

California State Assembly



Informational Hearing Agenda

Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 6 on Public Safety

Assemblymember James Ramos, Chair

Monday, April 20, 2026
2:30 P.M. – State Capitol, Room 447

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Public Comment will be taken in person after the completion of all panels and any discussion from the Members of the Subcommittee.

Items To Be Heard

5225 California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation 0552 Office of Inspector General

Issue 1: Sexual Abuse, Retaliation, and Violence in CDCR Women's Prisons

Various stakeholders will discuss progress updates and ongoing challenges related to sexual abuse, retaliation and violence in CDCR's women's prisons.

Panel

- Madelynn McClain, Director, Division of Administrative Services
- Kathleen Ratliff, Associate Director Region II, CDCR
- David Chriss, Deputy Director, Office of Internal Affairs, CDCR
- Amarik Singh, Inspector General, Office of Inspector General
- Shaun Spillane, Deputy Inspector General, Office of Inspector General
- Caitlin O'Neil, Legislative Analyst's Office
- April Grayson, Political Director, Sister Warriors Freedom Coalition
- Sandra Deanda, Member, California Coalition for Women Prisoners
- Amika Mota, Executive Director, Sister Warriors Freedom Coalition
- Ryan Weinberg, Department of Finance
- Alyssa Cervantes, Department of Finance

Background

On April 7, 2025, the Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 6 had a hearing to discuss high profile cases of sexual abuse in CDCR women's prisons and related budget requests. Background provided in that hearing includes the following with updated information for today's hearing:

There are more than 1.2 million women who are in detention or under supervision of the criminal justice system in the United States on any given day.¹ Since the mid-1980s, women are the fastest growing segment of the incarcerated population (double the rate of men) according to the ACLU. Statistics paint a bleak picture of the victimization of women prior to even entering the justice system. Human Rights Watch estimates that at least half of all incarcerated women have experienced sexual abuse prior to entering detention while the ACLU estimates that 92% of women in California's prisons have been battered and abused in their lifetimes. Prior abuse makes the women who enter the justice system significantly more vulnerable to abuse while incarcerated.² Data reported by the U.S. Department of Justice indicated between 2009 and 2011, women made up 7% of the total federal prison population but accounted for 33% of staff

¹ <https://www.aclu.org/issues/prisoners-rights/women-prison>

² U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, *Women in Prison: Seeking Justice Behind Bars* (February 2020), <https://www.usccr.gov/files/pubs/2020/02-26-Women-in-Prison.pdf>.

on incarcerated person victims.³ The budget proposal from the Office of Inspector General (discussed below) indicates there are approximately 1,400 complaints related to sexual abuse and harassment filed annually by incarcerated persons in all of CDCR's male and female prisons.

Federal Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) and California Sexual Abuse in Detention Elimination Act (SADEA). PREA, a bi-partisan effort supported by a broad base of stakeholders representing civil rights, faith based, and health organizations, was signed into law in 2003, which aimed to address sexual assault in detention settings by adopting a zero-tolerance policy, developing national standards, supporting research and data collection, and providing funding for training detention staff. SADEA, (Chapter 303, Statutes of 2005) enacted a number of provisions aimed to protect incarcerated individuals in CDCR against sexual abuse, including requiring CDCR to adopt policies and protocols related to the placement of individuals by accounting for certain risk factors that may make someone a target for sexual abuse, the provision of safe housing for someone who alleges they have been a victim of sexual abuse, the prohibition of retaliation against someone who files a complaint, etc. In addition, regulations specify that the legal concept of consent does not exist between CDCR staff and incarcerated individuals, and that any sexual behavior between them constitutes sexual misconduct and will subject the employee to disciplinary action and/or to prosecution.

