

A 21st Century Workforce for America's Correctional Profession

**Part One of a Three-Part Study Commissioned by
The American Correctional Association**

and produced by

**Workforce Associates, Inc.
Indianapolis, IN**

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Preface and Acknowledgements

It has been 35 years since the last comprehensive report was written on the state of the correctional workforce. In 1969, the findings of the Joint Commission on Correctional Manpower and Training (JCCMT) were released in several reports that profiled the correctional workforce and described how the public views corrections as a profession.

In many respects, the report was a pioneering effort that identified for correctional professionals and the public the critical human resource needs of correctional facilities and programs, including, but not limited to, a better public image, better staff development and training, and the need for higher education to develop programs and courses that would appeal to people working in corrections.

As the number of people incarcerated in detention and correctional facilities increased in the 1980s and 1990s, so did the number of correctional employees. Corrections was seen as a "growth industry" and by the mid-1990s, many local elected officials lobbied to have their communities selected as the site for the next prison.

By the close of the 20th Century, some states were reporting unemployment rates below 3%, but some workforce experts and futurists were sounding an alarm of a pending crisis in the U.S. workforce. Critical shortages were beginning to be seen on the "radar screen" in nursing, construction trades, information management, and teaching. The baby boomer generation was beginning to retire and the number of workers with some college education began leveling off. The stage had been set for a critical shortage of skilled workers in numerous occupations in this country.

In 2000, the National Institute of Corrections published a study of seventeen small, medium, and large jails titled *Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention: Current Practices in U.S. Jails*. That report described the promising practices in selected adult detention centers that addressed recruitment materials, screening tests, policies, and helpful websites. While the report focused on jails, the lessons learned could be easily applied to other branches of corrections.

With the arrival of the new millennium, the economy began to cool down, and the workforce crisis slowed. A further downturn in the economy, following the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States, tended to move the workforce issue to a back burner. But the trends that drive the workforce could not be reversed. In addition, the War on Terrorism brought about a significant increase in the number of security jobs in the country. Law enforcement, airport security, and emergency response jobs were being created in large numbers. Public safety agencies were drawing from the same workforce pool that corrections used. Fewer qualified, skilled workers and a greater demand for people who want to work in public safety were quickly becoming a critical problem for corrections.

In 2002, the American Correctional Association proposed to the Bureau of Justice Assistance that the Association undertake the task of developing a strategic plan for the corrections workforce. Director Richard Nedlekoff stressed that this effort had to be more than just another study of what we already know. There had to be specific strategies that correctional agencies could implement to be more successful in recruiting and retaining a qualified corrections workforce.

In January of 2003, the American Correctional Association announced that it had received a grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance to develop a workforce plan. The project, titled "Building a Strategic Workforce Plan for the Corrections Profession," provided funds for ACA to assess the correctional workforce challenges across the United States, identify promising practices, and develop strategies that federal, state, and local correctional agencies can use to strengthen their recruitment approaches, reduce turnover, and retain qualified correctional staff. ACA retained three internationally known experts in the workforce and strategic planning fields to assist in this project. They were Dr. Richard Judy and Dr. Jane Lommel of Workforce Associates, and Edward Barlow, Jr., President of Creating the Future, Inc. The primary focus of the project was on the correctional officer and juvenile careworker classifications, although the plan is applicable to all correctional positions.

This was a three phase project. The first phase was the Discovery Phase. The objective of this phase was to describe the current correctional workforce and to assess the difficulty correctional agencies are experiencing in recruiting and retaining correctional employees, especially correctional officers and juvenile careworkers.

The second phase was the Create Phase. The objective of this phase was to identify successful practices that were being used by public and private organizations in and outside of the corrections field.

The third phase was the Implementation Phase. The objective of this phase was to develop tools correctional agencies could use to enhance their recruitment and retention practices.

This document is a report summarizing the Discovery Phase of the extensive project entitled "Building a Strategic Workforce Plan for the Corrections Profession."

As previously mentioned, this project was supported financially by a generous grant from the United States Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance.

While this report endeavored to mobilize as much existing information that was relevant to its purpose, it was precluded by the terms of the grant from engaging in original research, and its authors make no pretense that they have done so.

The Discovery Phase of this project has been conducted by ACA Project, Workforce Associates, Inc., 6330 Lands End, Indianapolis, IN 46220.

The American Correctional Association wishes to express its deepest gratitude to Richard R. Nedlekoff, Richard Sutton, Ph.D., A. Elizabeth Griffith, and Thomas Carter. These individuals understood the challenges that are ahead for the corrections workforce and shared the vision of a strategic plan that would provide correctional leaders the tools necessary to meet the workforce challenge head on. To these individuals and their colleagues in the U. S. Department of Justice we give our thanks and praise.

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Executive Summary

Phase One - Discovery

Questions, Questions, Questions

This study asks ten basic questions:

1. How will the requirements for corrections staff, and especially correctional officers, increase in the remaining years of this decade?
2. What difficulties do corrections institutions face in recruiting and retaining corrections personnel, especially correctional officers?
3. How do these difficulties vary among the states?
4. Why do some states appear to succeed better than others in recruiting and retaining corrections officers?
5. What are the root causes of these difficulties and differences?
6. What is the current demographic composition of America's corps of corrections officers?
7. From which demographic or workforce pools do the nation's correctional institutions tend to recruit corrections officers?
8. What does the future hold in store for the demographic pools from which corrections officers have been recruited in recent years?

9. How well aligned are the recruitment practices of the states with the emerging demographic realities in those states?

10. What "best" or "promising" practices can be identified among the various states as well as the Federal Bureau of Prisons that appear to enhance institutions' recruiting and retention success?

Basic Findings

- America's inmate population has grown greatly in recent decades.
- And so has the number of corrections employees. Their numbers expanded by 150% between 1982 and 1999, i.e., from 300,000 to more than 750,000. Most of this growth has been at the state level. About half of that growth is due to growing numbers of corrections officers.

There is great variation among the states with respect to:

- The number of corrections officers per 10,000 population. The number varied in 1999 from 8.4 in West Virginia to 54.5 in the District of Columbia.
- The number of inmates per corrections officer. The variation in 2000 was from 2.6 in the District of Columbia to 10.8 in Alabama.
- Turnover rates among corrections officers. The range in 2000 was from 3.8% in New York to 41% in Louisiana.
- Hiring rates (defined as the number of corrections officers hired as a percent of those on staff). That rate varied in 2000 from 5% in New York to 73% in Delaware.
- The reasons why corrections officers depart, i.e., the proportions due to resignations, retirements, and incomplete probations differ greatly among the states.
- Pay. Entry level pay for corrections officers in adult facilities in 2001 varied from \$15,943 in New Mexico to \$36,850 in New Jersey.

- High turnover rates generate pressures for constant recruitment to replace officers who have departed. System growth, due to growing inmate populations, compounds the recruitment problem.
- In the ACA 2003 Survey conducted as part of this project, most respondents in both adult and juvenile institutions reported difficulties in both recruitment and retention.

There is a problem: Many, probably most, correctional systems around the nation face serious difficulties in recruiting and retaining an adequate staff of properly qualified corrections officers. Discussions with corrections officials as well as a review of many states' corrections websites and other literature confirm that point. For various reasons, some states experience this problem more acutely than others.

- Inadequate pay for corrections officers, compared to law enforcement personnel and others recruited from the same workforce pool, is broadly blamed for the difficulties of both recruiting and retention. Poor pay was the cause most frequently cited by respondents to the ACA 2003 Survey with respect to recruiting difficulty and the second most frequently mentioned relative to retention. The same reason was often cited elsewhere as well.
- Higher pay is associated with lower turnover rates. Statistically, we find that differences in salary levels are about 50% correlated with differences in corrections officer turnover rates among the states.
- Other frequently cited causes of recruiting difficulties include burdensome hours and shift work, a shortage of qualified applicants, and the undesirable location of some corrections facilities.
- High rates of turnover among corrections officers is seen to result mainly from demanding hours and shift work, inadequate compensation, stress and burnout, wrong initial selection of candidates, compe-

tition from other law enforcement and security agencies, poor career prospects, and poorly qualified supervisors.

- High turnover rates go with tight labor markets. National statistics show that high turnover rates among corrections officers are strongly but negatively correlated with low unemployment rates.
- The consequences of difficult recruitment and retention are serious; many are mutually reinforcing. They include high replacement costs (i.e., the costs of hiring and training new staff), greater stress and burnout among officers working in understaffed conditions, more expensive overtime, shift work, inadequate and/or inexperienced staff, diminished security within facilities, and lower morale.

A survey of the demographics of America's corrections officers produced the following findings:

- They are mainly male.
- They are mainly white, non-Hispanic.
- There is considerable variation among the states with respect to both gender and ethnicity. Some states are much more diverse than others. Nationally, there appears to be a slow trend toward greater gender and ethnic diversity.
- They are mainly aged 25 to 44.
- They are moderately well educated. Approximately half have not pursued formal education beyond the high school level.
- There is a tendency for states that employ a relatively large proportion of females and minorities among their corrections officers to pay less well than other states.
- Efforts to achieve greater gender and ethnic diversity generally appears not to be happening in states that pay relatively well.

Looking ahead at the future demand for corrections officers, we find the following:

- The total number of corrections officer jobs to be filled in this decade will be very large, estimated at 490,000 in total.
- That number includes both the new jobs required by the growth in the prison population and the replacement of officers who leave the service after completion of their probationary periods.
- It seems likely that the annual number of corrections jobs to be filled in this decade will be substantially below that of the 1990s.
- The War on Terrorism dramatically alters the demand for security and law enforcement workers. It is not clear that this increased demand has been fully taken into account in the most recent Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) occupational projections.
- Demand will be brisk in other occupations where workers share the same characteristics as corrections officers.
- The economic slowdown of 2001–2003 temporarily obscured the growth in demand for civilian sector workers that will become apparent as the economy recovers in 2004 and beyond.
- The demand for corrections officers and occupations that compete in the same workforce pool will grow rapidly in the years ahead.

From a survey of the demographics of workforce supply for America's corrections institutions, several key points emerge:

- The nation's pool of 25-44 year olds is shrinking. The Census Bureau projects it to decline by over 4 million in this decade.
- White non-Hispanics are the most rapidly shrinking demographic pool. The Census Bureau projects a drop of over 7 million between 2000 and 2010.

- Hispanics are the most significantly growing demographic group followed by Asians.
- This is equivalent to saying that the workforce pool from which many, although not all, states continually endeavor to recruit most of their corrections officers is declining.
- Despite nationwide movements toward diversity in recent decades, this diminishing workforce pool is the same one that many employers continue to favor in their recruitment practices.
- Some states have aligned their corrections recruitment practices with the emerging demographic realities much more than others.
- Those states that attempt to recruit from a familiar male, white, Non-Hispanic workforce pool, which face sharp declines in the years ahead, will confront some difficult challenges.
- These states will either need to realign their recruiting practices with demographic realities or they will need to make corrections a much more attractive employment option . . . or both.

Phase Two – Create

The Bureau of Justice Assistance stressed the importance of having deliverables in this grant beyond a report that would tell corrections professionals what they already knew, that there will be a severe shortage of qualified workers in the corrections profession in the years ahead.

When the grant was awarded, ACA immediately created two new committees to assist in developing the strategic plan. The Correctional Workforce Project Steering Committee was appointed to represent the stakeholders and associations that would be facing the workforce challenge. Those serving included adult and juvenile correctional administrators, wardens, facility administrators, labor leaders, university professors, employment professionals, and representatives from various associations. The purpose of this

group is to help identify successful approaches as well as challenges and barriers to the successful implementation of the project.

The second committee was the Human Resources Committee. This committee brings together the human resources administrators and managers in public and private correctional agencies. The purpose of this committee also is to identify successful practices that are being used to recruit and retain employees in correctional facilities. This committee is also expected to provide a profile of current human resource challenges that are being faced by correctional agencies across the country.

At the 133rd Congress of Correction in Nashville, Tennessee, the consultants and chairs of the Steering Committee and Human Resources Committee organized and presented more than 10 workshops on the ACA Workforce Project and on human resource issues confronting corrections. The workshops were very well attended.

Six more workshops were presented at the ACA Winter Conference in New Orleans in January of 2004 and at the 134th Congress of Correction in Chicago.

In a year and a half, nearly 20 workshops had been presented that addressed the challenges of recruiting and retaining a qualified and diverse workforce and presented successful practices that have been implemented in correctional agencies to overcome the challenges. Following every conference, committee members and consultants carefully reviewed the feedback from participants and identified successful strategies that participants had noted. Additional subject matter for future workshops was also provided by the conference participants. This information was compiled in a

notebook format that was shared with the committee members, ACA staff, and consultants.

Over the two years of the project, several workshops were given at various state and regional correctional conferences on the project.

Phase Three – Implement

With the information provided in the Discovery Phase and input from the field through the workshops and committees' discussions, the consultants and the committees have been able to initiate specific targeted strategies. The most significant has been the publication of the August 2004 issue of *Corrections Today*, ACA's award-winning journal of corrections, that was focused on the correctional workforce. For the first time in ACA's 134-year history, twelve articles from experienced individuals in and out of corrections focused on various aspects of the corrections workforce. It is estimated that *Corrections Today* has a readership of over 60,000.

In addition, the Human Resources Committee has created an on-line newsletter directed to human resources professionals in correctional agencies and facilities. *InfoLink* is provided at no cost to anyone wishing to receive the document electronically. In some cases, hard copies have been provided.

These resources have provided valuable information to correctional agencies on successful practices in the recruitment and retention of qualified correctional workers.

When the final report is delivered to the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Discovery Phase Report will be available to the field on the ACA website.

The Implement Phase continues through the ACA's leadership and through the efforts of the Steering Committee and the Human Resources Committee.

What Next?

