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# Challenges Facing Massachusetts Agencies

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# Challenges Facing Massachusetts Corrections Agencies

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***May 2014***

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## **I. Abstract**

For many residents of Massachusetts corrections is a part of the public sector that remains hidden behind tall walls topped with barbed wire. These walls do not just keep the inmate population on the inside, but keep the public out. This capstone provides a view from inside the walls of our corrections facilities. Interviews with high ranking corrections administrators throughout Massachusetts give an insiders perspective into the challenges facing Massachusetts corrections agencies.

Over a billion dollars is spent on corrections in Massachusetts alone. This capstone looks at how that money is spent and the policies that dictate how our corrections agencies operate. This study allowed the high ranking administrators of the Massachusetts corrections agencies an opportunity to voice there concerns with the current system. The findings show agencies struggling with funding, human resources policy, and reentry programming. Almost every aspect of the field could be considered an area that needs to be improved within the state. Corrections struggles are the result of poor agency management, an antiquated system and way of thinking, and a failure implement evidence-based research driven policies.

Findings do show the challenges faced can be overcome. Literature shows that best practices have not been implemented in the areas discussed. Research in the field has provided an outline of evidence-based strategies that have been successful in similar cases.

## **II. Introduction**

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts houses approximately 25,000 incarcerated people on any given day. The Massachusetts Department of Correction (DOC) is responsible for the state prison population. This is almost half of the total population, 11,403 individuals were incarcerated in the 18 DOC facilities in the most recent population count (Silva & Savelli, 2011). These men and women have been sentenced to serve over 30 months in a correctional facility. The rest of the incarcerated population, 12,616 at the last count provided by the Massachusetts Sheriff's Association, are housed in a jail or a house of correction. These facilities are the responsibility of 13 county Sheriff's Departments. The individuals housed in jails are pretrial detainees and safe keeps. Offenders held in a house of correction are sentenced to under 30 months. Some counties operate the jail and house of correction in separate locations while others operate under the same roof.

In order to evaluate different corrections management concepts properly we must have a sound understanding of the system that currently exists. The roll of the Sheriffs and DOC do not appear to differ in their mission. The DOC's mission statement (Silva & Savelli, 2011) is, "To promote public safety by managing offenders while providing care and appropriate programming in preparation for successful reentry into the community." Massachusetts General Law states the Sheriffs (Mass Sheriffs Association, 2011) are responsible, "For the purpose of protecting society from criminal offenders with short sentences and detained persons awaiting trial by housing inmates in the least restrictive security level that is practical while providing offenders with opportunity for treatment to

promote successful re-integration into the community.” Both are responsible for what is essentially the same thing. The Sheriffs do participate in what is considered mutual aid, assisting cities and towns in law enforcement duties throughout the county. The extent of mutual aid provided by each Sheriff varies between departments.

### **III. Contribution to the Field and Research Question**

This study on Massachusetts correctional agencies will identify problem areas in the current system. The study will answer the question, “What challenges are facing Massachusetts corrections agencies?” The system is unique in many ways, but the challenges it faces are not. The study will identify areas where Massachusetts can become more efficient and improve services. Hopefully this will provoke further thought and study into how we can improve in the field. The benefits of an improved corrections system can have an effect on every resident of the commonwealth. Throughout this study I’ve heard corrections referred to as an “unknown” in public management. The following should remove some of the mystery that surrounds corrections.

### **IV. Literature Review**

In Massachusetts county government has been abolished. In 2009, the last seven county sheriff’s offices were transferred to the state government, a process that began in 2007. Due to the abolishment of county government, the Sheriff’s budgets became the responsibility of the state legislature. The Sheriffs continued to operate as elected officials, each lobbying for his/her own budget, and directing all facets of the department with complete autonomy. Although county government has been abolished by



the state, Sheriffs are still elected every 6 years by residents of their respective counties. The only oversight for the Sheriffs are biannual inspections conducted by the DOC to insure Sheriff operated facilities adhere to the Code of Massachusetts Regulations.

When the Sheriff's offices were transferred to the state an audit was conducted by the Office of the State Auditor; at the time Joe Denucci was the elected official who was head of this agency. The purpose of the audit was to ensure the Sheriff's offices acted pursuant to state law as they became the responsibility of the state. The findings of the audit (Denucci, 2010) revealed inefficiencies and problems throughout the Sheriff's offices, as well as the state's management of these offices. The auditors office recommended that a set of laws be put into place to address the responsibilities of the office of the Sheriff.

As a result of the audit report, a commission was directed to make recommendations regarding reorganization, consolidation, operation, administration, regulation, governance and finances of sheriffs' offices. The commission, consisting of three state senators, three state representatives, the budget director for the executive office of finance, a former Suffolk County Sheriff and now Secretary of Public Safety, and an Undersecretary with the Office of Public Safety released their findings in July of 2013. The commission voted not to reorganize or consolidate Sheriff's offices, and to allow the Sheriffs to continue to have autonomy in directing their respective departments. The report did note some significant findings.

The commission recommended the Sheriffs establish a system to provide continuity, uniformity, and accountability in the state correctional system. Further it was recommended a corrections advisory board be formed to improve coordination between

agencies and establish best practices. It was found there is no information management system that is used by all state correctional agencies. There is also no consistent hiring practice throughout state corrections agencies, and no parity in pay. Training for correctional staff also lacks uniformity between agencies.

The Sheriffs have struggled to hang on to diminishing power within the state law enforcement system. *Commonwealth Magazine* reporter Jack Sullivan (2010) puts it bluntly, "In Massachusetts, the office has been marginalized as no more than an innkeeper for miscreants, one that is elected but whose budget is controlled by the state." Sheriffs in Massachusetts are responsible for their respective correctional agencies, and provide mutual aid to localities in various forms. This is in contrast to other states where Sheriffs have more responsibilities in daily police operations. A study on Massachusetts correctional agencies can not ignore the political motivations surrounding the Sheriffs. The autonomy of the position allows the Sheriffs to direct the office in a manner each individual Sheriff finds to be most beneficial. Some Sheriffs have used the office as a stepping stone toward higher political office and others have turned the position into a career.

## **Overcrowding**

Some Massachusetts facilities operate under the pressure of extreme overcrowding. A recent count provided by the Massachusetts Sheriff's Association (2011) showed the Essex County Sheriff's Department operating at 239 percent of its intended capacity. Pretrial detainees housed in the county jail system are accused of a wide range of crimes, from murder and rape, to driving with a suspended license. The jail

stay can last for years while court proceedings carry on. The house of correction inmates are often sentenced on low level offenses resulting in a sentence under 30 months. In overcrowded county facilities it becomes impossible to separate those incarcerated for offenses requiring maximum security housing and those who do not. An inmate charged with rape may be housed with an inmate sentenced for an OUI offense. While Essex County is severely overcrowded, Barnstable County operates at just 76 percent of capacity. 142 empty beds that could be used to alleviate overcrowding in other facilities. Similarly Franklin County operated at 71 percent of capacity at the time of last report. Most DOC facilities report being at approximately 100% capacity.