Recent High Profile Sexual Abuse. In January of 2025, the investigation and prosecution of a correctional officer at CCWF resulted in 59 felony and 6 misdemeanor convictions—leading to a 224-year sentence. He had been employed with CDCR for 27 years and had at least 22 women accuse him of sexual abuse. The convictions included rape, rape under the color of authority, oral copulation, sexual penetration, and sodomy. Records indicate that sexual abuse committed by this correctional officer was first reported in 2014 and interviews conducted by the Guardian suggest that other victims never came forward out of fear of retaliation.⁴

A class action lawsuit was filed against a staff gynecologist at CIW in February 2025 for sexual abuse allegations that occurred between 2016 and 2023. The suit also alleges that CIW first received complaints of misconduct by this gynecologist in 2017. In a separate federal lawsuit in 2021, two incarcerated women in CIW were used as “bait” to catch a correctional officer engaged in sexual misconduct during a sting operation conducted by other correctional officers. During the operation, the women were assaulted again as the investigators failed to intervene and did not stop the attacks.⁵ The correctional officer was eventually fired after a lengthy investigation, and he received a 2-year suspended prison sentence and 3 years of probation in 2018.⁶

Barriers to Reporting Sexual Abuse. For incarcerated women who wish to file complaints, they may send a complaint to the Office of Inspector General or use CDCR's internal grievance process that handles allegations of staff misconduct. CDCR's Office of Internal Affairs is responsible for determining when allegations of staff misconduct warrant an internal affairs

³ U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics. Sexual Victimization Reported by Adult Correctional Authorities, 2009-2011. January 2014

⁴ <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2023/oct/25/gregory-rodriguez-california-correctional-officer-accused-sexual-assault-womens-prison>

⁵ <https://www.dailybulletin.com/2021/05/05/2-female-inmates-allege-they-were-used-as-bait-to-catch-predatory-guard-at-chino-prison/>

⁶ <https://www.dailybulletin.com/2021/05/05/2-female-inmates-allege-they-were-used-as-bait-to-catch-predatory-guard-at-chino-prison/>

investigation and for completing all investigations in a timely and thorough manner⁷. Incarcerated women that have filed complaints have shared being placed in segregated housing in a punitive manner, receiving a rules violation report that may impact their release date, and being pressured to rescind their complaints or participation in class action litigation.

Fear of retaliation is a common impediment for victims coming forward to report sexual abuse and harassment, likely leading to significant underreporting. A federal lawsuit was filed by 13 women incarcerated in CCWF who alleged that on August 2, 2024, a number of correctional officers attacked them with pepper spray and rubber bullets in retaliation after they filed sexual abuse claims. The federal lawsuit alleged that a sergeant who is the leader of a correctional officer prison gang known as the “Delta Dogs” led the violent assault against 159 women in one housing unit involving grenades with mace, cannisters of pepper spray, and a large “super soaker,” as well as officers punching and using their batons against the women. Threats were made against the incarcerated women to stop submitting reports of sexual abuse or privileges would be taken away, the unit would be placed on lockdown, personal property would be thrown away, etc. Approximately 160 incarcerated women were moved to the dining hall in order for correctional officers to conduct a large-scale search of their cells. The women were kept in the dining hall for several hours and were denied access to medication and other needs. After the initial incident in the dining hall, the women were zip tied and appear to be moved to a yard outdoors where they were footage a second incident of correctional officers setting off grenades and cannisters. Reports indicate that a number of women were taken to a hospital. CDCR recently agreed on a \$1.9 million settlement for this case. CDCR did not admit to any wrongdoing, but their internal investigations concluded that 41 staff members violated policy and discipline ranged from transfer to termination.⁸ At least five correctional officers who faced discipline have filed legal actions arguing against the discipline and the subsequent transfer of their work assignment to another prison.⁹ Another related class action lawsuit is scheduled for mediation next month.

The Office of Inspector General. The OIG provides independent oversight of various CDCR operations, most prominently its staff misconduct investigation and disciplinary processes. The OIG provides this oversight and transparency by monitoring individual investigations CDCR staff perform, providing real-time recommendations to investigators and attorneys, and then publicly reporting its observations for CDCR, the Governor, the legislature, and the general public. The OIG has no direct authority over CDCR operations and does not perform investigations itself except in limited circumstances. Although the OIG provides recommendations for the department both in individual cases and more broadly to address its policies and practices, the OIG’s authority is advisory in nature; the department may choose to adopt or reject any recommendation the OIG issues.