As with any challenging project, the deeper one drills down, the more one finds that needs to be done. Additional priorities include:

- ✦ The establishment of a clearing house to gather real time information on the correctional workforce. Corrections cannot wait another 35 years to call attention to the importance of finding and keeping a qualified and diverse workforce. Changing demographic trends alone necessitate that one organization be charged with the responsibility of collecting and analyzing information from the Department of Labor and juvenile and adult correctional agencies across the nation.
- ✦ Further work is needed in focusing on specific positions in correctional facilities. Health care workers, teachers and counselors are in great demand in the free society. How much more will the demand be in correctional facilities?
- ✦ Identifying specific, successful, strategies focused on the recruitment and retention of women and minorities and on correctional leadership development was barely touched on in this project. Much more needs to be done.
- ✦ ACA is considering a special section on the Association's website for workforce issues.

The ACA Professional Development Department is studying the feasibility of a specialized correctional professional certification for human resources administrators, managers, and supervisors.

In Closing . . .

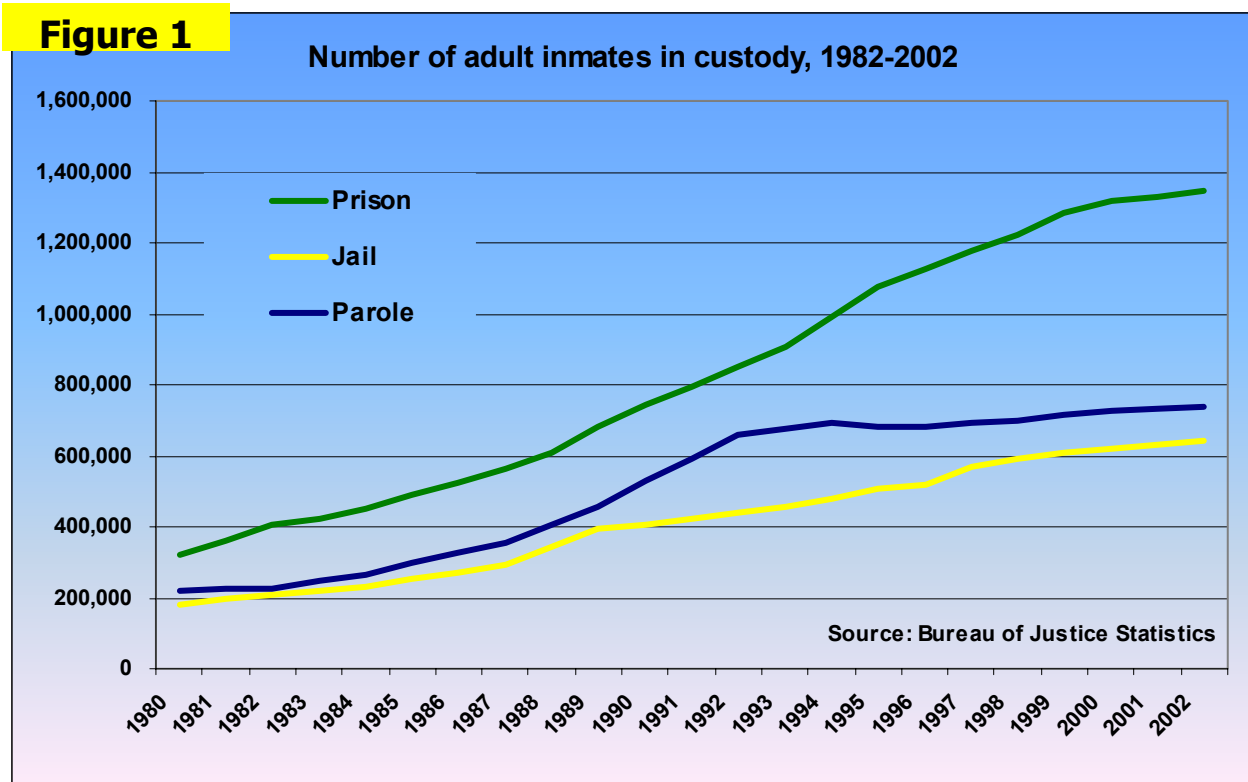
The American Correctional Association wishes to extend its deepest appreciation to the Bureau of Justice Assistance for its generous support of this project and for sharing the vision of the importance of the correctional workforce in the years ahead.

Section I: Growth of the Corrections System; Problems of Recruiting and Retaining Corrections Officers

America's corrections population is growing.

From 1982 to 2002, the number of adults incarcerated in the nation's jails and prisons more than tripled (Figure 1). Over those two decades, numbers rose from fewer than 650,000 to more than 2 million. The number of paroled adults also tripled, from fewer than 250,000 in 1982 to more than 750,000 in 2002. Meanwhile, the number of adults on probation rose from 1.4 million to nearly 4 million. In total, the number of adults in America's correctional system jumped from 2.2 million in 1982 to 6.7 million over the span of merely two decades.

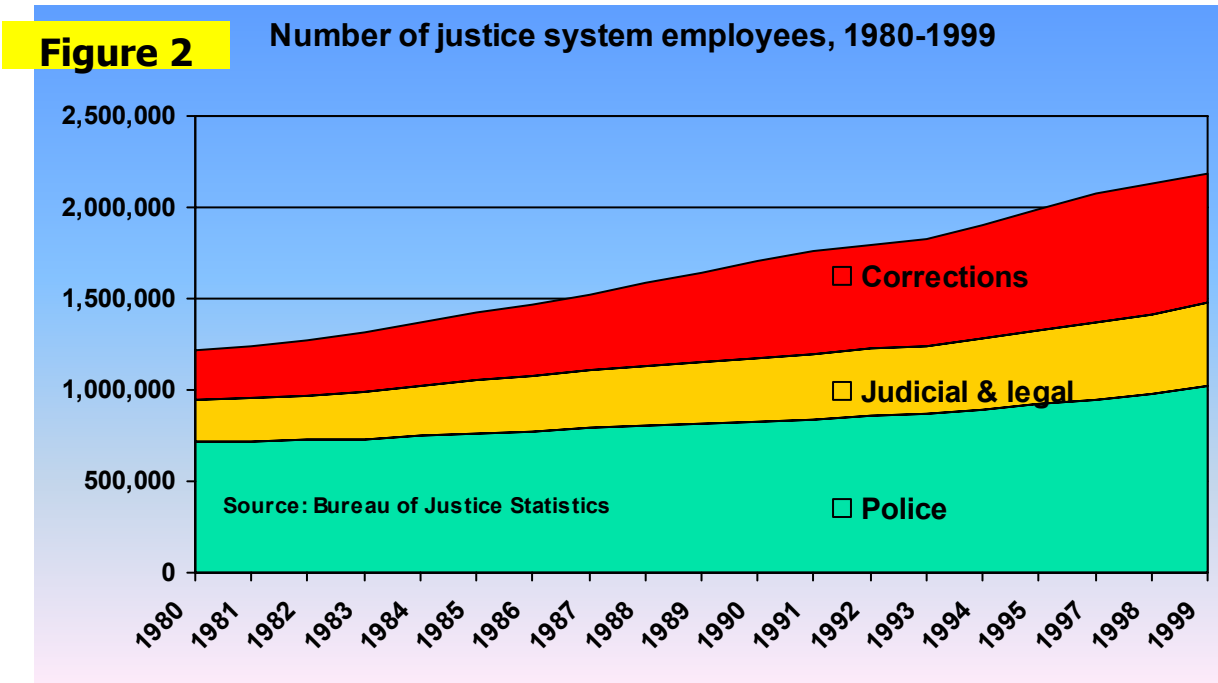
Data on juvenile incarceration are much less complete than those on adults. The latest data available appear to be those in the document *Juve-*



venile Offenders and Victims: 1999 National Report; wherein it was reported that about 109,000 juvenile offenders were being held in "residential placement facilities." That number was up about 75% from the 1983 level.¹

And so is the number of justice system employees.

With arrest numbers and the inmate population up so dramatically over the past several decades, an accompanying rise in the number of persons working in the nation's justice system was to be expected. From 1982 to 1999, police numbers increased by 41% and judicial and legal personnel by 84% (Figure 2). Meanwhile, the number of correction system employees increased from slightly fewer than 300,000 in 1982 to considerably more than 750,000 in 1999. While 140% growth represents a very significant increase, it is far less than the near-tripling of the inmate population. The inmate-to-corrections employee ratio has obviously been on the rise.



¹ Sickmund, Melissa, Snyder, Howard N., and Poe-Yamagata, Eileen. (1997). *Juvenile offenders and victims: 1997 update on violence*. Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/juvoff/contents.html>; Sickmund, M., Snyder, H., and Poe-Yamagata, E. *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence. OJJDP Statistical Briefing Book*. Online. Available: <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/ojstatbb/html/qa215.html>. 30 September 1999. The 1983 data are not strictly compatible with those of 1999 but we believe that they are sufficiently comparable to warrant the growth rate indicated in the text here.

Most corrections job growth has come at the state level.

State correctional institutions (including both adult and juvenile institutions) employed just under 164,000 persons in 1980 (Figure 3). Nineteen years later, in 1999, that number had swollen to nearly 457,000—an increase of about 180%. In 1980, state institutions accounted for 61% of all corrections jobs; by 1999, that share had expanded to 64%.

Employment in local jails and prisons at the county and municipal levels also grew rapidly (by 134%) in the last two decades of the 20th Century. By 1999, 32% of all corrections jobs were at the local level.

Federal corrections jobs, although far fewer in number than those at the state and local levels, nevertheless grew at a faster rate (221%). Even so, however, federal corrections jobholders numbered fewer than 31,000 and comprised only 4% of all corrections jobs in 1999.

Figure 3

Total employment, adult & juvenile correctional institutions, 1980-1999, by level of government

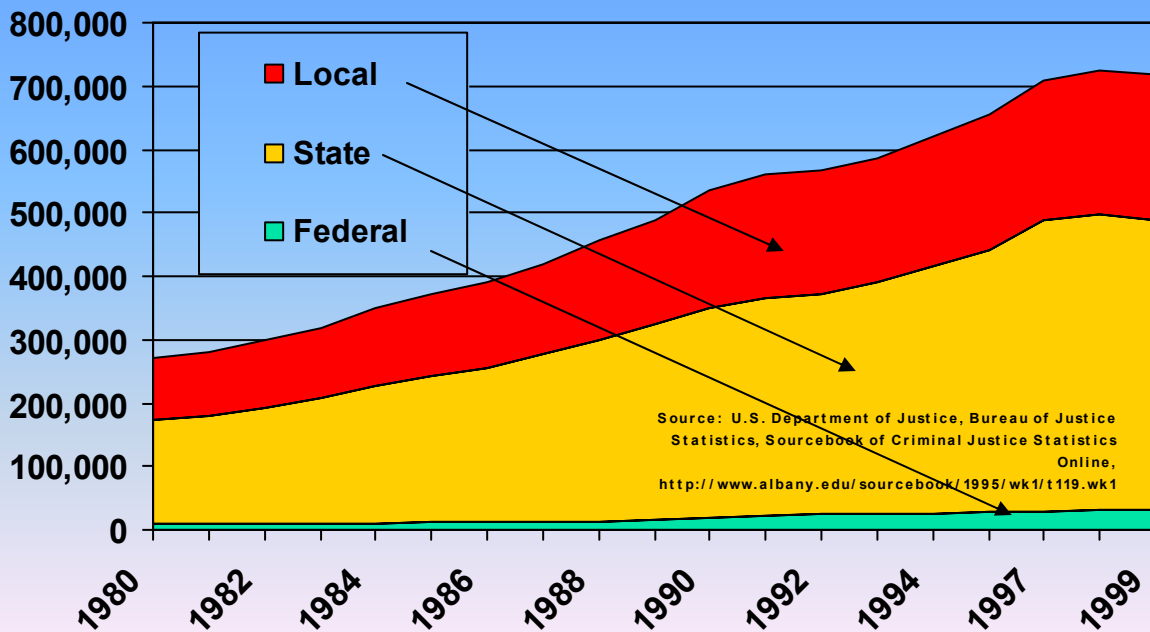
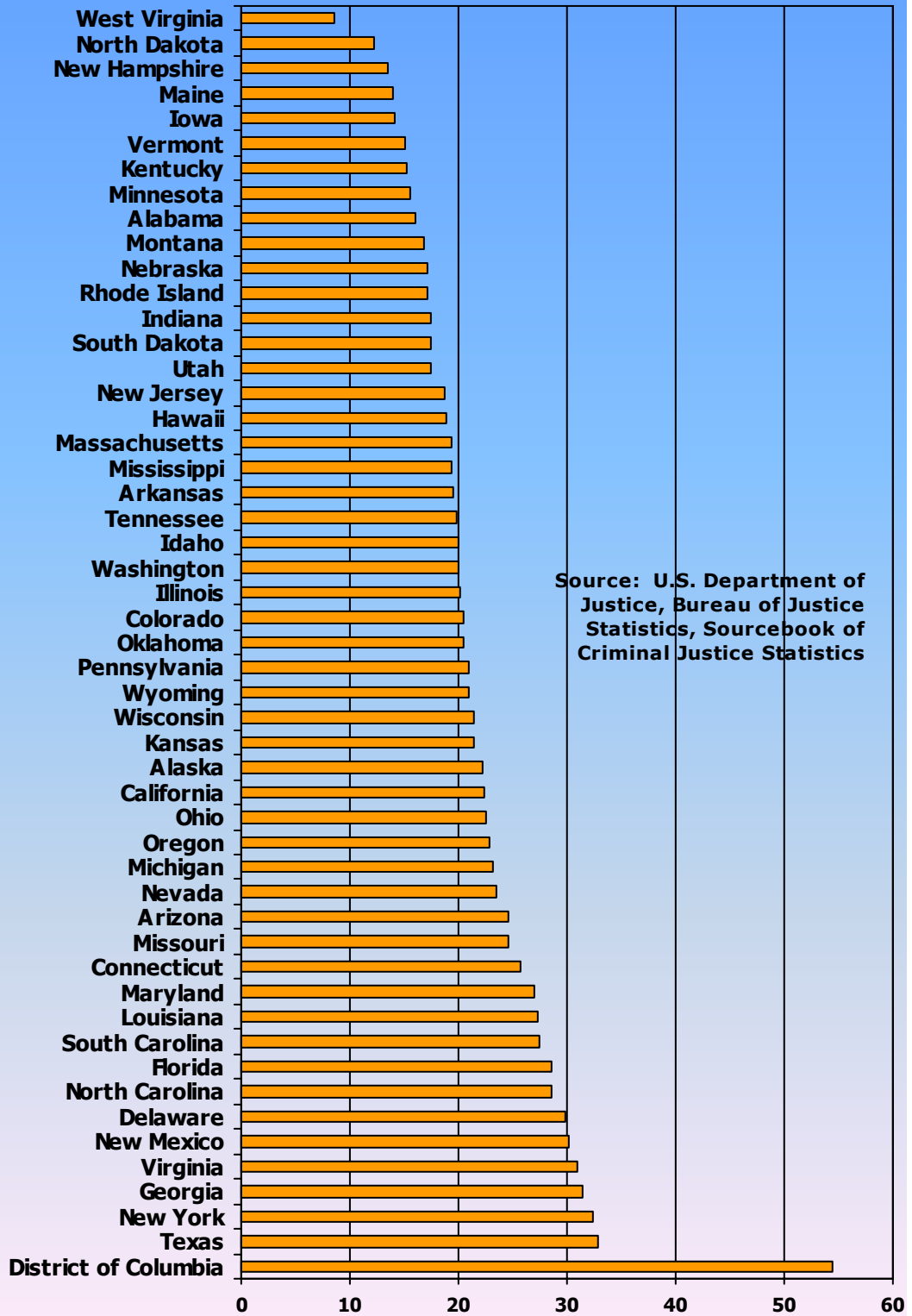


Figure 4

**Corrections jobs per 10,000 population,
by state, 1999**



Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics

The prevalence of correctional jobs varies greatly among the states.