Extreme overcrowding is dangerous for staff and inmates. Further it limits inmates access to programs designed to help rehabilitate and cripples classification departments. The Supreme Court ruling in *Platt v. Brown* (2011) found that because of overcrowding, California facilities had no way for the state to provide inmates with sufficient medical and mental health services. The Supreme Court ordered California to reduce all facilities to 135% of capacity. This has left California with the decision to either build more prisons or conduct a massive early release.

At the most recent count 3 Sheriff operated facilities and 8 DOC facilities are operating over the 135% mark. The most overcrowded facility is the Women Awaiting Trial unit in Framingham, which operates at 425% of capacity. This unit is an example of an inconsistency within the system, as inmates awaiting trial are the responsibility of the Sheriffs. Because many Sheriffs do not have facilities for women, they are moved to Framingham. Only 37.5% of the women housed in Framingham are the responsibility of the DOC. With the Supreme Court finding anything over 135% of capacity unaccept-

able, it is hard to imagine the problems faced in a unit at 425% of capacity. The Sheriffs Commission Report (2013) does address the problem the state faces in housing female inmates. The commission recommends women be housed regionally, and four regions should be created where women will be housed in regional facilities. Currently there is a Western Massachusetts regional facility for women; the commission recommends three more should be created. The commission does not make a recommendation regarding who should govern these regional facilities.

Overcrowded facilities put the inmate population and staff at risk (McDonald, Greifinger, & Kane, 2012). In order to deal with rising costs and overcrowding, states have attempted to reduce security staff, cut programs, release inmates early, and freeze plans to open new facilities. Massachusetts is one of many states that has enacted sentencing reform, lowering sentencing guideline restrictions creating shorter sentences. None of these plans provide improved service or reduce recidivism. Cutting staff creates a less safe environment, the cutting of programs decrease education for a population in dire need, and the shorter sentences assist what is known as the “revolving gate syndrome.” A study in the UK, where a similar battle with overcrowding in the correctional system is waged, showed that those who serve sentences under 12 months are the most likely to reoffend within two years at a rate of 70% (Howerton, Burnett, Byng, & Campbell, 2009). The “revolving gate syndrome” may temporarily alleviate prison overcrowding but places more pressure on other criminal justice agencies. Police and courts resources are exhausted by this group of offenders who are on a path to doing life in prison on an installment plan. The most effective way to lower population counts

is to reduce recidivism and keep the repeat offenders from coming back. Reentry strategies are typically connected to an agencies recidivism rate.

## **Reentry**

A recent study by the Pew Center (2011) showed some states making progress in recidivism at historic levels. Recidivism rates are often accepted as a performance management statistic that displays how correctional rehabilitation programs are doing. Recidivism in the criminal justice system is the act of committing a criminal offense after you have already been sanctioned for a prior offense. Recidivism rates in Oregon dropped by 32% and in Michigan by 12% over a five year period. From 1999 to 2004 recidivism has decreased nationally by over 2%. In that same time period Massachusetts rates have increased by 4.1% to 42.2%. This number is still a slight improvement from the national rate of 43.3%, although the national number may be misleading as it is under 40% if you do not factor in the state of California. According to the Pew Center (2011), states showing the most successful rates credit comprehensive reentry plans for the improvement. A comprehensive reentry strategy indicates an offender, after completing a needs and risk assessment, is seen through a reentry plan from day one that does not end until the offender has become acclimated back into society. These plans require great efforts from the community, and are also often assisted by nonprofit organizations.

Offenders start at a security level that is determined by the results of the risk assessment. The offender progresses through various steps before being moved to some form of community corrections program. For some offenders in Massachusetts, it will be

difficult to follow a comprehensive strategy due to jurisdictional issues in the correctional system. An offender may have an eighteen month sentence in Berkshire county, but also has overlapping time of three months to serve in Hampden county. This transfer will force the offender to restart the classification and reentry process, disrupting progress.

A MassInc. (2013) report on incarceration policy in Massachusetts focuses on the state's outdated reentry policies. The report is produced by a coalition of Massachusetts criminal justice experts. Nearly half of DOC inmates are released to the street without supervision. The coalition points to data showing approximately 60% of individuals released from the DOC or a House of Correction reoffended within six years. This state that often is a leader in progressive thought in public and social policy, is employing ineffective and outdated reentry strategies. States throughout the country have begun utilizing strategies that have been proven scientifically to be effective, while Massachusetts continues to use strategies that appear to be motivated by politics more than research. MassInc's coalition recommends expanded use of community supervision programs as well as enact an integrated reentry program for the communities most effected by crime. Currently female offenders in the state are not receiving the services needed to rehabilitate them. Sixty-three percent of women offenders are suffering from some form of mental health issue, and as outlined previously the overcrowding in the DOC's Framingham facility limits the services that can be provided.

A comprehensive reentry strategy in Massachusetts requires the DOC and Sheriffs to have systems in place to allow offenders to move through various security levels of corrections. The programs utilized in comprehensive reentry strategies require tech-

nology and money. According to the Massachusetts Sheriff's Association (2011) not all county Sheriff's have offenders placed in prerelease reentry centers. This is either a reflection of the Sheriff's choice, which is allowed because of the position's autonomy, or the Sheriff does not have the means to utilize pre-release or community supervision techniques. Due to a lack of transparency we do not know how many offenders leave a house of correction under no supervision. We do know MassInc.'s experts recommend all offenders be placed under community supervision upon release. Currently Massachusetts requires no uniformity in offender programming, and the legislature allocating budgets does not require best practices be utilized to receive state funding. Reentry in the state appears to be ineffective, inconsistent, and costly.

### **Budget Process**

There appears to be inconsistencies in county facility funding. Each Sheriff's budget is distributed via the state budget cycle. The budgets do not appear to be distributed based on need. Currently five Republicans preside over Sheriff's offices, receiving on average \$36,447.68 in funding per every inmate housed. In contrast Sheriff's who are registered as Democrat receive \$49,511.14 in funding per an inmate housed. The Democrat average budget does not factor in Dukes County, due to it being an extreme outlier. Are the budgets distributed based on political motivation, or is there a reason for the differential beyond politics? According the Sheriff's Commission Report each Sheriff submits a budget request annually, and the legislature then responds with a budget. The biggest cost driver in corrections, correctional staff compensation, differs from county to county. According to the Sheriff's Commission Report, staff are paid

based on cost of living within the county they work. This could explain the differential in budget distribution. Further research will be required to know if this is accurate.

As Sheriff's continue to have autonomy, overlap will exist as most of these departments are structured in a similar manner. All conduct their own training, human resources, and emergency management amongst other areas where savings may be found if these areas were consolidated. Uniformity may provide an opportunity to consolidate areas of overlap.