The 2025 Budget Act included \$3.6 million General Fund and 22 positions in 2025-26, and \$5,715,000 and 29 positions in 2026-2027 and ongoing, to support implementation of Chapter 1012, Statutes of 2024 (SB 1069), which authorizes the OIG to monitor and, under certain

⁷ [Office of Internal Affairs - Office of Internal Affairs \(OIA\)](#)

⁸ <https://www.kqed.org/news/12077737/california-agrees-to-1-9m-settlement-in-prison-use-of-force-case#:~:text=The%20Central%20California%20Women's%20Facility,to%20stop%2C%E2%80%9D%20Chalfant%20said.>

⁹ [‘I Thought I Was Going to Die’: Video Shows Mass Force at California Women’s Prison | KQED](#)

circumstances, investigate allegations of staff sexual misconduct with an incarcerated person at CDCR. The OIG estimated that the additional positions requested will enable them to increase their monitoring from approximately 30 CDCR staff sexual misconduct investigations per year to approximately 350 staff sexual misconduct investigations per year. The resources allocated limit the OIG's ability to only monitor approximately 25% of the current volume of all staff sexual misconduct cases within CDCR that involve incarcerated people in all prisons.

Office of Inspector General Report: Monitoring Internal Investigations, Staff Misconduct Complaint Investigations, and the Employee Disciplinary Process of CDCR (December 2025). Pursuant to Penal Code Section 6126(a) et seq., the OIG released its monitoring report that covered CDCR's performance in conducting internal investigations involving allegations of staff misconduct from January 1, 2025 to June 30, 2025. The OIG noted that in February 2024, their office became aware of a "wave of lawsuits" that currently and formerly incarcerated people had begun filing against CDCR regarding allegations of staff sexual assault, harassment, and misconduct. At least 279 incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people from 4 prisons accused at least 83 employees of sexual misconduct alleged to have occurred over several years. The allegations included, but were not limited to, rape, digital penetration, oral copulation, and sexual battery. In response to these allegations, CDCR approved at least 402 investigations and the OIG monitored and closed 92 of the investigations. Of the 92 investigations, 68 were criminal investigations and 24 were administrative disciplinary investigations.

The report noted that delayed investigation of sexual assault significantly impairs the integrity and effectiveness of the investigative process. When the Office of Legal Affairs (OLA) was served with multiple civil lawsuits, despite the serious nature of the allegations, OLA failed to immediately refer the allegations to the Office of Internal Affairs (OIA) for investigation. In just seven cases, the department assigned an attorney to handle the case; the remaining cases were handled by the employee relations officer. In 22 of the 68 criminal cases monitored by the OIG, OLA's performance was *inadequate* because it delayed referring the matter to the OIA, on average, for more than nine months. Worse, the allegations were against staff ranging in classification from officer to lieutenant who were still employed by the department at the time the department received the lawsuit and were, therefore, put on notice of the alleged misconduct. In addition, 10 of these cases involved allegations against the same officer. In all but one case, the hiring authority found insufficient evidence to sustain the allegations. The OIG concurred with the findings. However, in one case, the hiring authority sustained an allegation that an officer had written personal letters to an incarcerated person and made no findings on the sexual abuse allegations. The OIG disagreed because this officer had already been dismissed for the same sexual misconduct in 2018. In addition, in all but two cases, the deadline to impose discipline had expired because the misconduct allegedly occurred between the years 2001 and 2022. Below are examples of some of the criminal investigations the OIG monitored:

- Between June 1, 2014, and August 31, 2014, a lieutenant allegedly shoved an incarcerated person into the closet multiple times and forced her to orally copulate him. The incarcerated person filed her complaint in court alleging sexual abuse, but the OLA delayed referring the matter to the OIA for an investigation until 274 days after receiving notice of the complaint. **The lieutenant is still an active employee with the department.**