The number of persons employed per 10,000 population in *adult* corrections institutions varies greatly among the states for which we have such data (Figure 4). West Virginia stands at the low end of the distribution with only 8.5 corrections personnel per 10,000 population. Sixteen states are in the range between 10 and 20, and eleven are between 20 and 30. Only five states (NM, VA, GA NY and TX) fall between 30 and 40 corrections personnel per 10,000 population. The District of Columbia, with 54.4 per 10,000, is in a category all its own.

The number of adult inmates per corrections officer varies greatly.

States staff their adult corrections institutions very differently (Table 1). Some states operate with a high ratio of inmates to corrections officers. In Alabama, for example, the average in 2001 was 10.8 inmates for every corrections officer. Other states maintain a very low ratio of inmates to corrections officers.

In the District of Columbia, at the other end of the spectrum, there was an average of only 2.6 inmates for every corrections officer. That very low ratio obviously is linked to the District's high ratio of corrections

Table 1

<i>Number of Inmates per Corrections Officer in Adult Corrections Institutions, by State, January 1, 2001</i>					
DC	2.6	AZ	4.5	KS	6.0
VT	3.2	MS	4.6	MD	6.0
NY	3.4	MT	4.7	NV	6.1
MA	3.6	ND	4.7	FL	6.3
NH	3.6	IA	4.9	ID	6.4
HI	3.7	NM	4.9	KY	6.4
LA	3.7	PA	4.9	CO	6.5
NC	3.7	WY	4.9	DE	6.5
RI	3.8	GA	5.1	OR	6.7
ME	3.9	MI	5.1	OK	7.7
MN	3.9	OH	5.3	CA	7.8
AK	4.1	IN	5.5	SD	8.1
NJ	4.1	WA	5.5	UT	8.2
WI	4.1	TX	5.7	SC	8.4
WV	4.2	IL	5.9	TN	8.5
CT	4.3	MO	5.9	NE	8.9
VA	4.4	AR	6.0	AL	10.8

Source: Corrections Yearbook, 2001

¹ Although inmate-to-officer ratios are presumably much higher, it seems likely that a similar inter-state variance exists with respect to juvenile corrections institutions as well. Unfortunately, the data that would substantiate either of these propositions are not available.

officers per 10,000 population. The other 49 states fell between these two extremes.

Some states hire at much higher rates than others.

On average in 2000, the number of new corrections officers hired by adult correctional institutions was about 20% of the total number on staff as of January 1st, 2001 (Table 2). At the Federal Bureau of Prisons, the corresponding figure was 18%.

Some states hired much more intensively than others. Delaware's adult corrections institutions, for example, hired nearly three new corrections officers for every one currently on staff. Wyoming and Arkansas were not far behind. At the other extreme, New York hired only one new officer for every 20 now on staff.

Table 2

*Number of Corrections Officers Hired by Adult Correctional Institutions in 2000 as a Percent of Those on Staff, January 1, 2001, by State and FBP**

NY	5.0%	MI	14%	VT	28%
RI	7.1%	OH	15%	NV	29%
MA	7.6%	IA	15%	SC	30%
CT	7.9%	Federal	18%	NH	32%
AK	8.1%	OR	20%	NE	32%
IL	8.5%	NM	20%	MS	33%
MD	9.0%	FL	21%	SD	33%
AL	10.0%	UT	22%	KS	34%
NJ	10.7%	TN	25%	MO	34%
WA	11.5%	GA	25%	AZ	34%
OK	11.6%	MT	26%	LA	35%
PA	12.4%	TX	26%	CO	37%
ME	12.4%	IN	27%	KY	37%
MN	13.2%	ID	28%	AR	52%
HI	13.3%	NC	28%	WY	64%
VA	13.8%	ND	28%	DE	73%

Source: *Corrections Yearbook, 2001*
 * FBP - Federal Bureau of Prisons

Why so much difference in hiring rates among the states?

Despite some difficulties with the data, certain patterns emerge quite clearly.¹ Two factors appear to explain why some states hire proportionately so many more correctional officers in their adult correctional institutions than others.

- Corrections system growth occurs unevenly with some states growing more rapidly than others, new facilities opening, etc.

¹ Some differences arise because of inconsistencies among the states in how they gather and report the data. For example, Delaware and some other states do not include the departure of probationary officers when calculating turnover whereas other states do.

- Higher than average turnover rates occur among corrections officers.

Disproportionately high hiring due to rapid systems growth in a particular state needs little elaboration, because it can be considered "organic" or "natural." But the same does not apply to worker turnover. Very high worker turnover raises a "red flag," signaling potentially serious problems.

Turnover rates among corrections officers vary enormously from state to state.

The average national turnover rate among corrections officers in adult institutions in 2000 was 16.1%, up from 12.6% in 1995. But, as Figure 5 indicates, there were vast differences in reported turnover rates among the states.

Turnover rates among corrections officers in 2000 ranged from a low of 3.8% (New York) to a high 41% (Louisiana). Fifteen

states reported rates below the national average for all occupations (13.5%). But 34% of the states reported rates for corrections officers above 20% while 6% fell into the range above 30% (Figure 6).

Some of these differences in reported turnover rates arise because of inconsistencies among the states in how they gather and report the data. For example, Delaware and some other states do not include the departure of probationary officers when calculating turnover whereas other states do.¹

"During our research, we found ample evidence that correctional staff turnover is a widespread issue nationally, with many states struggling with staff-retention issues. According to BLS, correctional officers will be the fastest-growing protective-service occupation in the next decade because of turnover and rising prison populations. Additionally, turnover is currently an issue in many law enforcement agencies, and not just corrections."
*Wyoming Legislative Service Office Staff Report
Turnover and Retention in Four Occupations
May 2000. Chapter 4.
<http://legisweb.state.wy.us/progeval/reports/2000/turnovr/chapter4.htm>*

¹ Similar inconsistencies in how data are collected and reported plague the comparative analysis of many human resource management issues among the states' adult correctional institutions. The situation is much worse with respect to juvenile correctional institutions.

Figure 5

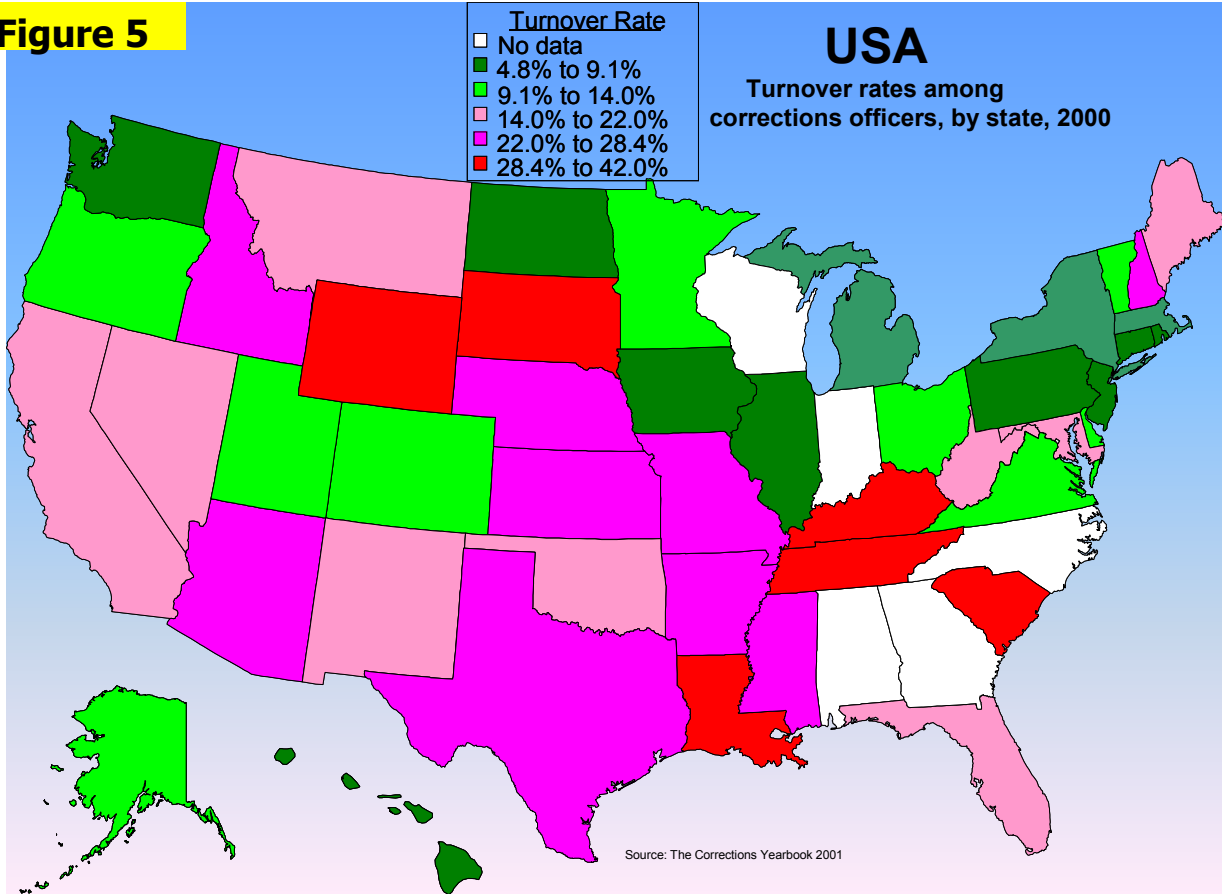


Figure 6

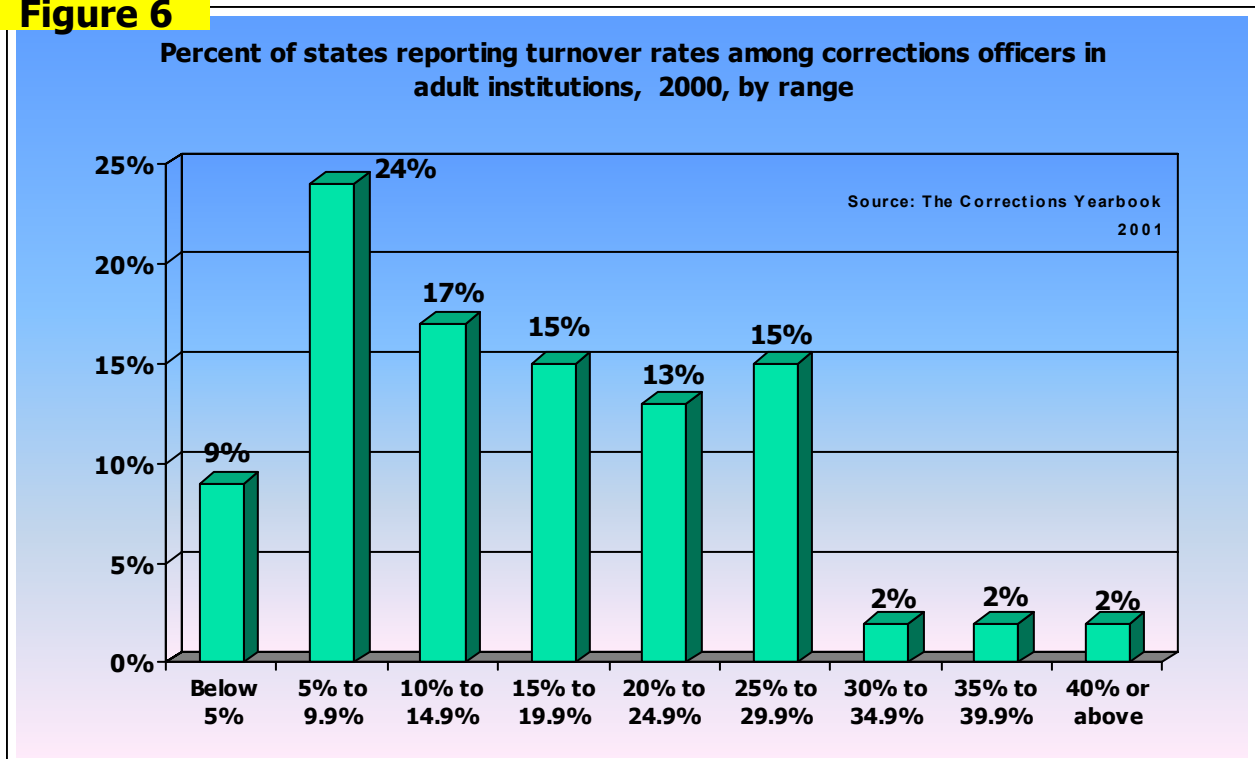
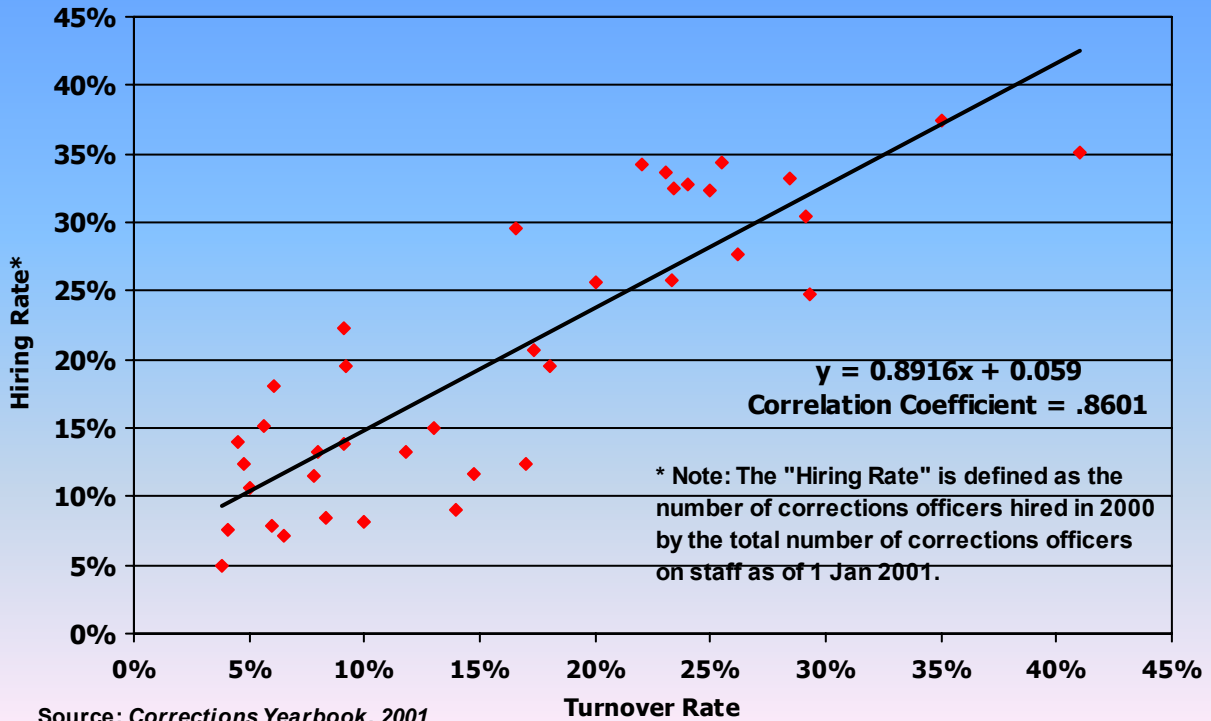