Democrat Dukes County Sheriff's budget allocated \$140,000 per an inmate housed. The Dukes County jail is located on the island of Martha's Vineyard and has been the cause of concern for island police who feel the antiquated facility built in 1873 introduces dangerous felons to the island community. The Bristol County District Attorney (Blair 2006) referred to the facility as a "country club for corrections," a view shared by many. This is due to such privileges as inmates having cable television with HBO in their cells. Inmates are also allowed to have pizza delivered to the jail. Judges have the right to sentence offenders to any Sheriff operated facility in the state as long as the sentence is under 30 months. This has resulted in a number of plea deals where offenders will plead guilty in exchange for being sentenced to the Dukes facility. Recently this policy has resulted in a high profile Saudi Prince convicted of vehicular homicide in Boston being sentenced to Dukes County. Also incarcerated in Dukes County was a New Bedford Priest guilty of possessing child pornography. The Dukes jail does not offer any sex offender treatment programs; this is problematic in the reentry process. The facility has also proven to lack security due its number of escapes, including a 2002 inmate who was alleged to leave the facility undetected by staff a number of times



throughout his sentence. When questioned about the possibility of closing the facility and moving the inmates to Barnstable County, the Sheriff (2010) responded, "Sending our sentenced inmates to Barnstable would reduce the funding level for the sheriff's office, which would undoubtedly result in loss of jobs for employees and a loss of revenues for local vendors." His argument appears to be his employees will lose their job and local vendors will lose contracts. The Sheriff's Commission voted against the idea of consolidating the two island Sheriff's departments with Barnstable County. One could argue Dukes County is an example of how a unified corrections system could result in improved public safety, addressing offender needs and financial savings. Inmates requiring a medium or maximum security facility do not need to be housed in this facility that required a budget of over 2.7 million dollars and housed just 18 at last count. These offenders could easily be transferred to another facility. Neighboring island Nantucket transfers all county inmates to Barnstable County. If Dukes, Nantucket, and Barnstable counties consolidated the facility could either be closed, or utilized as a minimum security pre-release center.

## **Transparency**

Transparency is a concept that the public has come to demand from government agencies recently. The Department of Correction produces an annual report detailing spending, performance, and future goals. The department budget is broken down in great detail by the states open checkbook website. Most Sheriffs do not produce this type of information, although Middlesex Sheriff Koutijian's office appears to be an exception. This makes it difficult to know if our state is effectively operating our correc-

tional institutions. National studies utilize only DOC statistics, eliminating half our adult corrections systems. And in a study conducted by the National Institute of Corrections, Massachusetts was one of ten states that did not participate. Transparency may become a bigger issue as this study progresses.

### **Staff Turnover**

Staff turnover is a challenge for correctional agencies throughout the country. Approximately 70% of corrections budgets are earmarked for staff salaries. A study on Texas Sheriffs stated that for every employee who leaves, it will cost approximately 50% more to replace the departed employee (Keikbush, Price, & Thies, 2003). Maslach and Jackson (1981) found a direct correlation between “job burnout” and “individuals who do people work.” Further Lambert (2010) found that correctional staff are at a higher risk of “job burnout” due to “supervising and securing an unwilling and potentially violent population.” This indicates that staff turnover will be higher in corrections than in other fields. Studies have shown the factors that figure into staff turnover rates could be the sign of bigger problems within our correctional agencies. Leip and Stinchcomb (2013) conducted a study on 1,924 front line level staff members at jails throughout the country. They found strong correlations between turnover intent and job satisfaction as well as salary.

There is disparity in pay and compensation amongst line staff in Massachusetts corrections agencies. In Bristol County officer’s make 39% less in starting salary than DOC officer’s. Franklin, Hampshire, and Worcester Counties are all paid salaries over 20% less than there DOC counterparts. Because of the disparity it is likely that a staff

member wishing to remain in the field will leave a department for another based on compensation. Because of a lack of uniformity in training, Massachusetts will take on the cost of training that person in their new agency as well as the cost at the individual's former agency, despite the job title being the same.

Boo and Koh (2001) found a strong correlation between organizational ethics and an individual's job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The researchers focus on Organizational Justice Theory, and argue that staff's perceived views of organizational justice affect their organizational commitment and job satisfaction. There are multiple independent researchers that have found these to be the two most important factors in staff turnover. Some Sheriffs accept campaign contributions from employees, an act that can directly affect one's view of organizational justice within an agency. In a post on [Masspoliticsprofs.com](http://Masspoliticsprofs.com) Umass-Boston Professor Maurice Cunningham (2013) argues that this practice influences personnel decisions, he recalls Psychologist Robert Cialdini's Theory of Reciprocity. According to the theory, it is human nature to feel obliged to another person who does a favor for you. If the theory is accurate, an employee who contributes to the Sheriff's campaign may receive benefits other employees don't. *Commonwealth Magazine* reporter Jack Sullivan (2011) asks, "How often do you hear about what the state's county sheriffs are doing, except at election time or in stories about patronage hiring?." Patronage hiring may provide another example of an act that decreases the sense of Organizational Justice within an agency. Are turnover rates consistent throughout the state correctional agencies, or are some experiencing significantly high rates? Organizational justice may provide the why if the answer is yes.

## **Literature Review Conclusion**

In researching corrections there are problems that consistently plague correctional agencies. Although the Massachusetts system is unique, it is still at risk of being susceptible to these reoccurring problems. Staff turnover has been identified by many researchers as a problem that is costly to correctional agencies, and the current Massachusetts correctional landscape suggests this may be a challenge to the state. Research has shown comprehensive reentry strategies are key in reducing recidivism rates. Current Massachusetts rates suggest there is a problem in our current reentry model. The Supreme Court has decided overcrowding results in a poor correctional environment; currently many Massachusetts facilities are above rates the Supreme Court deems unacceptable. The overcrowding issue creates more challenges for our correctional agencies. The state formed Sheriff's Commission has voted to allow Massachusetts Sheriffs to continue to have autonomy, but expect measures be taken to increase uniformity. The concept of uniformity could result in cost savings. Elected officials as heads of correctional agencies creates specific risks to those agencies, risks that should be monitored.

## **V. Research Methods**

Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected and used for the study. The goal of the data collection was to identify problems in state correctional agencies. Through the literature review, a wide range of challenges were identified as areas that may be trouble spots for state agencies. These challenges either historically plagued

corrections agencies nationwide, or were identified by recent publications such as the Sheriff's Commission.

