

OFFICE OF FISCAL ANALYSIS

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<http://www.cga.ct.gov/ofa>

sSB-1543

AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 26 \$	FY 27 \$
Correction, Dept.	GF - Cost	3.6 million	4.8 million
State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits ¹	GF - Cost	1,401,136	1,868,182
Public Health, Dept.	GF - Cost	153,100	
Resources of the General Fund	GF - Potential Revenue Gain	See Below	See Below
Treasurer, Debt Serv.	GF - Cost	See Below	See Below
Correction, Dept.	GF - Potential Cost	See Below	None

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill makes various changes to laws related to the Department of Correction (DOC) and incarcerated individuals, resulting in the following fiscal impacts.

Section 6 requires the Commissioner of Public Health to open an investigation into each case² of medical malpractice and neglect listed in a 2017 DOC report. This results in a one-time cost to the Department of Public Health (DPH) of approximately \$153,100 to retain independent

¹ The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 40.71% of payroll in FY 26.

² There are anticipated to be 25 medical practitioners identified in the report that will require investigation.

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medical examiners or peer-to-peer review specialists³ as required by the bill. The fiscal year in which these costs will be incurred is dependent on when DOC submits the report and documentation to DPH. If submitted close to the one-year deadline after passage of the bill (per Section 4), most costs will be experienced in FY 27. However, if the report is submitted earlier, costs may be incurred in FY 26.

Additionally, any professional discipline cases brought against health care providers identified in the report may result in civil penalties from disciplinary action. The extent of the revenue gain from civil penalties, if any, is dependent on the nature and number of violations adjudicated and DPH's discretion in levying civil penalties.

Section 9 requires DOC to ensure that persons who are incarcerated have access to and engage in productive programming, resulting in a cost of \$3.6 million in FY 26 and \$4.8 million in FY 27 to DOC and \$1,401,136 in FY 26 and \$1,868,182 in FY 27 to the State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits. FY 26 costs are adjusted to reflect the section's partial-year implementation.

Currently, about 26% of the correctional population participates in programming and about 12% participate in educational programming. DOC employs about 115 Correctional Counselors and 96 teachers and vocational instructors to provide current programming. To meet the bill's programming requirements, it is estimated that DOC will need to hire approximately 52 Correctional Counselors and 13 Vocational Instructors.⁴ The cost for equipment and programming materials is expected to be approximately \$200,000 annually.

Section 11 requires DOC to purchase at least two body scanning machines at certain correctional institutions, resulting in the following fiscal impacts. Section 13 authorizes \$500,000 in General Obligation bonds for costs related to the purchasing, installing, and training of

³ The average estimated cost per hour for these investigators is \$175, with each case investigation requiring an estimated 35 hours to conduct.

⁴ The annual starting salary for Correctional Counselor is estimated to be \$68,500 and the annual starting salary for Vocational Instructor is estimated to be \$79,000.

body scanning machines. To the extent bonds are fully allocated when available, total debt repayment is anticipated to be approximately \$715,000 over the 20-year duration of the bonds, with the earliest annual payment of up to \$25,000 possible in FY 27. There may be a one-time potential cost to DOC in FY 26 to the extent the department needs to modify its facilities prior to installation of the body scanners.

The bill makes various other changes and adds various reporting requirements which are not anticipated to result in a fiscal impact to the state.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to the size of the correctional population, the terms of any bonds issued, and inflation. Section 6 is not anticipated to have an out years impact.