- Between January 1, 2012, and December 31, 2013, a sergeant and two officers allegedly touched, fondled, and groped an incarcerated person on her breasts, buttocks, and genitals under her clothes, forced the incarcerated person to perform oral sex on them, and penetrated the incarcerated person's genitals with their fingers. The incarcerated person filed her complaint in court alleging sexual abuse, but the OLA delayed referring the matter to the OIA for an investigation until 272 days after receiving notice of the complaint. **The sergeant and one officer are still active employees with the department.**
- Between January 1, 2019, and December 31, 2019, an officer allegedly demanded an incarcerated person remove her clothes and perform oral copulation. The officer also allegedly penetrated the incarcerated person's anus with his genitalia. The incarcerated person filed her complaint in court alleging sexual abuse, but the OLA delayed referring the matter to the traditional section of the OIA for an investigation until 257 days after receiving notice of the complaint. **The officer is still an active employee and has been named in several complaints.**
- An officer allegedly engaged in acts of sexual misconduct with 12 incarcerated people. The sexual misconduct included forced oral copulation, sexual intercourse, grabbing the breasts of incarcerated women, and exposing his genitals to them. The officer allegedly smuggled chewing gum, a radio, and cannabis products into a prison in exchange for sexual favors. The officer also allegedly divulged confidential information from a case management database to incarcerated people and accessed the database without a valid reason. Moreover, the officer allegedly lied to an investigator when he denied being overfamiliar with incarcerated people and engaging in sexual misconduct with them. The hiring authority sustained the sexual misconduct allegations involving nine of the 12 incarcerated people. The hiring authority sustained allegations the officer divulged confidential information and accessed the database without a valid reason, sustained the allegation that the officer had lied to the investigator, but not that he had smuggled contraband into the prison. The OIG concurred with the hiring authority's findings except for the decision not to sustain three allegations. The hiring authority determined that dismissal was the appropriate penalty. The OIG concurred. **The officer retired before he could be served with a dismissal action.** Therefore, the hiring authority placed a letter in the officer's official personnel file indicating he had retired under unfavorable circumstances. The OIA unnecessarily delayed the completion of the investigation, which prevented the department from imposing discipline for some allegations. Although the investigator completed the investigation before the deadline to impose discipline for some of the allegations, the investigator unnecessarily delayed completing it until 223 days after being assigned to the investigation. The investigator completed the investigation only eight days before the deadline for allegations involving two of the 12 incarcerated people, which did not allow sufficient time for the hiring authority to make penalty decisions for those allegations. ***Because of the delay in completing the investigation, deadlines for imposing discipline for allegations before the deadline to do so expired.***

Legislative Analyst's Office

The LAO finds that state could close an additional prison within the next few years and still retain a significant buffer to manage unexpected population increases. This could save around \$150 million annually in operational costs and avoid the need for infrastructure projects at the closed prison. These savings would be partially offset, perhaps by a couple tens of millions of dollars annually, by increased cost pressures due to the reduction in salary savings that results from prison closures.

Staff Comment. To the extent the Legislature wishes to allocate additional resources toward preventing and responding to sexual abuse, retaliation, and violence in prisons, it could direct CDCR to begin planning to close another men's prison in 2027-28 or as soon as logistically possible. Doing so would free up General Fund resources that could be redirected toward prevention and response. While closing a men's prison would slightly increase the population density of the remaining men's prisons, it would not affect the population density of the state's two women's prisons.

Staff Comment

The Subcommittee is in receipt of stakeholder correspondence that cite significant concerns over CDCR's use "forced retirement" of staff in lieu of and not in addition to consequences and accountability for staff misconduct. The specific examples, provided confidentially to the Subcommittee, raise concerns regarding the integrity of a fair disciplinary process. In addition to eroding the public trust, it allows the harmful behavior that may be deemed unlawful outside of prison walls to continue without adequate repercussions and due process to the victims and the accused. Furthermore, concerns have been noted to the Subcommittee that staff with sustained accusations are often just moved within the same prison or moved to other prisons or face short-term reductions in salary. Oftentimes, staff accused by one or more incarcerated individuals continue to remain in posts that allow them to interact with the accusers. The Subcommittee may wish to inquire whether types of consequences sufficiently address the violations or serve as a deterrent for misconduct/criminal behavior.