Qualitative data was collected through a series of interviews with correctional administrators from a variety of state agencies. Approval to conduct these interviews was given by the University of Massachusetts Institutional Review Board. Twelve interviews were conducted with administrators representing 7 of the 14 adult corrections agencies in the state. Those interviewed were typically high level administrators whose titles included Special Sheriff, Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Commissioner, and Assistant Deputy Superintendent. The administrators I spoke with were a well educated group, most had obtained masters degrees, doctorates, or law degrees. Many also taught college level classes. The administrators interviewed accounted for over 250 years of total law enforcement experience. Nine of the 12 administrators are active members in their respective agency, the other three have retired within the last six years, but remain active in the field in some capacity. Line staff were not included in this study. The interviews targeted topics including patronage, reentry programming, staff turnover, and overcrowding. The interview times ranged from 15 minutes to over an hour.

The original intent of the research was to interview an administrator from all 14 agencies. Because of a lack of cooperation from the agencies finding high ranking administrators was a difficult process. I was able to reach out to contacts I have made during my seven years working in the field to get the collection of data started. These contacts also helped me to reach out to others who also participated in the study. I then turned to the academic community. I contacted current and former corrections adminis-

trators who currently teach at universities throughout Massachusetts. Lastly the website [LinkedIn.com](https://www.linkedin.com) was used to reach out to local corrections administrators. A search of an agency name provided a list of LinkedIn members who are current or former employees of the agency. These subjects were contacted via the LinkedIn member mail system. These resources were exhausted because of the importance of finding study participants who were knowledgeable about a variety of corrections topics. The “right” participants for the study were those who were identified as having experience with or educated in the wide array of corrections topics discussed during the interview. I also interviewed a former member of the state legislature. This interview was conducted to gain a better understanding of the budget process.

Quantitative data was collected to determine agency recidivism rates, budget distribution, overcrowding, and employment levels. The data served multiple purposes. The numbers provided insight into agency funding. This data also served as a way of fact checking the administrators interviewed. When an administrator spoke about how a particular agency handled facility overcrowding, it made it possible to check and insure that the agency was in fact overcrowded. The same held true for administrators speaking in regards to funding.

## **VI. Findings and Discussion**

Upon reviewing the interview data many common challenges were brought forward repeatedly. The challenges all fell into 1 of 3 categories, human resources, reentry, and budgetary. Administrators reported problems with receiving proper funding, staff turnover, reentry procedure, services provided to offenders, and patronage within cor-

rections agencies. There seems to be a correlation between each challenge and how it is addressed. When an agency struggles with one challenge, it often contributes to another problem within the agency. A lack of funding has an effect on the reentry process, overcrowding, offender services, and staff turnover. Overcrowding affects the reentry process, offender services, and staff turnover. Throughout these interviews it was found that the biggest challenges facing our Massachusetts correctional system are linked to each other. There appear to be “haves” and “have nots” amongst our correctional agencies. The “haves” have few problems, and this is backed up by quantitative data. The “have nots” appear to be in a hole they are constantly trying to dig themselves out of.

## **Transparency**

It became clear immediately that transparency was going to be an issue in the data collection process. In the current government climate transparency is expected of our state agencies. Despite this it became increasingly clear that corrections agencies in Massachusetts would do little to assist in data collection. Thirteen of the 14 agencies were contacted directly via telephone. I was transferred to research directors, administrative assistants, and public relations directors. Some I spoke with directly, some I left messages for. The agencies were all consistent in that they supplied little to no information, typically promising a call back with information, and then failure to follow through with this promise. The DOC mailed a research request form that required the request to pass through the agencies own version of the IRB. Considering the time restraints of the researcher, the request was not completed.

A high ranking administrator interviewed stated the system is designed to limit transparency. Agencies release what they want to, picking statistics that support a goal of the agencies leadership. Agencies that release information do so in an inconsistent manner. Recidivism data produced by agencies was done so in a variety of ways. Time after the offender was released ranged from 30 days to 3 years. This makes it nearly impossible to measure recidivism throughout the state. Many administrators interviewed stated agency data was often collected with bias, purposely constructing scenarios to achieve a statistical result. Due to the state's budget dashboard system, budget and employment statistics were available for all 14 agencies. However an in depth breakdown by line item was not available for the county sheriff's offices.

### **Overcrowding**

Multiple administrators interviewed stated overcrowding is a problem that causes a trickle down effect and creates further hindrances. One administrator stated the overcrowding was so bad at one point that booking, programs, and the indoor recreation area were utilized as housing areas. For months at a time the indoor recreation area housed approximately 100 inmates. There was no shower area, one television, and one bathroom area with a toilet and sink. An immediate problem that stems from housing inmates in an area like this is a safety concern for staff and inmates. History has proven poor housing conditions can result in riots and increase tension between staff and inmates. One toilet and one sink for 100 people creates health concerns. The administrator stated those who were housed in the recreation area were brought to other housing units during facility lockdowns to be showered, and those who resided in recreation



were given a “minimum” of one shower every three days. Because the area was used for housing, indoor inmate recreation was canceled. Again causing safety concerns for staff and inmates throughout the facility. Another administrator stated his agency also utilized space meant for programs and booking as temporary housing. Inmates would often have no assigned housing unit. Instead they would be shuffled amongst various areas when not in use. Administrators from various agencies reported under the current conditions it would be impossible to get below the 135% of rated capacity that the supreme court mandated for the State of California. According to the administrators interviewed overcrowding is the result of a combination of poor planning, outdated facilities, and current sentencing guidelines. Overcrowding affects each agencies ability to provide the services needed to rehabilitate offenders, the overall safety of each facility, and affects the staff turnover rate.

Nearly every administrator stated offender mental health was one of the biggest challenges for corrections agencies. Administrators who reported severe overcrowding stated in-house mental health workers could not possibly handle the caseload provided. The overcrowding created major classification problems. Every administrator stated a risk assessment was utilized to determine classification. Unfortunately in cases of overcrowding these risk assessments were done in vain. The risk assessment did not determine where and how an inmate is housed, because inmates were moved to any bed available regardless of where it was located. In some cases this meant carrying a temporary bed one administrator referred to as a “canoe” around to various parts of the facility where space was not being utilized throughout the day. Although many administrators are aware of scientifically proven methods to reduce recidivism involving a compre-

hensive reentry strategy, they are unable to implement such a strategy due to the lack of space. One administrator who reported the agency had plenty of open bed space, stated he believed this resulted in a better working environment and was one reason that agency did not have an issue with staff turnover.

## **Patronage**

Patronage has long been a part of the Massachusetts political system. Agencies where patronage affects the hiring, promotion, and discipline of staff suffer from a number of human resources problems. In Massachusetts, 13 of the 14 agencies who are tasked with operating adult correctional facilities are led by an elected official, a Sheriff, who operates with autonomy. The hiring, promotional, and discipline policy of these agencies are subject to few regulations. The jobs are not civil service and patronage appears to of been a problem for these agencies for centuries. While it appears some agencies are moving forward with best practices human resource policies recommended by the Sheriffs Commission, other agencies continue to allow patronage to be a big part of their human resource management philosophy.