Figure 7

Relationship between Corrections Officer Turnover Rates and Hiring Rates*, by State, 2000



Is there a connection between states' corrections officer turnover rates and their corrections officer hiring rates? Figure 7 strongly suggests that there is. Each point on the graph represents a single state's *Turnover Rate* (horizontal axis) and its *Hiring Rate* (vertical axis). As turnover rates increase among these states, hiring rates rise sharply too.

Table 3

"Outlying State"	Turnover Rate	Hiring Rate
DE	13.1%	73.4%
WY	33.3%	64.0%
AR	27.5%	52.0%
CO	10.7%	36.7%
ND	7.4%	28.1%
VT	10.0%	28.2%

Six states do not fit the pattern shown in Table 3. What makes these states "outliers" varies from state to state. Delaware, for example, displays a comparatively low turnover rate but a very high hiring rate. At the other extreme was Wyoming where the hiring rate was nearly double the turnover rate. *The "outliers" notwithstanding, the conclusion is that high turnover rates are linked to high hiring rates, and vice versa.*

¹ Data for only 37 states and the Federal Bureau of Prisons are shown. Excluded were seven states for which data were not available and also for the six "outlying" states with "abnormal" combinations of the two rates.

High turnover rates generate pressures for constant recruitment.

This should be obvious: Heavy losses of staff due to resignations or other departures means that the corrections system must scramble hard to recruit enough officers just to maintain existing staff numbers, never mind grow.

As the equation displayed in Figure 7 shows, each percentage point rise in a state's turnover rate brings about almost a full percentage point rise in that state's hiring rate. The two rates are over 86% correlated.

In other words, the higher a state's turnover rate, the more replacements it must hire to meet its staffing requirements (Table 4).

Exemplary are states such as New York and Massachusetts which display very low turnover rates and also very low hiring rates. At the other end are states like Wyoming, Louisiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, South Carolina and several others.

The combinations of turnover and hiring rates in a few "outlying" states lie well away from the close-to-one-to-one relationship between turnover and hiring rates displayed by most states.

Table 4

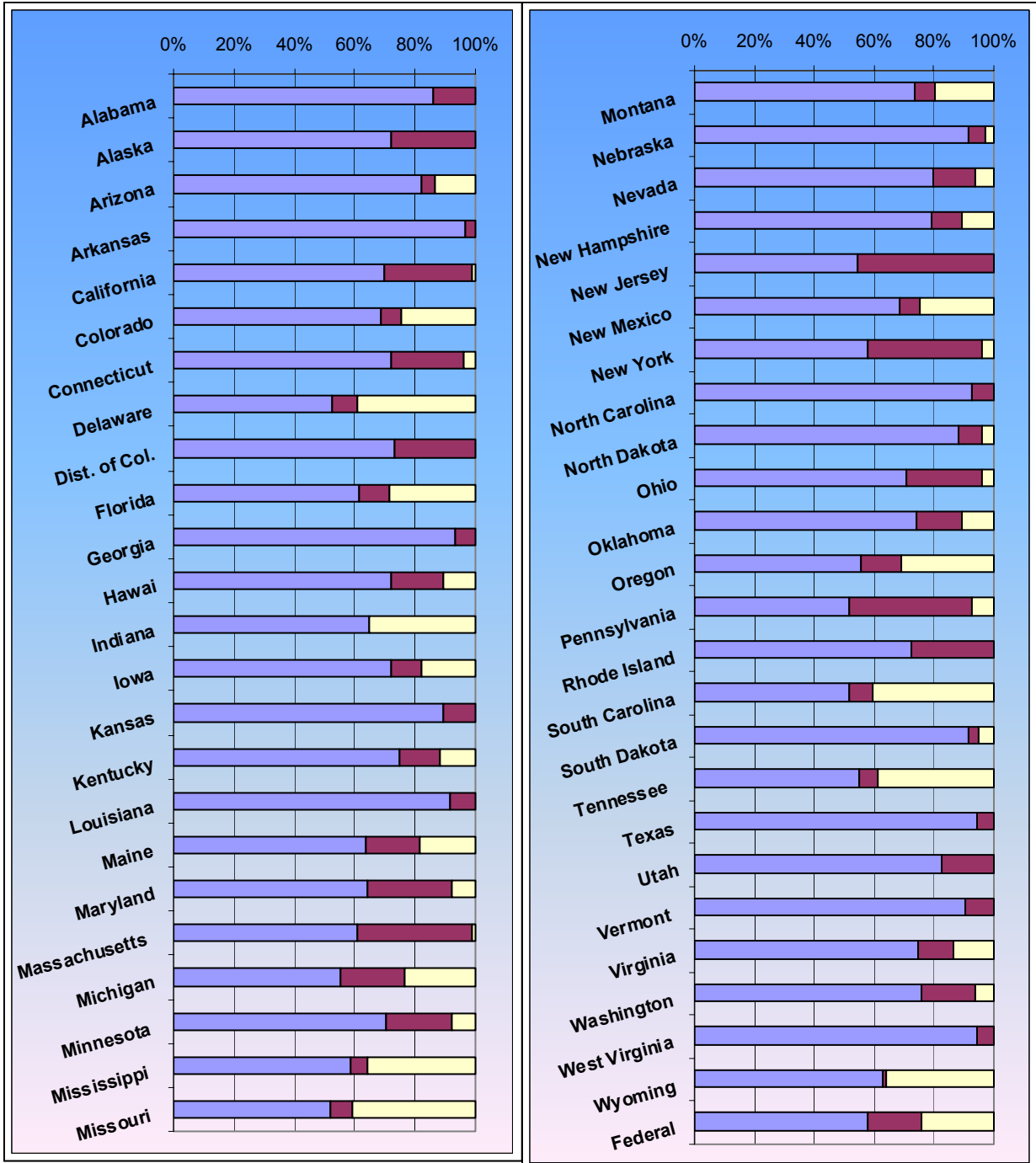
Turnover Rate and Hiring Rate for 43 states and the Federal Bureau of Prisons, 2000		
State	Turnover Rate	Hiring Rate
AK	10.0%	8.1%
AZ	25.5%	34.3%
AR	27.5%	52.0%
CN	10.7%	36.7%
CT	6.0%L	7.9%
DE	13.1%	73.4%
FBOP*	6.1%	18.0%
FL	17.3%	20.7%
HI	8.0%L	13.3%
ID	26.2%	27.6%
IL	8.3%L	8.5%
IA	5.6%L	15.1%
KS	23.1%	33.6%
KY	35.0%	37.5%
LA	41.0%	35.1%
ME	17.0%	12.4%
MD	14.0%	9.0%
MA	4.1%L	7.6%
MI	4.5%L	14.0%
MN	11.8%	13.2%
MS	24.0%	32.8%
MO	22.0%	34.2%
MT	20.0%	25.7%
NE	23.4%	32.5%
NV	16.6%	29.5%
NH	25.0%	32.4%
NJ	5.0%L	10.7%
NM	18.0%	19.5%
NY	3.8%L	5.0%
ND	7.4%	28.1%
OH	13.0%	15.0%
OK	14.7%	11.6%
OR	9.2%	19.5%
PA	4.8%L	12.4%
RI	6.5%L	7.1%
SC	29.1%	30.4%
SD	28.4%	33.2%
TN	29.3%	24.8%
TX	23.3%	25.8%
UT	9.1%	22.3%
VT	10.0%	28.2%
VA	9.1%	13.8%
WA	7.8%L	11.5%
WY	33.3%	64.0%
*Federal Bureau of Prisons		
Source: Corrections Yearbook, 2001		
L = Labor States		

Figure 8

Separating the Departures of Corrections employees into three parts: resignations, retirements, and incomplete probation, by state, 2000

Key to the Graph

- Resignations
- Retirements
- Probation Incomplete



The composition of corrections employees' departures varies greatly among the states.

In 2000, a total of 53,120 corrections employees left their places of employment. In some states (e.g., New Jersey, Massachusetts), these departures were due in large part to *retirement* of older workers. In other states (e.g., Louisiana, West Virginia, Texas), it is *resignations* that comprise the bulk of corrections workers' departures (Figure 8). In still other states (eg., South Carolina, Tennessee, Delaware, Missouri), it is the *failure* of newly hired corrections personnel *to complete their periods of probationary service*.

In some states, corrections officers comprise a disproportionate share of corrections employees' departures.

Nationally, corrections officers comprised on average 53% of the departing corrections employees in 2000. That is hardly surprising given that corrections officers also make up half of all corrections employees. But the national average disguises disturbing disparities among the states.

In some states, corrections officers constitute much larger shares of departures than they do of total corrections employment (Table 5). In Delaware, for example, corrections officers comprise 56% of total corrections employees but nearly 89% of all departures. In Wyoming, corrections officers are 44% of all employees but nearly 80 percent of departures. In Connecticut, the comparable percentage figures are 60% and 97.5%.

In other places, the situation is reversed. In the District of Columbia, officers are 85% of all corrections employees but only 43% of departures. South Dakota presents a similar picture: Whereas 57% of all corrections employees are officers, only 32% of departures are.

Table 5

Corrections Officers as Percentages of All Corrections Employment in Total Employment and in Departures (adult institutions only), 2000

State	Corrections Officers as Percentage of Total Corrections Employment		Departures of Corrections Officers as a Percentage of All Corrections Employees' Departures		State	Corrections Officers as Percentage of Total Corrections Employment		Departures of Corrections Officers as a Percentage of All Corrections Employees' Departures	
	Percent	Rank	Percent	Rank		Percent	Rank	Percent	Rank
AL	67%	4	56.3%	23	MS	65%	5	71.2%	9
AK	53%	16	47.6%	32	MO	40%	38	100.0%	1
AZ	57%	12	67.6%	13	NE	38%	40	47.9%	31
AR	57%	9	72.4%	8	NV	49%	23	62.3%	19
CA	42%	35	27.1%	43	NH	48%	24	64.9%	16
CO	37%	42	45.3%	35	NM	34%	43	53.1%	26
CT	60%	7	97.5%	2	NY	62%	6	44.8%	36
DE	56%	13	88.8%	3	ND	68%	2	64.0%	17
DC	85%	1	42.6%	38	OH	50%	22	72.6%	7
FL	42%	34	50.2%	28	OK	41%	36	48.4%	29
GA	53%	17	60.3%	21	OR	46%	29	45.5%	34
HI	48%	26	36.3%	40	PA	52%	19	70.6%	10
ID	45%	31	66.0%	15	RI	57%	11	51.8%	27
IL	56%	14	80.6%	5	SC	38%	39	55.5%	24
IN	47%	27	68.1%	12	SD	57%	10	31.8%	42
IA	52%	18	57.7%	22	TN	47%	28	67.0%	14
KS	48%	25	40.4%	39	TX	60%	8	68.6%	11
KY	41%	37	63.5%	18	UT	24%	44	26.4%	44
LA	67%	3	86.2%	4	VT	45%	30	46.3%	33
MA	55%	15	55.5%	25	VA	51%	21	60.4%	20
MI	51%	20	43.1%	37	WA	37%	41	35.3%	41
MN	45%	32	48.0%	30	WY	44%	33	79.6%	6

Source: Corrections Yearbook, 2001

The ACA 2003 Survey of corrections officials

As part of this study, we surveyed 85 correctional administrators and human resource managers in 47 states and the District of Columbia. Several metropolitan jails and juvenile detention centers were included as well. Fifty-two of the respondents represented adult institutions and 33 were from juvenile facilities.¹

Most respondents reported some degree of difficulty in recruiting correctional officers.

In total, 72% of the survey respondents reported some degree of difficulty in recruiting. Only 1% of all respondents said recruiting was easy.