CDCR has been, for a number of years, attempting to move to a "California Model" that centers rehabilitation and culture change for a "once in a generation transformation." CDCR's website features a video spotlight "Embracing the California Model at CCWF." This difficult, but noble endeavor, will continue to be sidelined until the most basic issue of safety and respect for human life for both incarcerated people and the staff is not prioritized. CCWF correctional officers wear body cameras and an AVSS system exists in the prison. In recent years, the Legislature has allocated hundreds of millions of dollars to improve the staff complaint process. Recently signed legislation has also resulted in additional resources to the OIG to provide some limited oversight over sexual abuse cases. It does not appear that these interventions are sufficient. Considering the urgency of the nature of the misconduct, the human, legal and fiscal consequences of inadequate deterrents and accountability measures, the Subcommittee and other Legislative Committees may wish to hold follow-up hearings and convenings to develop and solicit additional solutions that can complement existing strategies.

Non-Presentation Budget Proposal

Intake Processing Unit Staffing for the Office of Inspector General. The Governor’s Budget proposes \$275,000 General Fund to fund 2.0 permanent positions in 2026-27 and ongoing, to address the increased workload of the OIG’s Intake Processing Unit (IPU) and enable the OIG to timely respond to all complaints it receives. The Inspector General expects staff to review all complaints in a timely fashion and close complaints within 30 days of receipt to reduce the potential for a backlog of complaints.

Staff Recommendation: Hold Open.

Issue 2: Mental Health Receiver Action Plan Overview and Related Budget Proposals

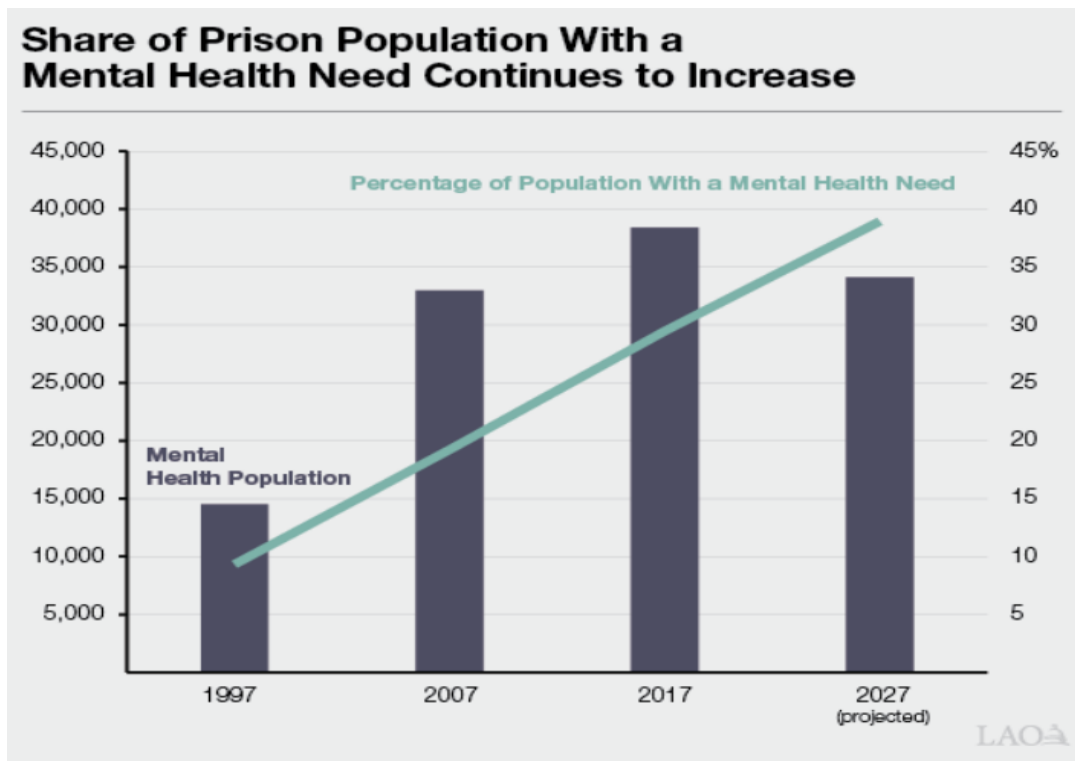
CDCR and the Receiver’s Office will provide an overview of their action plan and various associated budget proposals and the LAO will provide an overview of their report related to addressing chronic vacancies in prison mental health care. This report may be found on the Assembly Budget Committee’s website.

