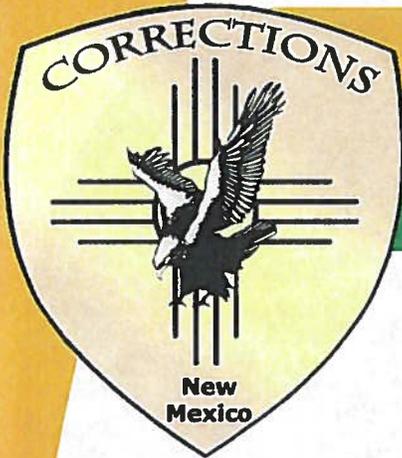


# New Mexico Corrections Department



## Factors and Cost in Recidivism Reduction and Prison Operations

### Current Recidivism and Prison Cost Facts

The New Mexico Corrections Department houses approximately 7,000 inmates in 11 prison facilities throughout the state. Currently, the recidivism rate for those returning to prison after three years is hovering around 46%. The average inmate in NMCD's custody costs taxpayers about \$104 a day. If that inmate is in a medical unit the cost increases to about \$125 a day.

The average New Mexico Corrections inmate has less than a high school education and has served time previously.

**We commit to the safety  
and well-being of the  
people of New Mexico  
by doing the right thing,  
always.**

Currently, NMCD is in the process of implementing new programming to reduce recidivism and drive down prison associated costs. One example includes moving inactive gang inmates into a general population to fix wheelchairs or broken bicycles. This program gives inmates a skill, changes hearts and reduces the cost to house such inmates.

Other opportunities like *Dress for Success* and *Offender Hobby Craft* prepare offenders for the real world by outfitting them with professional clothing, hosting mock interviews, creating a small business plan and increasing their likelihood to be employed upon release.

**Prison Operation Cost**

- Infrastructure and maintenance
- Aging inmate population
- Disbursed prison facilities
- Increasing inmate population

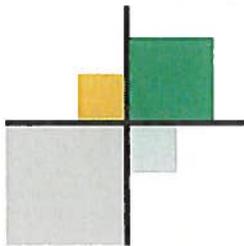
**Recidivism Factors**

- Lack of evidence-based programming
  - Educational
  - Employment
  - Social
- Inmate work and life skill assessments
- Family connections
- Post-incarceration job placement

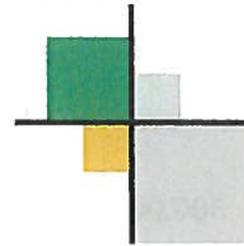
**Overlapping Drivers**

- Lack of community resources and halfway homes
- Unapproved Parole Plans
- Lack of staff and pay issues
  - Both in correctional staff overtime costs and lack of educational and programming staff
- Mental health treatment, chronic care and medications
  - Both in cost to supply and the ability for offenders to receive medication once released

## Top Identified Factors



- Lack of Evidence-Based Programming
  - Inmate Assessments
- Post-incarceration Job Placement
  - Family Connections
  - Aging Inmate Population