Respondents from adult and juvenile institutions reported somewhat different perceptions of the degree of recruiting difficulty (Figure 9). Eighty-two percent of respondents from juvenile institutions reported some degree of difficulty in recruiting correctional officers; nearly a quarter of them said that recruiting was "extremely difficult."

Most respondents also reported some degree of difficulty in retaining correctional officers.

In total, 64% of the survey respondents reported some degree of difficulty in retaining corrections officers. Only 4% of all respondents said retaining was easy.

Respondents from adult and juvenile institutions reported somewhat different perceptions of the degree of retention difficulty (just as they did with respect to recruiting) (Figure 10). Sixty-seven percent of respondents from juvenile institutions reported some degree of difficulty in retaining correctional officers, although only six percent of them said that retaining was "extremely difficult"—barely more than those saying it was "easy."

¹ A list of the responding institutions is provided as an appendix to this report.

Figure 9

**Degree of recruiting difficulty,
by adult and juvenile correctional institutions**

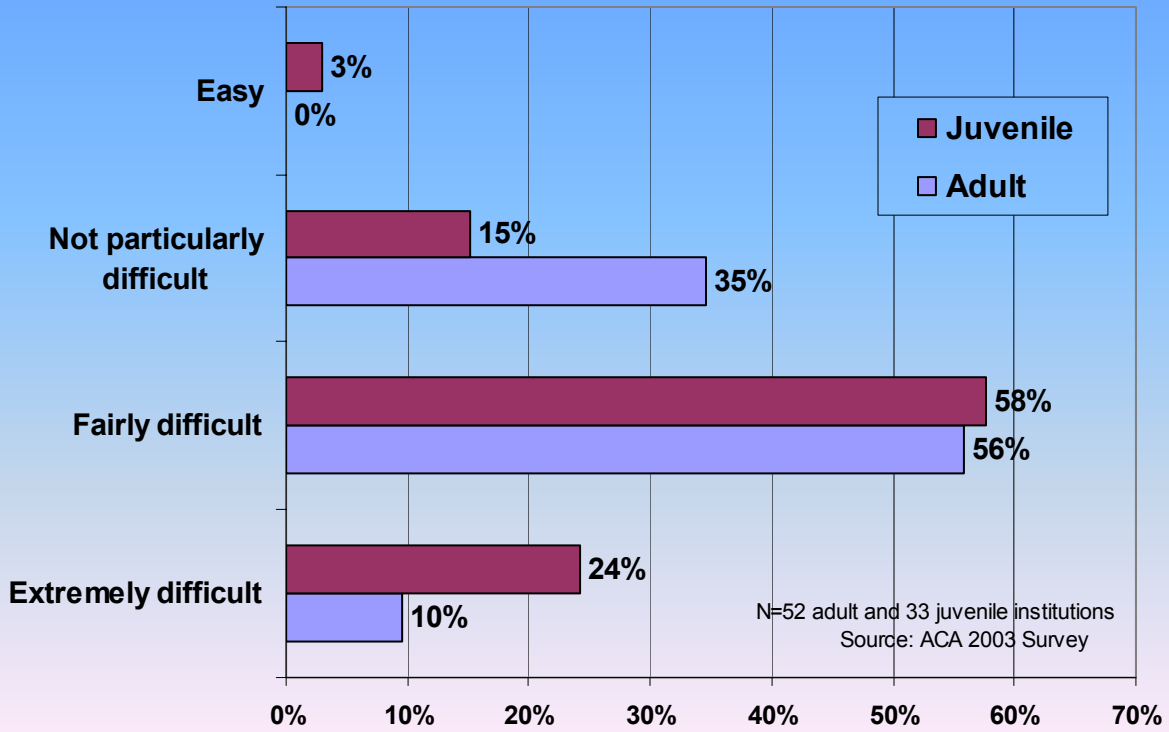
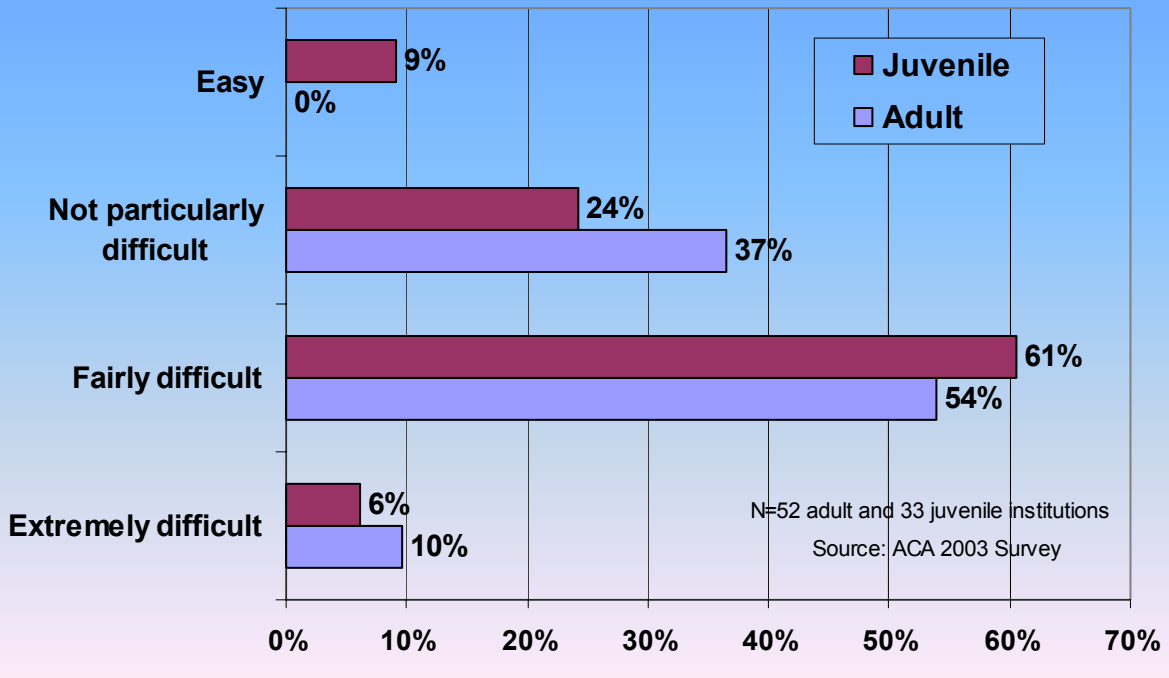


Figure 10

**Degree of retention difficulty,
by adult and juvenile correctional institutions**



North Carolina:

Around the country, many states have experienced increasing difficulty in recruiting and retaining qualified applicants for entry level correctional officer positions and North Carolina is no exception. The shortage can be attributed to a number of factors, including the rapid expansion of a prison system, low pay, a booming economy that makes the prospect of working inside a prison less attractive and the risk of dealing with a more violent inmate population.

The vacancy rate of correctional officer positions in the N.C. prison system was approximately 11 percent during the month of April 2000, and in some regions of the state the figure was more than 14 percent. This resulted in considerable overtime expenditures for the department, as well as placing additional stress on the remaining staff having to cover the extra workloads and having to work on scheduled off days. In addition, the attrition rate among correctional officers is rapidly increasing. Attrition rate is defined as the percentage of new hires separating from employment within the first 12 months. In the four-year period from January 1995 to January 1999 the attrition rate for correctional officers rose from 23.4 percent to 36.7 percent. Although the turnover rate decreases after the first year of employment, the problem of retention certainly doesn't go away. A recent study of the correctional officers hired from January through June 1996 showed that only 52 percent were still employed with the department at the end of a three-year period.

Correction News, North Carolina Department of Corrections, July 2000
<http://www.doc.state.nc.us/NEWS/cnews/0007/recruit.htm>

Kansas:

In Recent Years, Lansing Correctional Facility Has Had Difficulty Attracting and Retaining Corrections Officers Staffing shortages and security issues at that institution were highlighted in June 1998 after an inmate assaulted a female corrections officer in the medium security unit at the prison. That incident was the impetus for a 1999 Legislative Post Audit at Lansing Correctional Facility looking at staffing levels and safety and security issues. Our audit showed that the Facility was short staffed on many shifts, particularly in the medium and minimum security units.

Lansing Correctional Facility: Reviewing Issues Related to Overtime and Staffing, Kansas Legislative Division of Post Audit, 01PA18, March 2001

Texas

Prison officials are scrambling to keep penitentiaries staffed, recruiting at schools and over the Internet. The guard deficit has been growing since a \$2 billion prison expansion was completed in 1995, tripling the system's capacity. In 1995, the shortage was about 400, then became about 800 the following year. At the same time, the attrition rate among guards has climbed from 11 percent in 1995 to 21 percent last year, outstripping the rate at which new ones are being hired.

Michael Graczyk, "Texas Filling Guard Jobs", Associated Press and *The Washington Chronicle*, March 9, 2000
<http://www.washingtonchronicle.com/today/7n.html>

Do we have a problem? Some views from around the nation.

This page and the one previous to it present six more or less randomly selected excerpts from accounts of the difficulties of recruiting and retaining a sufficient number of properly qualified corrections officers. Examples such as these could be multiplied but half a dozen is enough to make the point. **We do have a problem.**

Arizona:

Our Conclusions: The Department's high correctional officer vacancy rate is preventing it from fully opening its newest prison while costing the State millions of dollars in overtime. Although the Department has taken aggressive measures to expand recruiting, it still has difficulty filling positions. And, ..., it has difficulty retaining the officers it does have. As of November 2000, more than 1 out of 6 correctional officer positions were vacant.

Highlights of a Report on the Department of Corrections HR Management by the Arizona Office of the Auditor General.
<http://www.auditorgen.state.az.us/PDF/01-04Highlts.pdf>

Maryland:

Most demographic data suggest that corrections agencies will be strongly affected by demographic changes in the U.S. Many corrections agencies stand to lose as much as 25% of their workforce over the next few years. In fact, there are currently large vacancies in most law enforcement agencies, and I would guess that few of you are fully staffed.

This issue came home to me when I first became Director in Montgomery County. I discovered that the Department had rotated shifts for many years, despite the fact that shift rotation had gone out of fashion in corrections many years ago. The next day I asked for data on overtime and found that, although the system was fully accredited, staff had worked over 200 hours of mandatory overtime. The use of overtime to staff existing posts is a sure sign of problems, so I was concerned. Staff turnover was also significant, as rotating shifts and required overtime had exacerbated difficult family situations.

Arthur Wallenstein, Director, Montgomery County (MD) Department of Correction, Remarks delivered at a meeting of NIC's Large Jail Network held in Longmont, Colorado, on January 6-8, 2002.

U.S. Department of Justice

Perhaps the most serious problem jail administrators face today is the need to attract and retain sufficient numbers of high-quality correctional officers.

Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention: Current Practices in U.S. Jails, January 2000. U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections

What causes the recruiting problem?

On the 2003 ACA survey, respondents from both adult and juvenile institutions broadly agreed that four main reasons accounted for recruiting difficulty.

1. Inadequate pay and benefits;
2. Burdensome hours and shift work;
3. A shortage of qualified applicants;
4. Undesirable location of corrections facilities.

Beyond these four main reasons, opinions varied significantly (see Figure 11). Respondents from adult institutions blamed stiff competition from other employers and complained of a poor public image of the profession. Those from youth institutions found too few qualified applicants and thought that young people lack knowledge of the corrections profession and/or perceived it to offer poor career prospects. Few of either group were prepared to blame poor recruiting practices by correctional institutions.

Figure 11



What causes the retention (AKA turnover) problem?

Enough evidence has been presented on preceding pages to identify *turnover* of corrections officers, i.e. difficulty in their retention, is a (if not *the*) main problem plaguing corrections institutions around the nation.

So, the next question is: ***What factors make it difficult to retain corrections officers? What are the root causes of the problem?***

Money matters.

Virtually every list of the factors causing difficulties in recruiting and retaining corrections officers *begins* with inadequate pay at the top of the list (see the nearby comments from Arizona, North Carolina, and Wyo-

ming). How well are corrections officers paid? How does their pay compare with other protective service occupations? How much does pay vary among the states? To what extent does that variation correlate with inter-state variation in turnover rates?

Table 6	
Median Annual Pay of Various Protective Service Occupations, U.S., 2003	
First-line supervisors/managers of correctional officers	\$ 45,500
First-line supervisors/managers of police and detectives	\$ 62,350
Bailiffs	\$ 34,470
Correctional officers and jailers	\$ 33,160
Detectives and criminal investigators	\$ 52,390
Fish and game wardens	\$ 41,380
Police and sheriff's patrol officers	\$ 44,020
Transit and railroad police	\$ 44,160
Source: BLS, May 2003 Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates	

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2002 corrections officers' median annual earnings in the public sector were \$40,900 in the Federal Government, \$33,260 in State government, and \$31,380 in local government. In the management and public relations industry, where the relatively small number of officers employed by privately operated prisons are classified by the BLS, median annual earnings were \$21,390.

Many observers suggest that correctional officers are paid less well than members of other protective service occupations. The BLS data support that contention.

Table 6 indicates that the median annual pay of correctional officers and jailers in 2003 was below all that of the other protective service listed. Furthermore, supervisors and managers of correctional officers earn less than supervisors and managers of police and detectives.

Pay for corrections officers also often lags behind what is paid to persons filling the myriad of new security positions created subsequent to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. For example, annual salaries for transportation screeners at U.S. airports are now paid from \$23,600 to \$56,400 plus attractive benefits.¹ A popular job board recently listed positions for 1,743 security officers, most of them in the private sector with some paying as high as \$100,000 per annum.²

Table 7 displays the annual salaries for corrections officers in adult institutions along with the average turnover rates in the various states. Figure 12 shows the statistically inverse relationship between the average compensation paid in 2000 to corrections officers in 44 states and those states' turnover rates in the same year. Quite clearly, higher pay is associated with lower turnover rates, and, of course, lower pay correlates with higher turnover rates.

But money is only half the story.

All, or virtually all, analysts of recruiting and retention problems cite other contributing factors beyond inadequate compensation (again, the comments in boxes on pages 20 and 29 are representative). Even the

¹ Information provided by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Transportation Security Administration.