Panel

- Colette Peters, Receiver, Coleman Receiver’s Office
- Darci Delgado, Senior Advisor, Coleman Receiver’s Office
- Duane Reeder, Deputy Director, Fiscal Management Section, California Correctional Health Care Services, CDCR
- Orlando Sanchez, Legislative Analyst’s Office
- Ryan Weinberg, Department of Finance
- Alyssa Cervantes, Department of Finance

Background

Mental Health Needs in CDCR. According to the LAO, nearly 35,000 people in prison have a diagnosed mental health need—representing about two out of five people in prison, as shown in the figure below:



Coleman v. Newsom (Coleman, 912 F. Supp. 1282 (E.D. Cal.1995)). *Coleman* is a federal class action lawsuit filed in 1990 on behalf of incarcerated people who receive mental health care in CDCR. Plaintiffs alleged that inadequate mental care placed people at serious risk of death, injury, and prolonged suffering. In 1995, a federal court found CDCR violated the Eighth Amendment against cruel and usual punishment and that prison officials showed deliberate indifference to the needs of mentally ill incarcerated people. The Court identified six areas that required improvements: (1) screening; (2) treatment programs; (3) staffing; (4) accurate and complete records; (5) medication distribution; and (6) suicide prevention

CDCR has had significant challenges in meeting some of the court ordered remedies including staffing levels (90% fill rate across the system, not by prison). On February 28, 2023, the state was issued a federal court order which fined the state \$1,000 a day for each of the 15 unmet safeguards related to suicide prevention, beginning April 1, 2023. The federal judge also indicated that she will impose fines for the state's failure to hire enough mental health professionals.¹⁰ ***During an eight year period, more than 200 individuals committed suicide in prisons as CDCR failed to implement the court ordered reforms.*** On June 25, 2024, the state was ordered to pay \$112 million in fines, finding CDCR in contempt for failing to provide adequate mental health care. On December 6, 2024, the Ninth Circuit heard the state's appeal of the fines. The 2024 Budget Act included the following provision:

Upon order of the Department of Finance, the Controller shall issue payment to the United States District Court for the Eastern District of California for any fines related to staffing vacancies ordered in *Coleman v. Newsom*. Payment shall be made from the General Fund. The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation shall provide quarterly reports to the Joint Legislative Budget Committee on any fines paid to the court pursuant to this provision.

These fines were ultimately deposited into a Mental Health Special Deposit Fund (MHSDF). The state deposited a total of \$155.2 million General Fund in fines which was later adjusted to \$113 million by the Ninth Circuit court of Appeals, a difference of \$42 million. By court order, the fines portion of the MHSDF must be used to address continuing staffing shortfalls. In April 2025, the court appointed a Receiver-nominee for a four-month period to develop a comprehensive action plan for CDCR to comply with court ordered remedies. Unlike the Special Master, who primarily monitored compliance and made recommendations, the Receiver has direct executive authority over the MHSDF and the authority to seek waivers of laws or requirements through the court. In August, the Receiver-nominee filed the plan, which was approved by the court. The action plan prioritizes staffing, suicide prevention, and quality assurance. The Receivership went into effect on September 1, 2025, and the Receiver's action plan is estimated to cost \$41 million annually with a timeline of five to seven years to execute the plan. The plan ("Achieving and Sustaining a Constitutionally Adequate mental Health Care System—Receiver's Action Plan for the Mental Health Service Delivery System of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation"—available on the Assembly Budget Committee's website) was filed and approved by the court on August 27, 2025.

