While most bookings proceed smoothly, there are times when the challenge of substance abuse or mental health issues present themselves to officers. Because the ID/receiving area is the first contact that staff at VCDC have with inmates as they are booked, it is crucial that officers recognize emergent needs of inmates in a timely manner. In 2023, 28.7% of inmates booked into VCDC self-reported that they were going through substance or alcohol withdrawal at the time of booking. Officers, along with medical and mental health staff in the ID/receiving area identify inmates in need of special housing in a detoxification or mental health housing unit.

Booking and Release

Booking officers work to process all information from the arresting officer or court that might impact an individual’s stay at VCDC. Additionally, booking officers are crucial actors in the process of managing the jail population. They are able to identify and track individuals who are being held for other agencies or who need to be transported to state prison. By tracking this information, booking officers are able to arrange for pick up by holding agencies to release those inmates from VCDC custody. When inmates can be moved to the appropriate jurisdiction, it saves Volusia County the cost of incarcerating those inmates.

VCDC has benefitted from declining booking numbers since 2020. As noted, staff work with a number of stakeholders in the criminal justice system to manage the jail population.
Classification

While there are case management counselors that are specifically assigned to reentry efforts, the majority of case management counselors work to classify inmates after intake into the appropriate security level, and manage everyday activities and programming for inmates. Even though most inmates booked into the VCDC are released within 72 hours, case management counselors work diligently to classify all other inmates in a timely manner. Inmates who have not been classified remain in “MAXI” status assigned during intake. As Figure 4 below demonstrates, 59% of inmates booked in 2023 were not classified beyond their intake “MAXI” status. Descriptions of classification statuses are provided below.

Classification involves a review of an inmate’s charges and criminal history to identify any issues that might impact the security level necessary to house the inmate.

Figure 4: Inmate Classifications 2023

Case management counselors are responsible for (to name a few):

- Reviewing criminal history and background to appropriately classify inmates
- Providing for specific needs of inmates with disabilities
- Responding to inmate requests
- Communicating with family members who are concerned about an inmate
- Enrolling inmates in programming
- Reviewing needs of all inmates and coordinating services

Close: Inmates with behavior issues or sentenced to Florida State Prison
MAX: Maximum security
MED: Medium security
MIN: Minimum security
MAXI: Not Classified
Re-Entry

For 2023 a focus was to bring in re-entry programs that will better serve our inmate population and improve their chances of a successful re-entry into society.

For 2023 we have started up the following programs:

- Anger Management
- Parenting classes
- Life Skills (Interviewing, skills and budgeting skills)
- Ged (This was brought back after going away during the pandemic)

Job skills, Peer counseling, OSHA certifications, Heavy Equipment operation, and our Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) program are just some of the other programs offered. In total 1,451 inmates attended these various programs throughout 2023. We expect these numbers to increase in 2024 as some of these programs started towards the end of last year. We will also be looking to add additional programs throughout the year. That, in addition to improved staffing will allow for us to service a greater portion of our inmate population, which in turn will increase their opportunities for success post release.

As seen in the chart below WRAP/Peer Counseling and our ID program accounted for 70% of our inmates served through these programs. Our WRAP/Peer Counseling program works with inmates on dealing with drug addiction and sets them up with assistance post released. The ID program provides state issued ID’s, social security cards, and birth certificates which will in turn allow them to apply for jobs, seek assistance, open bank accounts, and many other things that most people take for granted.

As we move forward we will be looking to add programs where inmates are able to receive skills that will set them up for success when they are entering back into society. Ultimately these programs will go a long way to not just help the inmates, but will better our entire community.

Figure 5: Re-Entry Programs
Officer and Civilian Employee of the Shift

Every six months, shift assignments are reviewed and assigned. VCDC uses this time of reflection and change to recognize outstanding work by sworn and civilian staff in the prior six months, and award “Officer and Civilian Employee of the Shift” recognitions. Nominees are selected by supervisors, and the winners are voted by all employees and contract staff of VCDC. This award is truly a recognition by supervisors and peers of the efforts made by nominees to strive for excellence. This year, VCDC was pleased to award the following staff with Officer or Employee of the Shift.