² Monster.com. May 15, 2004

Table 7

**Corrections Officers' Annual Salaries and Turnover Rates,
50 States, District of Columbia and Federal Bureau of Prisons**

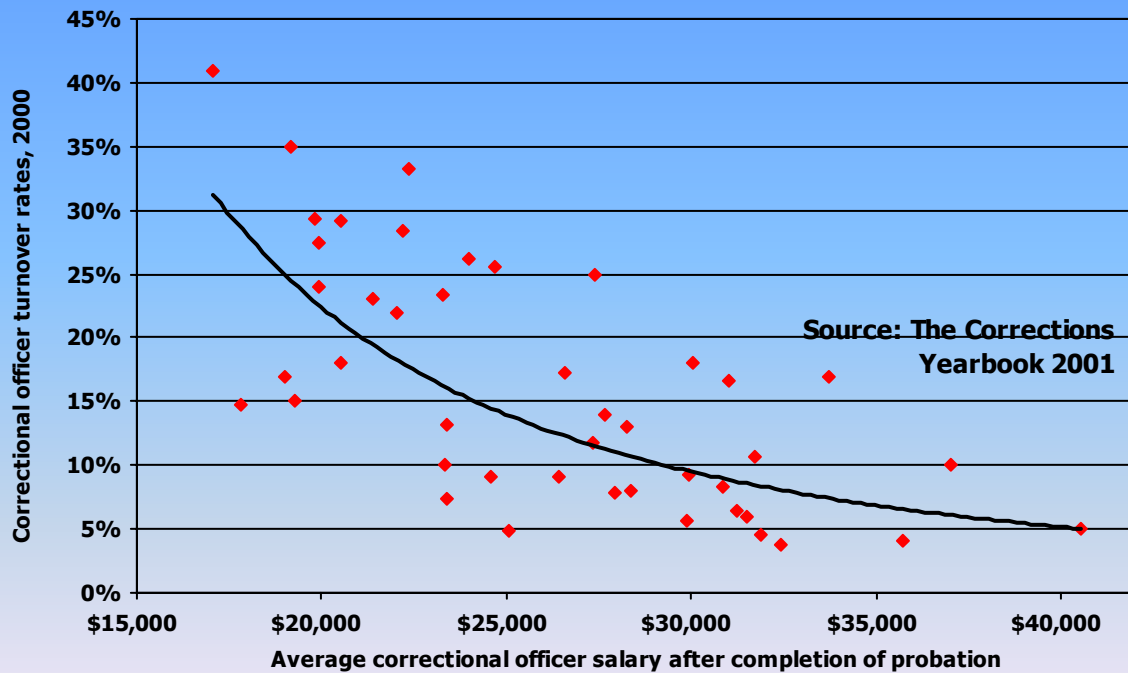
State or Area	Annual Salary, January 1, 2000				Turnover Rate, 2000
	Entry Level	Completion of Training	Completion of Probation	Max. Salary	
Alabama	\$ 22,766	n.a.	n.a.	\$ 37,214	n.a.
Alaska	\$ 32,688	\$ 37,020	\$ 37,020	\$ 57,996	10%
Arizona	\$ 23,504	\$ 23,504	\$ 24,689	\$ 40,548	26%
Arkansas	\$ 19,931	n.a.	\$ 19,931	\$ 39,157	28%
California	\$ 27,264	\$ 32,100	\$ 33,708	\$ 52,272	17%
Colorado	\$ 30,216	\$ 30,216	\$ 31,727	\$ 42,384	11%
Connecticut	\$ 28,355	\$ 31,505	\$ 31,505	\$ 41,007	6%
Delaware	\$ 23,366	\$ 23,366	\$ 23,366	\$ 29,207	13%
Dist. of Col.	\$ 26,422	\$ 27,856	\$ 30,068	\$ 40,158	18%
Florida	\$ 25,175	\$ 26,572	\$ 26,572	\$ 38,113	17%
Georgia	\$ 22,044	n.a.	n.a.	\$ 38,650	n.a.
Hawaii	\$ 26,220	\$ 26,220	\$ 28,380	\$ 34,800	8%
Idaho	\$ 23,982	\$ 23,982	\$ 23,982	\$ 35,277	26%
Illinois	\$ 23,392	\$ 23,392	\$ 30,840	\$ 37,632	8%
Indiana	\$ 21,814	\$ 21,814	\$ 21,814	\$ 34,216	n.a.
Iowa	\$ 28,704	\$ 28,704	\$ 29,889	\$ 36,961	6%
Kansas	\$ 20,384	\$ 20,904	\$ 21,382	\$ 31,595	23%
Kentucky	\$ 18,264	\$ 18,264	\$ 19,177	n.a.	35%
Louisiana	\$ 15,324	\$ 15,324	\$ 17,076	\$ 28,236	41%
Maine	\$ 19,000	\$ 19,000	\$ 19,000	\$ 25,000	17%
Maryland	\$ 25,921	\$ 25,921	\$ 27,643	\$ 41,137	14%
Massachusetts	\$ 35,699	\$ 35,699	\$ 35,699	\$ 49,095	4%
Michigan	\$ 26,601	\$ 26,601	\$ 31,883	\$ 39,588	5%
Minnesota	\$ 26,538	\$ 26,538	\$ 27,353	\$ 39,568	12%
Mississippi	\$ 17,073	\$ 19,000	\$ 19,950	\$ 33,947	24%
Missouri	\$ 21,300	n.a.	\$ 22,056	\$ 29,784	22%
Montana	\$ 19,215	n.a.	n.a.	\$ 26,800	20%
Nebraska	\$ 23,281	\$ 23,281	\$ 23,281	\$ 33,719	23%
Nevada	\$ 27,415	\$ 27,415	\$ 31,028	\$ 40,027	17%
New Hampshire	\$ 24,321	\$ 26,243	\$ 27,364	\$ 30,773	25%
New Jersey	\$ 36,850	\$ 36,850	\$ 40,536	\$ 56,380	5%
New Mexico	\$ 15,943	\$ 20,498	\$ 20,498	\$ 51,022	18%
New York	\$ 26,553	\$ 26,553	\$ 32,432	\$ 46,965	4%
North Carolina	\$ 22,269	\$ 23,382	\$ 23,382	\$ 34,337	n.a.
North Dakota	\$ 16,200	\$ 18,360	\$ 21,960	\$ 36,600	7%
Ohio	\$ 27,560	\$ 27,560	\$ 28,246	\$ 33,488	13%
Oklahoma	\$ 16,672	\$ 16,672	\$ 17,805	\$ 45,607	15%
Oregon	\$ 28,524	\$ 28,524	\$ 29,928	\$ 39,300	9%
Pennsylvania	\$ 23,660	\$ 23,660	\$ 25,058	\$ 51,409	5%
Rhode Island	\$ 30,209	\$ 30,209	\$ 31,258	\$ 42,849	7%
South Carolina	\$ 19,748	\$ 19,748	\$ 20,542	\$ 32,482	29%
South Dakota	\$ 21,320	\$ 21,320	\$ 22,170	\$ 27,060	28%
Tennessee	\$ 19,416	\$ 19,416	\$ 19,804	\$ 31,092	29%
Texas	\$ 18,924	\$ 21,744	n.a.	\$ 28,380	23%
Utah	\$ 23,733	\$ 23,733	\$ 26,437	\$ 38,667	9%
Vermont	\$ 21,133	\$ 21,133	\$ 23,338	\$ 41,496	10%
Virginia	\$ 22,361	\$ 22,361	\$ 24,597	\$ 41,980	9%
Washington	\$ 26,652	\$ 26,652	\$ 27,924	\$ 37,200	8%
West Virginia	\$ 18,120	\$ 18,120	\$ 19,260	\$ 30,372	15%
Wisconsin	\$ 19,038	\$ 19,038	\$ 19,600	\$ 47,412	n.a.
Wyoming	\$ 21,180	\$ 21,180	\$ 22,380	\$ 30,792	33%
Federal	\$ 26,354	\$ 26,354	\$ 27,790	\$ 40,062	6%

Source: *Corrections Yearbook, 2001*

Note: Data are for adult correctional institutions only. Comparable data for juvenile institutions are unavailable.

Figure 12

**Compensation and Turnover Rates Among Corrections Officers
Data for 44 states in 2000**



Source: The Corrections Yearbook 2001

For readers interested in the statistical properties of the black line above, it is a 2nd degree power curve fitted to the data points. The fitted formula is $y = 3E+08x^{-2.1146}$ and the $R^2 = 0.4764$.

statistical analysis displayed in Figure 12 indicates that pay explains less than half the variation in turnover rates among the states.

More results from the ACA 2003 Survey:

On the ACA 2003 survey, non-competitive compensation was the most frequently cited cause of difficulty in recruiting and the second most commonly cited difficulty in retention of corrections officers (Figure 13). But other factors were cited as well. Four main reasons were cited for retention difficulty:

1. Demanding hours and shift work;
2. Inadequate pay & benefits;
3. Stress and burnout;
4. Wrong initial selection; employees not suited to the job.

Terry Stewart, Director, Arizona Department of Corrections

Low salaries, difficult working conditions, the different attitudes of so-called 'Generation X' employees, and low unemployment rates, combine with other factors to complicate hiring and retention efforts. As vacancies increase, staff members are required to work more over-time hours to fill in.

Correction Managers' Report, April/May 2000
http://www.adc.state.az.us/pio/correction_managers.htm

Summary: Separating Officers' Exit Surveys in North Carolina

- 68.5% left because dissatisfied with salary.
- 66.7% had a new job prior to leaving DOC.
- 34% went with another correction or law enforcement agency.
- 37% would have remained if salary, benefits and shift schedules had improved.

Correction News, North Carolina Department of Corrections, July 2000
<http://www.doc.state.nc.us/NEWS/cnews/0007/recruit.htm>

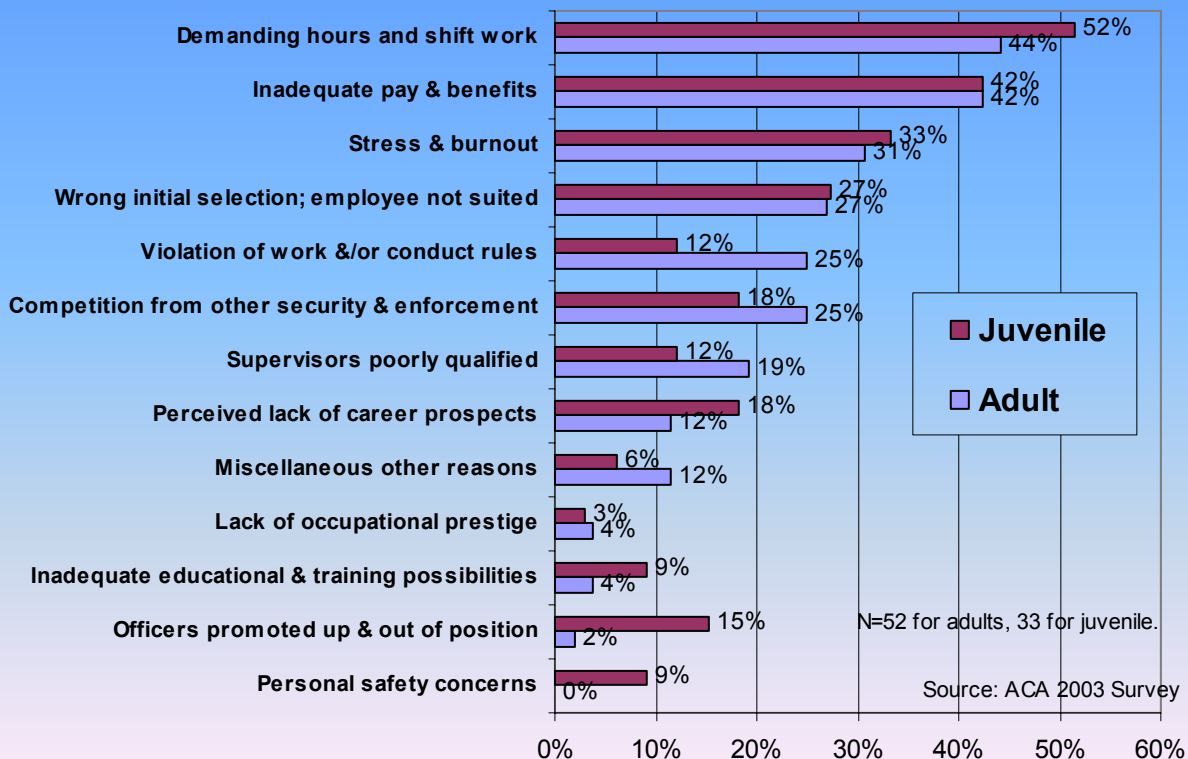
Wyoming Legislative Service

Current and former correctional staff we contacted indicated that dissatisfaction with wages and benefits, especially the rising cost of health insurance for dependents, contributes to turnover at DOC. Correctional officer salaries likely compound dissatisfaction with the State's health insurance because individuals in lower wage brackets are strongly impacted by fixed health insurance costs, such as premiums and deductibles. Nevertheless, R&P's analysis shows that the 93% of individuals who left DOC but remained in Wyoming during the four-year period earned 26 percent less on average after leaving DOC. R&P concluded that these individuals may have left DOC for reasons other than wage.

Turnover and Retention in Four Occupations, *Office Staff Report, May 2000, Chapter 4*
<http://legisweb.state.wy.us/progeval/reports/2000/turnovr/chapter4.htm>

Figure 13

Reasons for Retention Difficulty



With varying degrees of emphasis, respondents also cited poor supervision, lack of perceived career prospects, and competition from other security and law enforcement agencies recruiting from the same workforce pool.

High turnover rates go with low unemployment rates.

Laments heard in the late 1990s and even 2000 about the difficulties of recruiting and retaining corrections officers frequently identified the tight labor markets (low unemployment rates) during those years as complicating factors.

That low unemployment rates are associated with higher turnover rates is a conclusion strongly corroborated by the national data displayed in Figure 14. These two rates are very highly but negatively correlated ($R^2 = .8$). Between 1989 and 2000, every percentage point drop in the annual national unemployment rate was associated with a 1.56 percentage point increase in the turnover rate among corrections officers.