¹⁰ This Subcommittee will be hearing from CDCR psychiatrists on a mental health panel scheduled for a hearing on April 24.

Governor's Proposal. The Governor's proposed budget includes \$746.2 million for mental health services in CDCR. This includes the following proposals:

1. **Mental Health Receivership (*Coleman*):** \$33.9 million from the Mental Health Special Deposit Fund to establish the office of the Mental Health Receivership to address and overcome the deficiencies identified in the *Coleman* lawsuit, filed in the federal courts against the state.
2. **Tele-Mental Health Staffing Augmentation.** 69.0 positions and \$8.9 million General Fund in 2026-27, 119.0 positions and \$13.5 million General Fund in 2027-28, and \$12.8 million General Fund in 2028-29 and ongoing to augment staffing and resources to support the use of tele-mental health services. CDCR has already implemented a tele-psychiatry program which was expanded in July 2023.

Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO)

The LAO provided a report "Addressing Chronic Vacancies in Prison Mental Health Care" which includes an overview and analysis of mental health vacancies in CDCR, an analysis of the related Governor's budget proposals, and recommendations to the Legislature. The report is available on the Assembly Budget Committee's website. The recommendations are summarized below:

Addressing Chronic Vacancies

1. **Assess Effectiveness of Other Steps Before Considering Across-the-Board Pay Increases.** For various reasons, including that current CDCR compensation appears to meet or exceed market rates and factors outside of compensation likely play a major role in the state's ability to staff mental health positions, we recommend the Legislature not provide significant across-the-board compensation increases in the near term, though more targeted increases could be appropriate.
2. **Eliminate the Requirement for Licensed Out-of-State Providers to Get California Licenses.** This would allow CDCR to benefit from recruiting from a wider pool of applicants. We also recommend directing CDCR to recruit more from out of state.
3. **Increase Use of CDCR Tele-Mental Health to Maximum Court-Approved Levels.** The *Coleman* court allows up to half of providers to patients not in inpatient beds to provide services through tele-mental health. Even under a proposed expansion, however, only about 30 percent of providers will be remote. Further expanding tele-mental health could attract qualified professionals who might not otherwise want to work in a prison setting, as well as allow the state to recruit from areas where there are more providers available.
4. **Ask Court to Allow Tele-Mental Health Providers to Work From Out of State.** This would open up a potentially large pool of new applicants who are interested in working for CDCR but would prefer not to move from their current location.

5. **Require CDCR Report on the Feasibility of Concentrating Mental Health Population in Prisons That Are Easier to Staff.** Concentrating the mental health population could have various benefits, such as making it easier to recruit staff located in areas with a wider pool of applicants and reducing the need for staff at locations with large vacancies. However, this could prove logistically difficult. Having a report that explores the feasibility and costs of this option would better position the state and the Legislature to know what the challenges of such an approach are.
6. **Direct CDCR to Align Inpatient Capacity With Actual Need.** CDCR is operating hundreds more inpatient beds than the amount projected to be necessary. This increases costs and the number of positions it needs to fill unnecessarily. We recommend directing CDCR to request the Receiver to allow it to operate only the inpatient beds projected to be necessary.

Mental Health Receivership (Coleman) Budget Proposal

The LAO recommends that, despite the appointment of the Receiver, the Legislature continue to exercise oversight over the delivery of prison mental health, track progress towards exiting the mental health Receivership, direct CDCR to take additional steps to address mental health vacancies (such as increasing the use of tele-mental health), and monitor the impact of the recent salary increases for CDCR mental health staff implemented by the Receiver. Finally, the LAO recommends approving the Governor's proposal to implement the Receiver's action plan. The LAO notes that costs will likely increase under the Receivership. For example, under the *Plata* Receiver, state spending on prison medical care has more than doubled since the first year of the Receivership (after accounting for inflation)—reaching \$3.1 billion in 2025-26. The *Plata* Receiver also ordered the construction of 31 healthcare facility improvement projects that have totaled over \$1.5 billion.