- Senior Officer Anthony Whited
- Officer Jennifer Gray
- Sergeant Brendan Lowenstein
- Mr. Jessie Williams

Correctional Officer and Staff Appreciation Week

Correctional officers and staff can have challenging jobs. It is important to recognize the good work that they do on a day-to-day basis, but it is great to be able to focus attention and treat staff to something special. During Correctional Officer and Christmas staff was treated to 4Rivers Barbecue and Texas Roadhouse with the food being served by command staff as well as leadership from partnering divisions within the County.
VCDC is funded largely through the Volusia County General Fund. As such, VCDC employees work diligently to be good stewards of tax payer money, and look for ways to maximize financial resources. In FY 2023, VCDC had operating expenses of $53,067,932. For FY2023-24 an operating budget of $64,653,408 has been adopted. This includes reserves of $4,351,122. As Figure 5 demonstrates, the largest area of expense is personnel services at 58% of the total operating budget. This is followed by operating expenses at 35%. The adopted operating expenses represents a small decrease from 2023 actual expenses.

**Per Diem**

The total operating expenses at the end of the fiscal year is used to calculate the fiscal year per diem, or cost per day for an inmate’s stay (Per diem = (operating expenses ÷ FY ADP) ÷ 365) The per diem for FY 2023 came to $111.07. In other words, to house an inmate it costs VCDC $111.07 per day (or $40,540.55 a year). The trend in per diem is shown in Figure 6. The ADP plays a role in the per diem expense. This is largely because the operational budget does not fluctuate in the same way that ADP does. ADP can be unpredictable, and the operating budget, especially personal services must account for the higher end of these fluctuations. The decrease in ADP from year over year represents an increase in the per diem of over $8 a day.

**Efforts to Reduce Cost**

Staff across the Division have taken steps to attempt to reduce costs this year, as they do every year. The items listed below represent a sampling of the efforts undertaken this year:

- Add support to contract management to ensure we are holding vendors to the contract terms leading to reduced costs and better service.
- Process change leading to reduced medical expenses in the back half of the year after implementation.
2023 Employment

At year end, VCDC had 375 funded positions with 9 of those being part time; 271 sworn officers, and 104 civilian staff. During 2023 we worked to identify positions that were being filled by sworn officers, but could be done by civilian personnel. As a result we converted some positions over to civilian staff which will allow for current officers to return to the floor as these positions get staffed.

Some of the current funded positions are for capital improvement projects currently being constructed and do not represent current staffing needs.

VCDC is working on recruiting efforts through community outreach events, social media campaigns, signage, and creating a more efficient onboarding process. Increased staffing levels will reduce mandated overtime, and in turn, help with retention efforts.

https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/volusiaco

Pay and benefits are competitive. Correctional Officers at VCDC receive:

- Tuition and salary pay during Corrections Officer Academy
- Competitive starting salary with increase upon certification
- Recruitment Bonus
- Advancement opportunities
- Individual and family medical, dental, prescription, life, and vision insurance
- Florida State Retirement, Special Risk
- 28 days/year personal leave. Accruals start at hire, and accruals increase with longevity of service
- Ten paid holidays
- Short- and long-term disability insurance
- Job satisfaction
- Rewarding career providing a vital service to the community
Data Management and Research

Managing the jail population is crucial to meeting the safety and security needs of the inmates and staff at VCDC. While VCDC is mandated to house all arrestees for Volusia County and local municipalities, and has little control over who or how many are brought to VCDC, closely monitoring various aspects of the jail population can help appropriately allocate resources, or target areas where VCDC staff can have influence. Regular monitoring and working with other relevant organizations has allowed VCDC to maintain a manageable ADP even in the face of broader population growth in Volusia County and changes in enforcement strategies.

Arresting Agency

It comes as no surprise that most bookings come from arrests made by the Volusia County Sheriff’s Office (VCSO). As the police department for one of the largest and most popular cities in the county for tourism, Daytona Beach Police Department (DBPD) accounts for the second largest group of arrests for VCDC. Combined, VCSO and the DBPD account for over 62% of those booked into VCDC during the year. This falls in line with the arrest statistics since 2020 when arrests from VCSO and DBPD comprised approximately 67% of arrests for each year.