Beginning 2001, with the higher national unemployment rates that began in that year, fewer complaints were voiced about tight labor markets as a factor contributing to the difficulties of recruitment and retention of corrections officers. As national unemployment rates subside in 2004 and beyond, we can anticipate tight labor markets again to make both recruitment and retention become more difficult.

It's hard to recruit and retain: So what?

What consequences flow from corrections institutions' difficulties in recruiting and retaining corrections officers? Those who responded to the ACA 2003 Survey were in general agreement that they included these (Figure 15):

Figure 14

**Turnover Rates Decline
as National Unemployment Rates Rise**

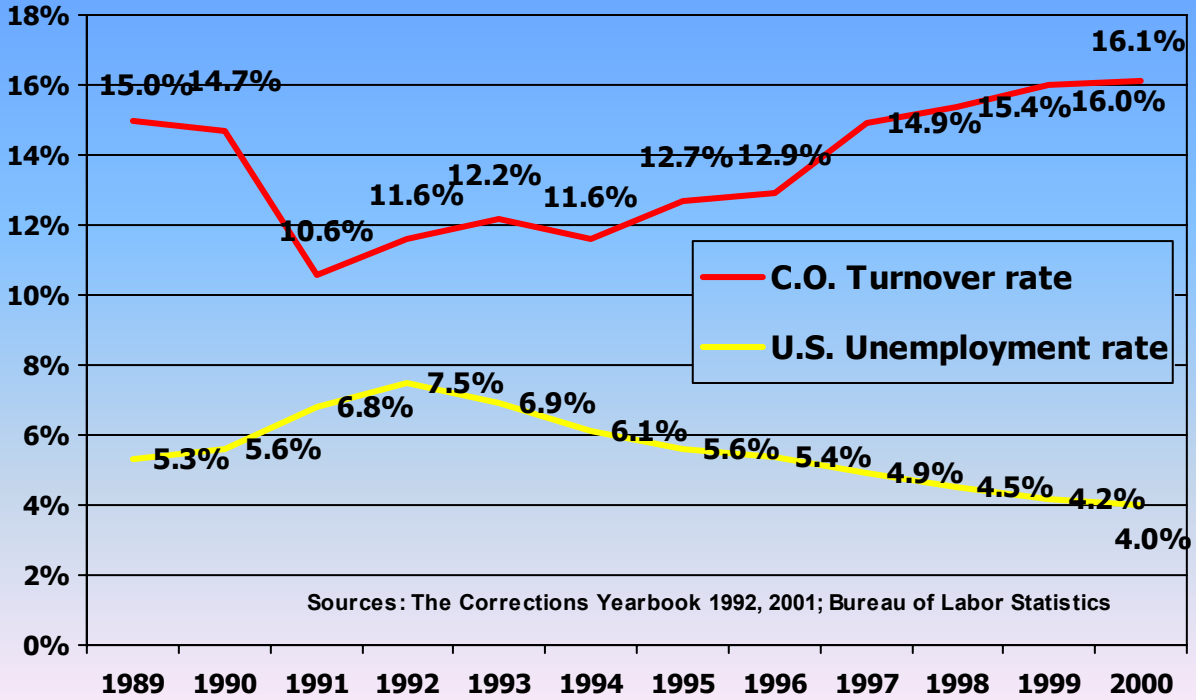
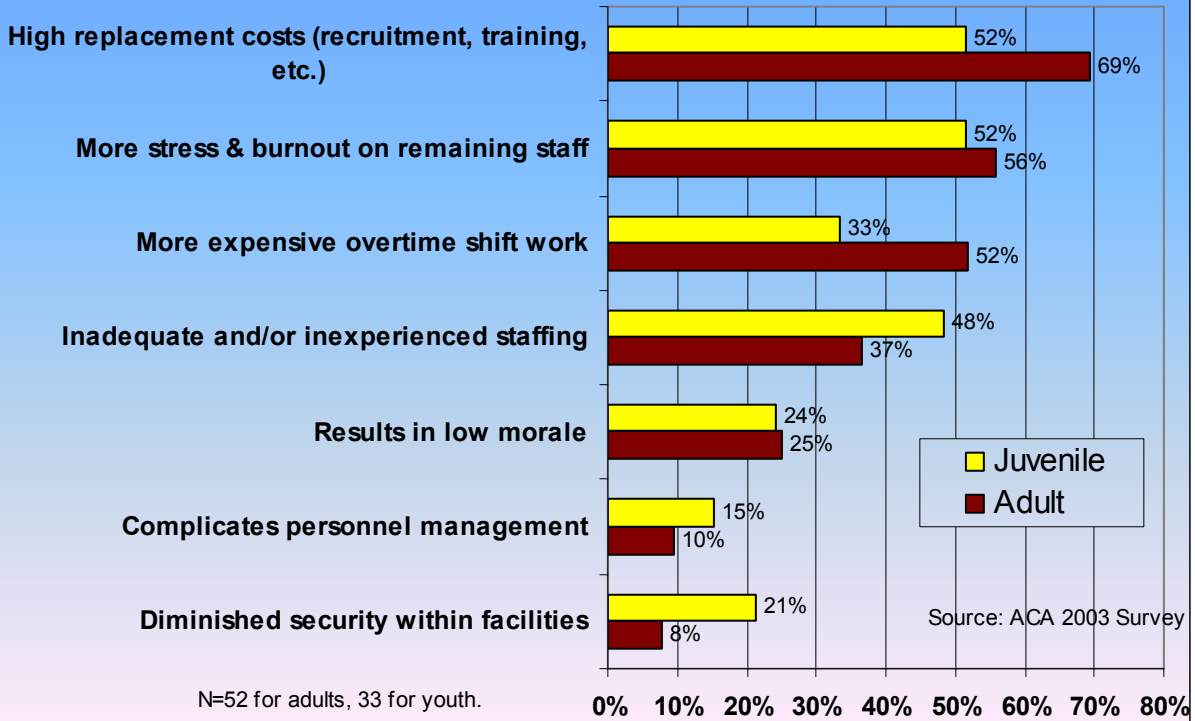


Figure 15

**Consequences of Difficulties of
Recruiting & Retaining Corrections Officers
(Percent of respondents citing)**

Note: Respondents could cite as many as three consequences.



- High replacement costs (costs of recruiting new staff, training them, etc.);
- Greater stress & burnout among remaining officers working in under-staffed conditions;
- More expensive overtime shift work;
- Inadequate &/or inexperienced staff;
- Lower morale.

All of these factors are mutually reinforcing.

Summary of this section:

This section has established the following points:

- America's inmate population has grown greatly in recent decades.
- And so has the number of corrections employees. Their numbers expanded by 150% between 1982 and 1999, i.e., from 300,000 to more than 750,000.
 - Most of this growth has been at the state level.
 - About half of that growth is due to growing numbers of corrections officers.
- There is great variation among the states with respect to:
 - The number of corrections officers per 10,000 population. The number varied in 1999 from 8.4 in West Virginia to 54.5 in the District of Columbia.
 - The number of inmates per corrections officer. The variation in 2000 was from 2.6 in the District of Columbia to 10.8 in Alabama.
 - Turnover rates among corrections officers. The range in 2000 was from 3.8% in New York to 41% in Louisiana.
 - Hiring rates (defined as the number of corrections officers hired as a percent of those on staff). That rate varied in

2000 from 5% in New York to 73% in Delaware.

- The reasons why corrections officers depart, i.e., the proportions due to resignations, retirements, and incomplete probations differ greatly among the states.
- Pay. Entry level pay for corrections officers in adult facilities in 2001 varied from \$15,943 in New Mexico to \$36,850 in New Jersey.
- High turnover rates generate pressures for constant recruitment to replace officers who have departed. System growth, due to growing inmate populations, compounds the recruitment problem.
- In the ACA 2003 Survey, most respondents in both adult and juvenile institutions reported difficulties in both recruitment and retention.
- **There is a problem:** Many, probably most, correctional systems around the nation face serious difficulties in recruiting and retaining an adequate staff of properly qualified corrections officers. Discussions with corrections officials as well as a review of many states' corrections websites and other literature confirm that point. For various reasons, some states experience this problem more acutely than others.
- Inadequate pay for corrections officers, compared to law enforcement personnel and others recruited from the same workforce pool, is broadly blamed for the difficulties of both recruiting and retention. Poor pay was the cause most frequently cited by respondents to the ACA 2003 Survey with respect to recruiting difficulty and the second most frequently mentioned relative to retention. The same reason was often cited elsewhere as well.
- Higher pay is associated with lower turnover rates. Statistically, we find that differences in salary levels are about 50% correlated with differences in corrections officer turnover rates among the states.

- Other frequently cited causes of recruiting difficulties include burdensome hours and shift work, a shortage of qualified applicants, and the undesirable location of some corrections facilities.
- High rates of turnover among corrections officers is seen to result mainly from demanding hours and shift work, inadequate compensation, stress and burnout, wrong initial selection of candidates, competition from other law enforcement and security agencies, poor career prospects, and poorly qualified supervisors.
- High turnover rates go with tight labor markets. National statistics show that high turnover rates among corrections officers are strongly but negatively correlated with low unemployment rates.
- The consequences of difficult recruitment and retention are serious; many are mutually reinforcing. They include high replacement costs (i.e., the costs of hiring and training new staff), greater stress and burnout among officers working in understaffed conditions, more expensive overtime, shift work, inadequate and/or inexperienced staff, diminished security within facilities, and lower morale.

Section II: The Demographics of America's Correctional Workforce

Most corrections officers in America are white males.

Men comprised 79% of all corrections officers in adult institutions in 2001. That share had gradually declined from 82% in 1992 (Figure 16).

In 1992, 72% of corrections officers in adult institutions were white. By 2001, that number had declined to 65%.

Figure 16

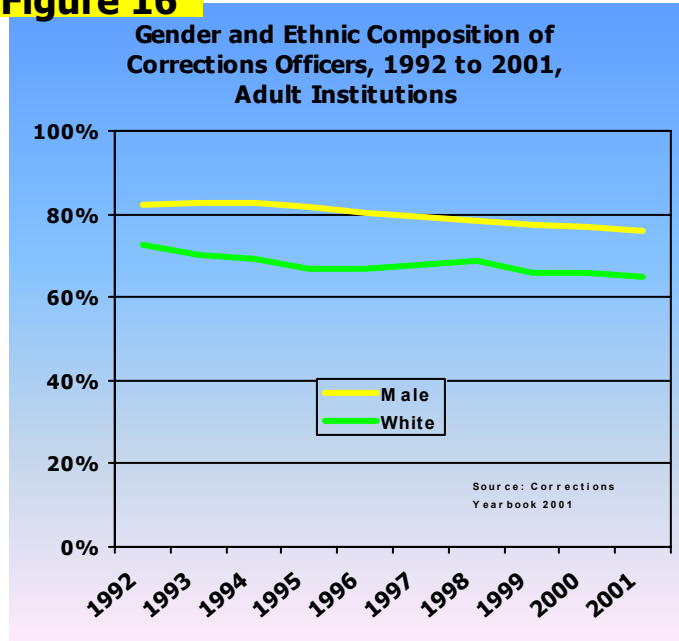
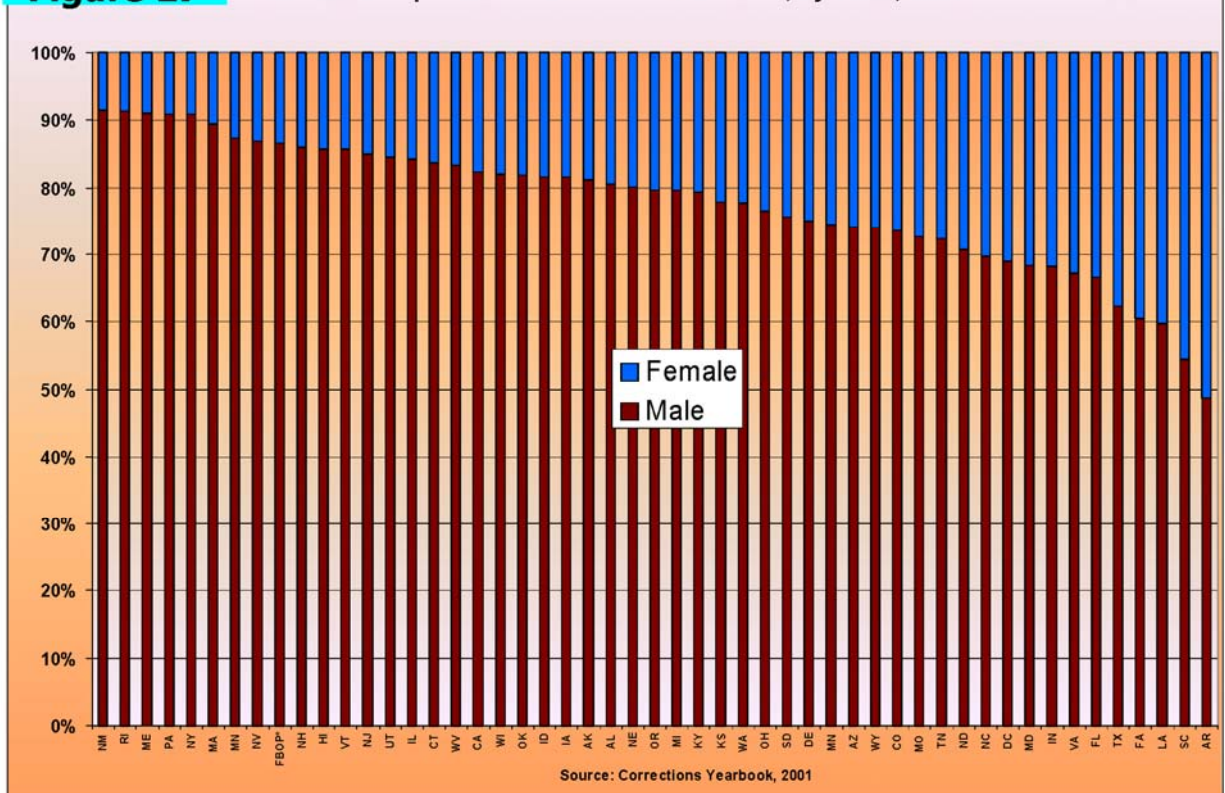