Tele-Mental Health Staffing Augmentation Proposal.

The LAO recommends reducing the request and CDCR's baseline budget for tele-mental health medical assistants to account for the time when they are not directly supporting appointments. The LAO also recommends taking steps to increase the use of tele-mental health to the maximum levels allowed, including allowing remote providers to work from out of state, expanding licensing exemptions so that licensed out-of-state mental health providers no longer need a California license to work at CDCR, and pairing these changes with more recruitment from out of state. Finally, the LAO recommends the Legislature monitor whether on-site providers need a pay differential to encourage them to remain in positions that cannot be done remotely.

Staff Comment

The Subcommittee is in receipt of correspondence from the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists who support the prioritization of the hiring of California licensed mental health professionals, including licensed marriage and family therapists (LMFTs) to work at CDCR. CDCR has recently expanded its job classification for mental health positions to include

LMFTs. Previously, the scope for these positions were limited with an emphasis for licensed clinical social workers and psychologists. This expansion will likely assist CDCR in filling mental health vacancies which is part of the Receiver’s action plan.

In addition, the Subcommittee is in receipt of correspondence from AFSCME California that raises ongoing concerns regarding CDCR’s use of contractors in lieu of state civil servants. Specifically, they raised the following concerns:

- Department of Finance’s \$20 million contract with the Boston Consulting Group that was based on identifying an estimated \$2 billion in savings across CDCR, the Department of Health Care Services, and the Department of Social Services. Subsequently, projected savings are significantly lower and limited details have been shared.
- The proposed tele-mental health positions should be limited to civil servants who live in California and CDCR should provide information as to how the plan to find appropriate space within the prisons for staff-patient appointments.
- The Receiver’s Office should be staffed with state civil servants, not contract positions.
- Any efforts to address workforce shortages should include a joint labor-management committee.

Staff Recommendation: Hold Open.

Various Departments

Issue 3: Various Non-Presentation Spring Finance Letters

0250 Judicial Branch

- 1. Continuation of Courts of Appeal Workload**—It is requested that Item 0250-001-0001 be decreased by 18 positions in fiscal year 2026-27. It is also requested that Item 0250-001-3060 be decreased by \$1,269,000 and increased by 18 positions in 2026-27. These adjustments correct the expenditure and position authority in a proposal included in the Governor's Budget.
- 2. Orange Central Justice Center Facility Modification**—It is requested that Item 0250-001-0001 be increased by \$36 million in 2026-27 and \$35 million in 2027-28, Item 0250-001-3066 be decreased by \$36 million in 2026-27 and \$35 million in 2027-28, and Item 0250-012-0001 be decreased by \$36 million in 2026-27 and \$35 million in 2027-28. This is a net-zero technical adjustment to correct the funding source for a proposal included in the Governor's Budget.
- 3. Reappropriation: Racial Justice Act**—It is requested that Item 0250-494 be added to reappropriate up to \$2,120,000 from Item 0250-001-0001, Budget Act of 2023, to provide legal representation in capital cases, and to remove the requirement that counsel must be appointed by July 1, 2023. These changes are necessary to continue providing legal representation in capital cases and to expand the use of these funds to support more cases.

8120 Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training

- 4. Technical Adjustment**—It is requested that Item 8120-002-0001 be amended to shift \$1,950,000 ongoing from Program 6500-Standards to Program 6515-POST Administration to better align funding with program functions.

5225 California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

- 5. Technical Adjustments**—It is requested that Item 5225-001-0001 be increased by \$2,862,000 in fiscal year 2026-27 and ongoing, Item 5225-002-0001 be increased by \$138,000 in 2026-27 and ongoing, and Item 5225-008-0001 be decreased by \$3 million in 2026-27 and ongoing, to correct various coding and technical issues, and to better align funding and positions with program functions.

Staff Recommendation: Hold Open.