Every administrator was asked, "In what ways is patronage a factor in staff hiring, discipline, and promotions?" Many were apprehensive, asking about this researcher's confidentiality policy. Many would not answer until reassured, citing a fear of retribution. Every administrator had a story about patronage, and how at some point in their career it was a factor within their agency. One administrator stated that currently "a lot of relatives" and "everyone knows someone" within the agency. Another reported that when an employee acted in a manner where discipline would be appropriate, the discipline

taken was based on who the employee knew. Another stated that currently, "If you are on the team you are good. If not start looking for a new job. Corrupt is the last thing I'll say about that." It was reported that one agency had hired a department head whose only job experience was operating a small sandwich shop. The job this person was hired for was not in food service. It was also stated often times the biggest pressure for patronage comes when firing a staff member is deemed necessary by administrators. This has resulted in phone calls being made from state elected officials looking to influence the decision. These are often the elected officials who have can influence how the agency is funded. Multiple administrators reported that their agencies were improving due to either recent changes in the agency leadership or new controls being put into place to limit patronage. In order to reduce patronage many administrators reported testing had been put into place for hiring and promotions. Outside agencies have been used to conduct exams and interviews to handle the promotions and hiring. When asked about any information that may be pertinent to a study on the state corrections system, an administrator stated the politics needed to be eliminated. The administrator went on to state that the politicians limit talented career professionals from carrying out their job duties, citing a time a fellow administrator was asked by an elected official to act in a manner that would violate federal HIPAA law. In this case the elected official did not further pressure the administrator when it was explained that federal law would be violated. Others interviewed cited instances where this was not the case, careers were threatened and administrators were forced to act in a manner they knew was wrong professionally, ethically, and/or legally.

Throughout the interviews it was made clear that patronage within the agency was the result of who was at the top of that agency. The Sheriffs and the Governor's Office are responsible for how much it is a factor in each respective agency. It appears that patronage hits correctional agencies in waves depending on the leadership. While some reported the most recent leadership had taken steps to eliminate patronage, others reported recent leadership changes perpetuated acts of patronage. Those who reported patronage was an issue within the agency always related it to another problem within the agency. Staff turnover was expected to have the strongest correlation to patronage. As expected, multiple administrators who reported high levels of patronage also reported problems with turnover. However in one case it was stated that staff turnover was not an issue in an agency where patronage was described as a "huge factor." When asked why this was the case, this administrator stated a high number of employees who were patronage hires, also lacked the qualifications to make a similar or better salary outside the agency. Because of this staff rarely left.

Administrators did report that patronage was a problem for staff morale. When unqualified people were put into important jobs, it left others with a decreased sense of organizational justice. And because they are unqualified they lack the ability to provide the best services for offenders, having a negative effect on recidivism rates. Having read Professor Maurice Cunningham's thoughts on patronage amongst Massachusetts Sheriff's on the MassProfs blog, referring to many as "Moochers, ingrates, and welchers," administrators reporting patronage as a challenge within the field is no surprise. What is most shocking is that despite the recommendations of the Sheriff's Commis-

sion, nothing is done to force these agencies to employ best practices in their Human Resource policies.

## **Reentry and Recidivism**

Reentry is a philosophy more than it is a particular program. It is the process an agency uses to reduce recidivism. During the interviews it became clear that reentry in Massachusetts requires the cooperation of multiple agencies. DOC, Sheriffs, probation, courts, police, nonprofit, and private organizations all factor into the reentry strategies used. Recidivism rates are the best tool to determine the success of an agency's reentry philosophy, but the recidivism rate must be figured with the least amount of bias possible. An administrator explained how some agencies calculate recidivism rates in a manner that allows them to skew the number in the direction they want. Specific programs that an agency may want to prove to be "successful" will only allow the "best" inmates to enroll. Recidivism rates showing success for prerelease centers may be more about natural selection than the quality of the reentry program. The amount of time after release used in recidivism studies are also different from agency to agency. Many use one year rates, while others use three. Because the likelihood of one reoffending over three years is greater than one year, these rates promote a bias toward the agency using the shorter time period. An administrator also reported that in the past the agency has used 30 day rates. This is a poor way to measure recidivism because often times one can't even complete a trial in 30 days.

A reentry strategy can look good, but if the resources are not available to implement them, they are useless. Administrators who reported issues with overcrowding

also reported the agencies used evidence-based reentry practices. Unfortunately due to the strain from overcrowding, the strategy is not used as intended. Nearly every administrator stated the inmates who are being released from medium to maximum security facilities are often at the highest risk of reoffending. There are no services to assist this individual upon release. They are no longer the responsibility of the agency. Mass-Inc's coalition argues for a form of assumed parole, where every offender released is done so under state supervision. Beyond that, administrators interviewed argued offenders released need assistance in finding jobs, medical care, and mental health services.

Reentry policies differ from agency to agency. Resources and agency philosophy drive each agency's reentry strategy. One agency had no step down facility to work with, making it difficult to move offenders slowly into the community. Without some form of prerelease center the agency has become reliant on halfway and sober houses. These places are not under the umbrella of the agency and do not need to function in a manner that promotes the agency's reentry strategy. The local economy throughout the state was a factor for agencies looking to implement work release programs. Many reported it was difficult to find employers willing to hire offenders.

Again there is a difference between the "haves" and "have nots" amongst our agencies. Administrators from multiple agencies reported that they can start working an individual reentry plan for each inmate on day one. Upon arrival inmates are processed and housed in a unit with other new arrivals. Here they go through an orientation, a risk assessment is conducted, and after a period of time that ranged from a day to two weeks are classified based on the results of the risk assessment. The offender may

stay within the facility and attend programs based on need. Eventually he/she will be moved to an agency pre release center, or to a home in the community and supervised as part of an Electronic Monitoring Program (EMP) prior to release. EMP is a program where the offender is released to a home, but is monitored by a bracelet that tracks movement. This allows agencies to supervise the offender in a cost effective manner. Further restrictions like visits from staff to administer drug and alcohol tests are often a part of the program. An administrator stated that their agency had approximately \$300,000 worth of EMP equipment that was not used, simply because know one knew how to.

EMP is an example of a community supervision program. The popularity of community based corrections strategies has increased in recent years as evidence has shown positive results. Many administrators interviewed cited housing as the biggest obstacle in implementing these programs, one calling it the “elephant in the room.” When released under supervision, offenders need somewhere to go. Halfway and sober houses are often utilized, but there are not enough beds available for the current demand. As the field continues to stress the use of these comprehensive strategies demand for housing will continue to rise. The administrators interviewed stated that the lack of housing needs to be addressed if these programs are going to be successful.

An administrator revealed that to her, accountability was the part of reentry that is missing. Holding the administrators and policy makers accountable for their reentry strategy is most important. The administrator stated what the literature review has shown, there are evidence based practices that have proven to work. The current system is failing to use a model that has proven to be successful. Another administrator

stated that the voters don't typically hold politicians accountable for reentry practices in corrections because the majority of the public does not know what best practices are. As evidence of this the administrator pointed to a press release during which one agency reported a recidivism rate in the 50's is something to be proud of, citing it as evidence that programs are working. Research has proven that a recidivism rate in the 50's is very poor compared to the national average. The administrator stated that there was no political backlash because few people understood how the rate measured up against other states.