Inmate City of Residence at Arrest

Volusia County is home to several major events, and attracts people from all over the country and world. As such, some might assume that a large portion of people booked into jail would not be local. However, the vast majority (92%) of inmates that are booked into VCDC are from Florida; 91% of inmates from Florida resided in Volusia County prior to arrest.
Charges

The most common type of new charge in 2023 was related to dangerous drugs as is typically the case in Volusia County. In fact, the most common charges remain fairly consistent from year to year. The top three (3) charge types for 2023 are displayed in Figure 10. For all charge types, males represent the majority of offenders with the exception of commercial sex offenses.

Offense Classification

As in previous years, on an average day at VCDC, the vast majority of inmates are being held for a felony charge. In 2023, 54% of inmates had a felony charge while 46% of inmates were booked on a misdemeanor charge. Of these, most inmates were non-sentenced. Nearly 15% of inmates being held on a felony charge were not sentenced (i.e., awaiting trial or sentencing).
Frequent Fliers

Frequent fliers, or individuals who return to the jail several times throughout the year, persist as an issue for VCDC. Often, these inmates have brief stays which prevents VCDC from offering impactful programming that might provide resources and skills to inmates upon release. While the individual stays for this group of inmates are brief, the 37 individuals with 8 or more stays were booked into VCDC 377 times. This totals 3,882 days served at VCDC in 2023.

The 9 most common charges for frequent fliers are presented in Table 3 below. Trespass and Possession related charges comprise the vast majority of the 2,781 charges for which frequent fliers were booked.

Table 3: Frequent Flier Charges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Charge</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trespass</td>
<td>969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possession of Controlled Substance</td>
<td>645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petit Theft</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violation of Probation</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fail to Appear</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burglary</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battery</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loitering or Prowling</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,781</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Days to Release

Inmates released in 2023 spent an average of 18 days incarcerated. However, 56% of inmates released in 2023 spent between 1 and 3 days at VCDC. Nearly 91% of inmates released in 2023 were released within 60 days of their booking. If the average length of stay is adjusted to account only for those who stay beyond 72 hours, the average length of stay in 2023 was 41 days.
Mechanisms for Release

The single most common mechanism for release is bond, with 43% of inmates released in 2023 released on bond. Bonds can be in the form of either cash bonds or surety bonds. Cash bonds allow an inmate to pay an amount, set by the judge or statute, to facilitate release from jail prior to the resolution of their case.

Surety bonds require the inmate to pay an amount set by the judge or by statute, but the payments are processed through a bondsman. Only a percentage of the bond is required to be paid prior to release for a surety bond. Bond allows for inmates to be released prior to their trial, which helps mitigate the size of the jail population.

Pre-trial release also helps to manage the size of the jail population. Pre-trial release staff assess each inmate prior to first appearance to determine whether they would benefit from this type of release. The goal of this program and type of release is to allow offenders to await trial outside of the jail when there is no concern regarding risk to the community and likelihood of attending trial. Inmates released through pre-trial services often have requirements of release such as no contact with offenders and/or victims, or drug screenings.

Requests for Data

As noted above, the statistics presented in this annual report reflect a sampling of the data that is tracked at VCDC. For clarification of statistics provided, or to request access to VCDC data, contact the County of Volusia Public Information Officer at 386-736-2700.
Volusia County Division of Corrections
Department of Public Protection

Joseph DeMore
Director

Volusia County Branch Jail
1300 Red John Drive
Caller Service Box 2865
Daytona Beach, FL 32120
386-254-1555 (Daytona Beach)
386-736-5918 (DeLand)
386-423-3370 (New Smyrna Beach)

Volusia County Correctional Facility
1354 N. Indian Lake Road
Caller Service Box 2865
Daytona Beach, FL
386-254-1565 (Daytona Beach)
386-736-5916 (DeLand)
386-423-3372 (New Smyrna Beach)

Please visit our website at:
http://www.volusia.org/services/public-protection/corrections/