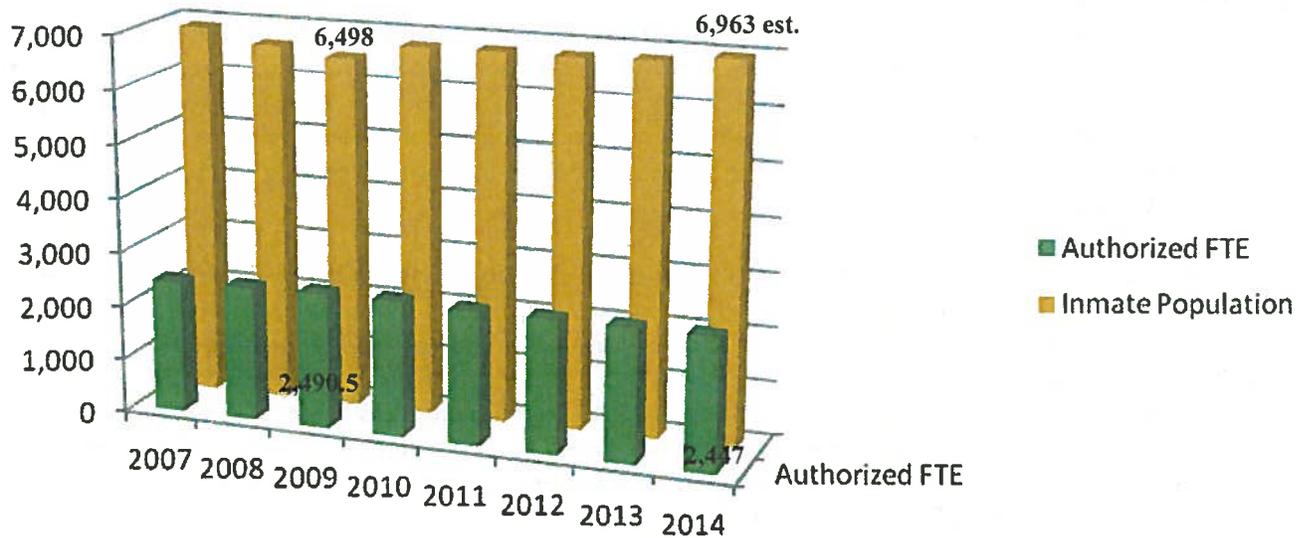
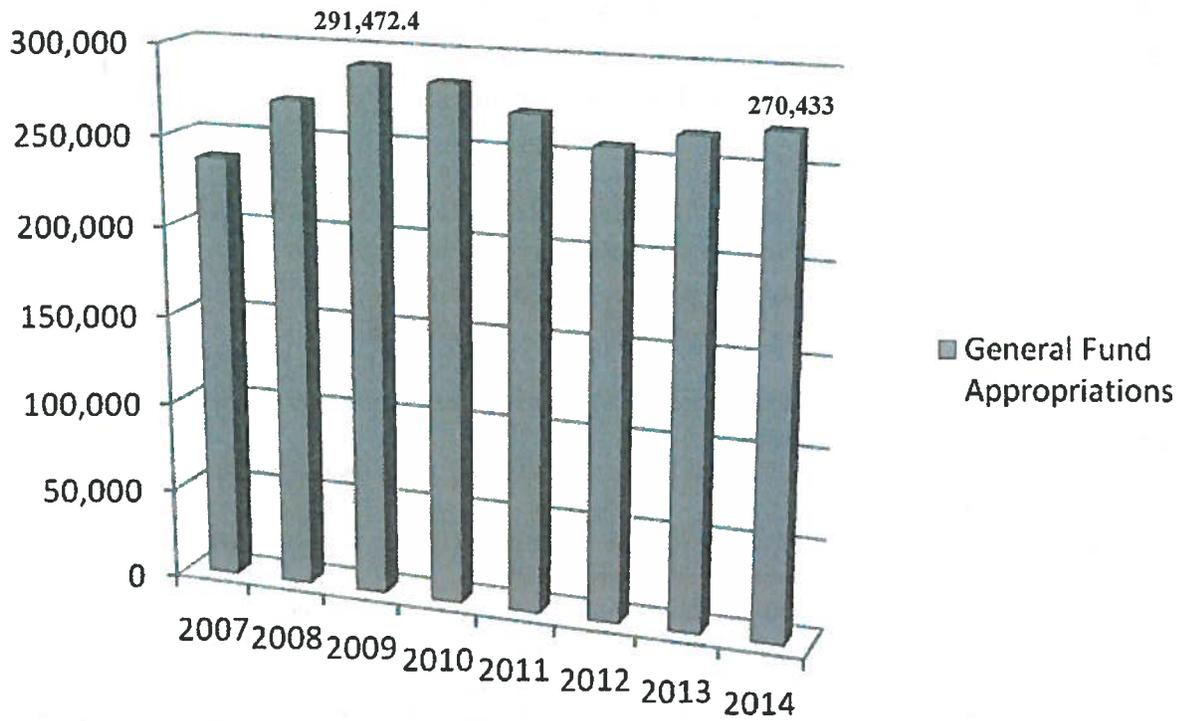


## Action Plan

- **Lack of Programming**
  - NMCD is currently adding evidence-based and innovative programming to facilities across the state. Some of these new programs include:
    - Cowboy Up—Veterans will rehabilitate abused and abandoned horses seized by the Livestock Board.
    - Joni and Friends, Wheels for the World—non-active gang members will refurbish broken wheelchairs that will be sent to third world countries.
    - Bakery—Springer Correctional Center will be expanding their culinary program.
    - Greenhouses—Western and Central New Mexico Correctional Facilities will have greenhouses where inmates will grow fresh fruits and vegetables.
    - Inmate Hobby Craft—Inmates will be able to make unique pieces to sell to the public with a portion of the funds going back to victims organizations, inmate programming and the offender's family.
    - Old Main Revitalization—using the old prison to create new offender programming.
- **Inmate Assessments**
  - Inmates previously were assessed for their job skills and placement options 180 days before release. Now inmates are assessed when they arrive at the prison. This allows us to place the offender in meaningful programs to enhance the offenders job and social skills. It also enables the offender to take part in more educational programming suited to his or her needs. We are now reassessing the offender every 90 days until release to make sure the inmate is receiving the program he was assessed for.
- **Post-Incarceration Job Placement**
  - Some of our new programming will work with outside contractors who have the ability to offer the offender a job when he or she leaves prison. These outside business groups could also offer a letter of recommendation or connection to another business in the community looking to hire.
- **Family Connections**
  - Programs like our Hobby Craft initiative will require the inmate to identify someone in their family to send a portion of their proceeds to. Changes to the family visiting criteria will also focus on offenders making connections with family through letters and phone calls, and keeping those connections during the period of their incarceration.
- **Aging Inmate Population**
  - We are looking at implementing a hospice program where offenders would take care of the aging population and reduce costs. We are also looking at creative placement and Medicare <sup>and</sup> funding.

Since Fiscal Year 2009, the NMCD general fund appropriation has decreased \$20.9 million and authorized FTE has decreased by 43.5. Yet, the inmate population has increased by 465. Reduction in general fund appropriations translates into a reduction of programs made available to inmates while in prison and to offenders when released into the community.

## General Fund Appropriations





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