## **Budget**

Budget distribution appears to be the most telling evidence that there are the haves and have nots amongst correctional agencies. Analysis of the 14 agency budgets shows disparities in what is budgeted for each agency. The administrators interviewed provided insight into how important money was to getting ahead in corrections. There was a strong correlation between agency administrators thoughts on their agencies funding, and how it was actually funded. When asked if the agency received enough funding to meet the demands placed on the agency an administrator responded, "Does anybody receive enough funding? The answer is no one does!" The administrator continued to state that all correctional agencies are grossly underfunded. Unfortunately this administrator was with an agency that received very little funding per inmate when compared to others. The administrators who came from the "have not" agencies appeared so focused on digging the agency out of the financial hole, they had little sense for how others were budgeted. This is likely due to agency leaders reporting



to the legislature they need more money, regardless if the agency's financial situation.

There is no incentive for an agency to give money back to the state. A number of administrators stated in confidentiality they felt they were properly funded, some even stating they were over funded.

In order to get a better understanding of how correction's budgets are distributed a former member of the legislature were interviewed. The interview revealed the hypothesis that the budgets are politically motivated may be untrue. Although the budget distribution showed great disparity between agencies based on the political affiliation of the elected official in charge, the legislator stated this was not a factor. Instead the Sheriffs and DOC budgets are distributed based on the agency history. According to the interviews, a zero based budgeting approach has not been done for the corrections budgets since the Sheriffs moved under the umbrella of the state. Zero based budgeting is the process of looking at an agency by line item, and deciding an appropriate budget. The former member of the legislature stated this was not done for two reasons, it is too time consuming, and members of the legislature are not experts in the field, leaving them unsure what aspects of each agency is necessary. Many Sheriffs have line items that have been built into their respective budgets for decades, and use these as the reason they have budgets that are inflated in comparison to others. Examples of this include Barnstable's Bureau of Criminal Investigation, Middlesex's mobile training center, and Berkshire's underwater search and rescue team. These are services provided to the county by these correctional agencies that are funded by the government. These services have not been analyzed by the legislature to decide how important they were to the county.

It was stated that the agency budgets were only scrutinized when a red flag was raised, a given example for a red flag was an agency receiving media attention for wasting state funds. Our county Sheriffs have been around for hundreds of years, some agencies in the state have existed since the 1600's. Over time the agencies have been used as a flexible law enforcement tool. Some picking up more duties than others along the way, in the process picking up more money. During the interview it was stated that some of the programs have been around for so long a zero based budgeting approach would be required to get rid of them. More work needs to be done to determine how the added funds are used, what is necessary, and if the budget process is contributing to an unbalanced playing field amongst corrections agencies.

Having reviewed interview data in comparison to the budget distribution, it would be reasonable to hypothesize agencies that have extra budget items are able to transfer this to being a better corrections operation. An administrator stated that although the agency was always trying to find a way to obtain more funds, the amount received is enough to provide a high level of corrections service. On the opposite end of the spectrum, another administrator stated that currently his agency was facing a deficit of millions of dollars for the current fiscal year. The administrator stated funding limited the agency's ability to properly staff corrections operations, and cited finances as a reason for a number of other agency short comings. The same agency also struggled with what was deemed a "major problem" with staff turnover that was caused by job environment. Research has shown staff turnover is very costly, and likely contributes to this agency's deficit. This administrator's agency fell amongst the lower half of agencies funded per an inmate.

The state budget dashboard system was used to analyze agency budgets. The budget dashboard is a vehicle for transparency for state agencies. The budget dashboard provide each agencies fiscal year budget and number of full time employees. Agency capacity and inmate count numbers were provided by the Massachusetts Sheriffs Association and the DOC. Worcester, Essex, and Bristol Sheriff's are all distributed less than \$35,000 per an inmate housed. Berkshire, Franklin, Middlesex and Dukes Sheriff's are all funded more than \$55,000 per an inmate. Because of this employee to inmate ratios also display great disparity. The DOC currently employs 1 staff member to every 2.14 inmates housed, the total number of full time Sheriff employees for the 12,749 inmates in their facilities is similar, 1 employee to every 2.15 inmates. A closer look shows that Essex County, which also receives on the lower end of state funding per an inmate housed, employs 1 staff member for every 2.91 inmates housed. In contrast to the Essex number, Franklin County employs 1 staff member for every 1.29 inmates housed. This appears to be evidence one of these agencies may be over staffed, one may be under staffed, or a combination of the two. It remains unclear at the current time. It is possible this is a reflection of one agency providing extensive services to their county that requires added staffing.

## **Mental Health**

Mental health was the most popular topic that was not directly tied to any of the questions asked during interviews. When asked what their agency could do better in reducing recidivism, 9 of the 12 stated they needed to provide better mental health ser-

VICES. Multiple administrators also spoke of the importance of mental health for employees. Mental health training for staff was also discussed.

It was found mental health services for the inmate population during incarceration, as well after release, are lacking according to administrators in nearly every agency. Multiple administrators reported mental health workers within the agency had caseloads that were too big to handle. Many also stated that more attention needs to be paid to aftercare, insuring inmates released receive proper mental health treatment upon release.

One administrator turned the focus of the interview toward the importance of mental health training for correctional staff, and changing policies to address mental health needs. The administrator, who has also conducted extensive work in the field of mental health, stated many agencies have made progress, but there is still work to be done. The administrator stated that line staff who are better trained in mental health can provide better service and avoid a number of confrontations with the inmate population.

This administrator also stated better mental health services needed to be provided to security staff, and a greater emphasis needed to be placed on critical incident stress management for staff who respond to a variety of traumatic incidents. Staff who respond to incidents involving death or major injuries should immediately go through a critical incident debrief. Another administrator stated that the agency employee assistance program (EAP) was viewed by staff as a “joke.” It was further stated employees only used the program as a way to “save their job” when they got in trouble. The program is supposed to provide assistance to assist employees who may be in mental distress that can adversely affect their job.

## **Staff Turnover and Agency Culture**

Administrators who stated staff turnover was an issue within the agency cited a variety of reasons. Every administrator stated staff leaving for other public safety opportunities was amongst the most common reason given for staff turnover. The reason is that other jobs are simply more desirable. As one administrator put it, "How many people grow up wanting to be a corrections officer, I don't know one. But a lot of people want to be firefighters and police officers." Two high ranking administrators cited generational traits as being a reason for the high turnover. Both stated most new officers are young, recent college graduates, who have few responsibilities. Many still reside with parents and have few bills to pay. New officers are regularly forced to work the schedule that is in the least demand, often times night shifts, weekends, and holidays are part of the schedule. When the agency is understaffed forced overtime is implemented, demanding these new officers to work double shifts. The job itself is less than glamorous. Corrections officer's have higher rates of substance abuse, suicide, and divorce than the average US citizen. The average life expectancy (Bedore, 2012) of someone who has worked 20 years as a corrections officer is 58, nearly 20 years shorter than your average American. And on average, a corrections officer will die just 18 months after retirement. For new officers the reality is the job just isn't worth it. They do not *need* the job, so they leave.

