

**Department of Corrections
Impact Statements in Response to
House Finance Subcommittee Budget Proposals**

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The House Finance Subcommittee budget reduces the Department of Correction's request by \$1,050,900 from the Governor's amended budget request.

Program:	Dollar Amount(s):	Fund Source(s):
Administration and Operations	(\$1,050,900)	General Fund

Impact Title: Elimination of funding associated with positions identified in Administrative Order 207

Impact Analysis:

The report adopted by the House Finance Subcommittee for the Department of Corrections eliminates \$1,050,900 and related positions.

The administration had previously identified a need to address Correctional Officer, Probation Officer and health care staff vacancies in the department. A large number of essential security and health care positions have been authorized but not filled because of lack of funding. Rather than request a budget increase to address these staffing concerns, the Governor issued Administrative Order 207. The Governor's commitment is to refocus the department's mission on public safety. To that end, the administration is evaluating all programs, implementing efficiencies, eliminating programs that do not work and reallocating resources.

AO 207 directed the department to eliminate certain positions. The intent was to utilize savings to fund front line staff positions. Staffing shortages caused by lack of funding, inadequate training, and high employee turnover rates are compromising officer safety, degrading public safety, and adversely impacting the department's ability to carry out its core missions. The FY2004 budget is predicated on \$4.4 million vacancy factor for correctional facilities alone. Combined with the \$1.05 million proposed reduction proposed by the House Finance Subcommittee and the Cola amount that will have to be absorbed by the department, it will be necessary to hold on the average 94 correctional positions vacant. This equates to a total of 19 security posts that would be unmanned.

Staffing levels in institutions are critical since the department's facilities operate at 98% to 102% of capacity. It is not possible to increase Correctional Officer overtime to cover 19 security posts.