Workplace culture was also cited as a reason for staff turnover. An administrator stated it was difficult to keep contract employees who provide food service, mental

health, and medical services. These employees were viewed as “outsiders” by the security staff and treated poorly. Another administrator, who was in a position to terminate staff members, stated that a lot of turnover within the agency was “good turnover.” Staff members who embraced a culture of “violence” in corrections were the one’s leaving the agency. Multiple administrators spoke of the field progressing professionally, and stated they had issues with a similar culture of “violence” amongst staff. An administrator stated all agency “employees need better mental health training” to prevent staff from “verbally and physically abusing inmates.”

Through the interviews it became clear that each agency promoted a different type of “corrections culture.” Administrators cited a number of instances that could be described as a lack of professional behavior. Tales of excessive force, hazing, and physical abuse of coworkers were told. The cause of this in many agencies are holdovers from previous administrations who perpetuated this behavior. Training, technology, and administrators who are better educated have changed the field, but there is still progress to be made.

Not much is being done to prevent staff from leaving. Few agencies offer a specific plan to retain staff. The administrators interviewed spoke about improving compensation, scheduling, and benefits as a way to retain staff despite the research showing the importance of organizational commitment to staff retainment.

## **VII. Recommendations**

MassInc’s (2013) study and the report produced by the Sheriff’s Commission provide evidence of problems that permeate the system. Having conducted these

twelve interviews with corrections administrators the number of issues discussed displayed the range of the system. Some focused on issues of the structure of the system as a whole, similar to the Sheriff's Commission study. Other's focused on smaller problems within their specific agency.

Problems that the state has proven exist in a number of correctional agencies need to be addressed more aggressively. We have seen that when an agency struggles to address one problem, it often snowballs into more problems throughout the agency. The Sheriff's Commission documented widespread problems in many agencies Human Resources policy. The commission recommended having the state Human Resources Division provide consultation to assist in this area. During the interviews it became apparent agencies are continuing in poor human resource practices. Best practices should not be an option for state agencies, but mandatory. This will limit the effect patronage has on staffing within agencies, as better hiring and promotional practices are instituted.

Few agency leaders have a sense of how costly staff turnover is and can be. Few administrators stated their agency recorded staff turnover statistics, or knew the real cost of turnover to the agency. Only one administrator stated his agency recorded turnover statistics. Considering it was reported as a problem within multiple agencies, it's surprising how little is done to address the issue. More research needs to be done to find out what the real cost of turnover is to the state. Research has shown organizational commitment and staffs sense of organizational justice are both major factors in corrections turnover rates. Programs and policies promoting organizational commitment should be explored. Using already available agency resources to create programs

can limit the costs. Instituting best practices in human resources should positively effect staff members sense of organizational justice.

A lack of transparency and accurate measures make it impossible to know how our corrections agencies are really doing. The administrators interviewed made it clear recidivism studies are often conducted in-house with bias. In 2008 Northeastern University conducted a recidivism study of the Billerica House of Correction, which is operated by the Middlesex Sheriff's Office. This is a rare case of a state corrections agency releasing statistics collected through an independent study. State agencies should take advantage of the many criminal justice researchers at universities throughout the state to conduct studies measuring the performance of implemented programs. State agencies should also look to the universities to provide analysis of management methods currently used. More research and analysis of our correctional agencies by independent reviewers can lead to positive changes needed in our corrections system.

An independent study of agency budgets should to be conducted to better distribute corrections funds. Programs outside the scope of corrections, conducted by corrections agencies should be analyzed to ensure they are necessary and do not overlap with a service already provided by state or municipal government. Why do we need to wait for a red flag? Having recently taken command of the Middlesex Sheriff's Office, Sheriff Peter Koutoujian (2012) released a report informing the public he was returning his office's Marine Unit to state surplus, a \$148,000 boat purchased in 2006. In the release Sheriff Koutoujian stated the boat was intended to provide mutual aid to communities along the water ways of Middlesex County, but was under utilized due to it being too big to fit on most county water ways. Annually government funds were utilized to train,



staff, and provide upkeep for the Marine Unit that Sheriff Koutoujian deemed unnecessary. Returning the boat may of been a show of fiscal responsibility. Or it may of reflected a “red flag” raised by the media while the agency was heavily scrutinized immediately following the Sheriff Dipaola scandal (Walsh, 2010). The question asked needs to be “How many similarly unnecessary programs are operated by state corrections agencies?” This may reveal line item funding that could be better used to fund the “have not” corrections agencies. The only way to really find out is an analysis of each line item in our agency budgets.

The state corrections system as a whole needs to be analyzed independently to search for areas of cost saving. During an interview an administrator stated he didn't understand why the fourteen agencies needed their own human resources and training divisions, stating these services among others could be consolidated. If areas of overlap can be identified, certain aspects of our corrections agencies can be regionalized, saving state funds. The research supports that because the population served differs throughout the state, Sheriff's should continue to have autonomy in most their operations. However, some autonomy may need to be sacrificed for the greater good of the system. Thorough, independent research conducted by corrections experts should be authorized as this may be a source of significant cost saving.

Most administrators stated something similar to “We know what reentry programs work.” The research conducted by the Pew Center makes a similar statement. Comprehensive reentry strategies, starting with a risk assessment and ending with a sound community supervision strategy gives agencies the best chance for success. During the interviews many lauded the work of the Hampden County Sheriff's Department for

investing in and implementing a comprehensive reentry strategy. Many other agencies in the state have failed to duplicate Hampden County's program for a number of reasons. A lack of funds, training, resources, and poor management were all reasons given for failing to implement a comprehensive reentry strategy. The state needs to insist all state agencies implement, and have the resources to implement successful, research driven reentry strategies. As so many stated, we know what works in reentry, now we need to do what works.

An administrator stated that corrections sways back and forth like a pendulum between punitive and rehabilitative strategies over time. In Massachusetts this statement is a reflection of a corrections strategy that is the result of our elected leader's political philosophy. In 1988 Governor Michael Dukakis made the state's furlough program famous during his presidential campaign. The furlough release of convicted murderer William Horton resulted in a subsequent rape conviction. From 2003 to 2007 Governor Mitt Romney took a "tough on crime" stance pushing for longer sentences for offenders. This approach may of been politically popular, but has historically resulted in severe prison overcrowding. For these governors corrections was a way to promote a political agenda. If Massachusetts is going to have success in the field it needs to cease the use of corrections as a vessel for political philosophy. Instead view it as a science. Utilize evidence based techniques in every aspect of the field. Times have changed, when Dukakis was in office it was still the consensus that "nothing works." Now because of the work of the academic community and think tanks like the National Institute of Corrections and the Pew Center we have a better understanding of what works. It's time to take advantage of the academic community in this state and start really measur-

ing our own performance. Massachusetts has the resources and has shown it is willing to spend what it takes to succeed in the field, but needs to change its approach if the system is ever going to reach its potential.

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## Appendix A: Informed Consent

### Consent Form for Participation in a Research Study

#### University of Massachusetts Boston

**Principal Investigator:** Richard Ferrari

**Study Title:** Challenges facing the Massachusetts Correctional System.

#### Introduction

You are invited to participate in a research study to examine the Massachusetts Correctional System. You are being asked to participate because you work in corrections.

#### Why is this study being done?

The purpose of this research study is to examine the variety of issues facing our correctional agencies. This study will contribute to our understanding of the system and analyze staff turnover, reentry, overcrowding, and budgetary issues in Massachusetts agencies.

#### What are the study procedures? What will I be asked to do?

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in an interview conducted by the principal investigator. The interview will ask you questions about inmate programs, classification, and staffing. The interview is expected to last for approximately 30 to 45 minutes.

#### What are the risks or inconveniences of this study?

The questions in this interview will give you a chance to reflect on your experience in Massachusetts corrections. Although you may not receive direct benefit from your participation, others may benefit from the aggregate knowledge obtained from this study.

#### Will I receive payment for participation? Are there costs to participate?

There are no costs to participate and you will not be paid to be in this study.

#### How will my personal information be protected?

The following procedures will be used to protect the confidentiality of your data. The researcher will keep all study records (including any codes to your data) locked in a secure location. Research records will be labeled with a code. A master key that links names and codes will be maintained in a separate and secure location. The master key and audio-tapes will be destroyed 5 years after the completion of this study. All electronic files (e.g., database, interview transcripts, etc.) will be housed on a computer and/or external storage device with password protection to prevent access by unauthorized users. Any hardcopy

transcripts will be kept in a locked file separate from the master key. Only the principal investigator will have access to the passwords. Data that will be shared with others will be coded as described above to help protect your identity. The audio recordings will be transcribed by a professional transcriptionist who will sign a confidentiality form and who will destroy the recordings and transcripts when completed. At the conclusion of this study, the researchers may publish their findings. Neither you nor your agency will be identified in any publications or presentations.

Can I stop being in the study and what are my rights?

You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to. If you agree to be in the study, but later change your mind, you may drop out at any time. There are no penalties or consequences of any kind if you decide that you do not want to participate. You do not have to answer any question that you do not want to answer. You will be notified of all significant new findings during the course of the study that may affect your willingness to continue.

Who do I contact if I have questions about the study?

Take as long as you like before you make a decision. We would be happy to answer any question you have about the study. If you have further questions about this project or if you have a research-related problem, you may contact the principal investigator, Richard Ferrari at richard.ferrari001@umb.edu or (617)-953-1077. If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact the University of Massachusetts Boston Institutional Review Board at (617) 287-5374 or at [human.subjects@umb.edu](mailto:human.subjects@umb.edu). The IRB is a group of people who review research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research participants.

**Documentation of Consent:**

I have read this form and decided that I will participate in the project described above. Its general purposes, the particulars of involvement and possible hazards and inconveniences have been explained to my satisfaction. I understand that I can withdraw at any time. My signature also indicates that I have received a copy of this consent form.

\_\_\_\_\_ I consent to having my interview audiotaped.

\_\_\_\_\_ I DO NOT consent to having my interview audiotaped.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Person

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date:

## **Appendix B Interview Questions**

1. Is a risk assessment conducted upon an inmate's arrival that determines the individual's classification? If yes, what factors into the risk assessment?
2. Does your facility meet the security and treatment needs of its population? Are offenders typically being placed upon arrival in housing/programs that fit a need or are they placed where there is an open bed?
3. In what ways does your agency work with other Correctional agencies?
4. How does your agency implement community supervision techniques?
5. The current Massachusetts recidivism rate is above the national average. What does your facility/department do correctly in reducing recidivism? What could be done better?
6. Does your agency receive proper funding to meet demands?
7. How has your agency solved overcrowding problems in the past and what are the future plans?
- 7B. If your agency was forced to reduce it's population to 135% of capacity, could this be accomplished?
- 7C. Does your agency assist other state agencies in efforts to reduce severe overcrowding?
8. How do you feel the needs of your population differ from the neighboring agencies?
9. In what ways are statistics used in your agency to measure performance?
10. Is staff turnover a problem for your agency?
  - 10b. If yes, what are the reasons for the high rate of turnover?
  - 10c. If yes, has anything been done to alleviate the stress staff turnover places on the department?
  - 10d. Are staff members leaving for other correctional organizations within the state?
11. Are there controls within your agency to ensure ethical standards are met?
12. In what ways is patronage a factor in staff hiring, discipline, and promotions?
13. Is there anything else you would like to add that you feel could contribute to the study?



## Appendix C: Funding, Overcrowding, and Staffing Statistics

	Budget	Inmates Housed Sheriff's 8/11	\$ per an inmate	Full time Employees Approved FY 14	Inmates per an employee
<b>DOC</b>	\$433376155.00	11127	\$38948.16	5209	2.14
<b>Barnstable</b>	\$24722789.00	477	\$51829.75	337	1.42
<b>Berkshire</b>	\$15650082.00	275	\$56909.39	218	1.26
<b>Bristol</b>	\$40070823.00	1397	\$28683.48	572	2.44
<b>Dukes</b>	\$2695815.00	19	\$141885.00	48	0.40
<b>Essex</b>	\$49132977.00	1576	\$31175.75	541	2.91
<b>Franklin</b>	\$12664962.00	222	\$57049.38	172	1.29
<b>Hampden</b>	\$70793801.00	1564	\$45264.58	857	1.82
<b>Hampshire</b>	\$13242234.00	272	\$48684.68	166	1.64
<b>Middlesex</b>	\$63968484.00	1148	\$55721.68	680	1.69
<b>Norfolk</b>	\$30533140.00	748	\$40819.71	302	2.48
<b>Plymouth</b>	\$50111302.00	1384	\$36207.59	581	2.38
<b>Suffolk</b>	\$103594154.00	2459	\$42128.57	970	2.54
<b>Worcester</b>	\$41484943.00	1208	\$34341.84	482	2.51
<b>Nantucket</b>	\$755173.00	0	N/A	3	0.00
<b>MSA</b>	\$351686.00	0	N/A	3	0.00
<b>Sheriff Total</b>	\$519772365.00	12749	\$40769.66	5932	2.15
<b>Total</b>	\$953148520.00	23876	\$39920.78	11141	2.14