Figure 17

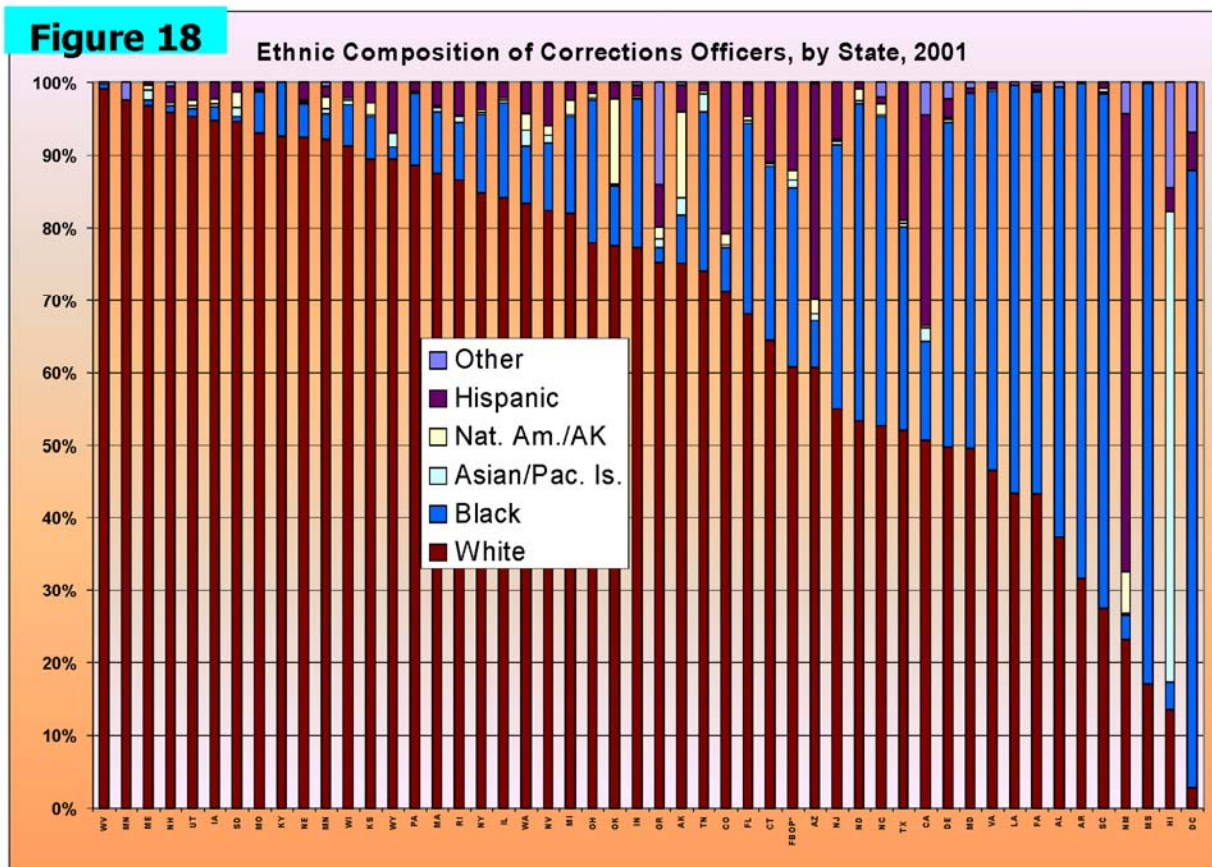
Gender Composition of Corrections Officers, by State, 2001



But the national averages obscure great differences among the states.

Among the states, the gender distribution proportion of correctional officers varies greatly (Figure 17). The share of males, for example, ranges from a low of 40% in Mississippi to a high of 92% in New Mexico.¹ The ethnicity of the corrections officer workforce also shows great variation among the states (Figure 18 and Table 8). In West Virginia, for example, non-Hispanic whites comprise 99% of the workforce. At the other extreme is the District of Columbia where Blacks make up 85%. Blacks comprise more than half the force also in Mississippi, South Carolina, Alabama, and Arkansas. Hispanic make up 56% of the force in New Mexico and 25% in Arizona and California. Asians and Pacific Islanders make up 65% of Hawaii's force.

¹ The data on this and the preceding page refer to adult correctional institutions only.



A 21ST CENTURY WORKFORCE FOR AMERICA'S CORRECTIONAL PROFESSION

Gender and Ethnic Composition of the Corrections Officer Workforce and their Salary Levels in Adult Correctional Institutions, by state, 2000										
State or Area	Male	Female	White	Black	Asian & Pac. Is.	Native American	Hispanic	Other	Annual Salary, Jan 1, 2000	
									Entry Level	Completion of Probation
AK	81%	19%	75%	7%	3%	12%	4%	0%	\$ 32,688	\$ 37,020
AL	81%	19%	37%	62%	0%	0%	0%	1%	\$ 22,766	n.a.
AR	49%	51%	32%	68%	0%	0%	0%	0%	\$ 23,504	\$ 24,689
AZ	74%	26%	61%	7%	1%	2%	30%	0%	\$ 19,931	\$ 19,931
CA	82%	18%	51%	14%	2%	0%	29%	5%	\$ 27,264	\$ 33,708
CO	74%	27%	71%	6%	1%	1%	21%	0%	\$ 30,216	\$ 31,727
CT	84%	16%	64%	24%	0%	0%	11%	0%	\$ 28,355	\$ 31,505
DC	69%	31%	3%	85%	0%	0%	5%	7%	\$ 23,366	\$ 23,366
DE	75%	25%	50%	45%	0%	0%	3%	2%	\$ 26,422	\$ 30,068
FBOP	87%	13%	61%	25%	1%	1%	12%	0%	\$ 26,354	\$ 27,790
FL	67%	33%	68%	26%	0%	1%	5%	0%	\$ 25,175	\$ 26,572
GA	61%	40%	43%	55%	0%	0%	1%	0%	\$ 22,044	n.a.
HI	86%	14%	14%	4%	65%	0%	3%	15%	\$ 26,220	\$ 28,380
IA	82%	18%	95%	2%	0%	1%	2%	0%	\$ 28,704	\$ 29,889
ID	82%	18%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	\$ 23,982	\$ 23,982
IL	84%	16%	84%	13%	0%	0%	2%	0%	\$ 23,392	\$ 30,840
IN	68%	32%	77%	20%	0%	0%	2%	0%	\$ 21,814	\$ 21,814
KS	78%	22%	90%	6%	0%	2%	3%	0%	\$ 20,384	\$ 21,382
KY	79%	21%	93%	7%	0%	0%	0%	0%	\$ 18,264	\$ 19,177
LA	60%	40%	44%	56%	0%	0%	0%	0%	\$ 15,324	\$ 17,076
MA	89%	11%	88%	8%	1%	0%	3%	0%	\$ 35,699	\$ 35,699
MD	68%	32%	50%	49%	0%	0%	1%	1%	\$ 25,921	\$ 27,643
ME	91%	9%	97%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	\$ 19,000	\$ 19,000
MI	80%	20%	82%	13%	0%	2%	2%	0%	\$ 26,601	\$ 31,883
MN	74%	26%	92%	4%	1%	2%	1%	1%	\$ 26,538	\$ 27,353
MO	73%	27%	93%	6%	0%	0%	1%	0%	\$ 21,300	\$ 22,056
MS	40%	60%	17%	83%	0%	0%	0%	0%	\$ 17,073	\$ 19,950
MT	87%	13%	98%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	\$ 19,215	n.a.
NC	70%	30%	53%	43%	0%	2%	1%	2%	\$ 22,269	\$ 23,382
ND	71%	29%	53%	44%	0%	2%	1%	0%	\$ 16,200	\$ 21,960
NE	80%	20%	92%	5%	0%	0%	2%	0%	\$ 23,281	\$ 23,281
NH	86%	14%	96%	1%	0%	0%	2%	1%	\$ 24,321	\$ 27,364
NJ	85%	15%	55%	36%	1%	0%	8%	0%	\$ 36,850	\$ 40,536
NM	92%	9%	23%	4%	0%	6%	63%	4%	\$ 15,943	\$ 20,498
NV	87%	13%	82%	9%	1%	1%	6%	0%	\$ 27,415	\$ 31,028
NY	91%	9%	85%	11%	0%	0%	4%	0%	\$ 26,553	\$ 32,432
OH	77%	24%	78%	20%	0%	1%	1%	0%	\$ 27,560	\$ 28,246
OK	82%	18%	78%	8%	0%	12%	2%	0%	\$ 16,672	\$ 17,805
OR	80%	20%	75%	2%	1%	2%	6%	14%	\$ 28,524	\$ 29,928
PA	91%	9%	89%	10%	0%	0%	1%	0%	\$ 23,660	\$ 25,058
RI	91%	9%	87%	8%	1%	0%	5%	0%	\$ 30,209	\$ 31,258
SC	54%	46%	28%	71%	0%	1%	1%	0%	\$ 19,748	\$ 20,542
SD	76%	24%	95%	1%	1%	2%	1%	0%	\$ 21,320	\$ 22,170
TN	72%	28%	74%	22%	2%	0%	1%	0%	\$ 19,416	\$ 19,804
TX	62%	38%	52%	28%	1%	1%	19%	0%	\$ 18,924	n.a.
UT	85%	15%	95%	1%	0%	1%	3%	0%	\$ 23,733	\$ 26,437
VA	67%	33%	47%	52%	0%	0%	1%	0%	\$ 22,361	\$ 24,597
VT	86%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	\$ 21,133	\$ 23,338
WA	78%	22%	83%	8%	2%	2%	4%	0%	\$ 26,652	\$ 27,924
WI	82%	18%	91%	6%	1%	0%	2%	0%	\$ 19,038	\$ 19,600
WV	83%	17%	99%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	\$ 18,120	\$ 19,260
WY	74%	26%	90%	2%	2%	0%	7%	0%	\$ 21,180	\$ 22,380

Source: *Corrections Yearbook*, 2001

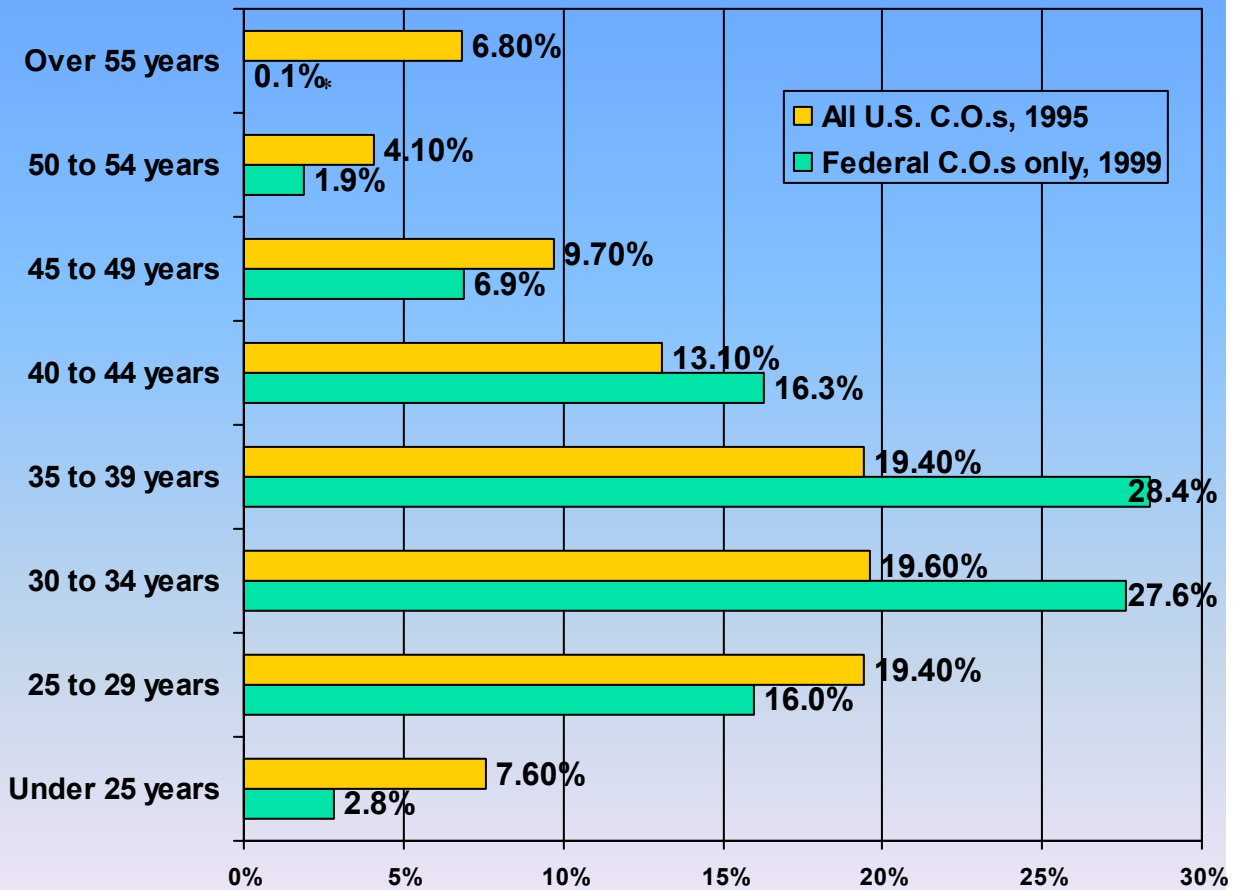
Corrections officers are highly concentrated in the age groups from 25 to 44

In 1995, about 70% of all U.S. corrections officers were aged between 25 and 44. Of these, by far the largest numbers were in their thirties (Figure 19).

Corrections officers in federal prisons tend to be considerably younger, on average, than the national average for all correctional officers. About 56% of federal corrections officers in 1999 were aged 30 to 39.

Figure 19

Age Structure of Corrections Officers, in All U.S. Prisons, and in Federal Prisons, (percent of total, by 5-year age categories)



Sources: For corrections in Federal prisons in 1999, U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics; For all U.S corrections officers in 1995, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

* Note: The mandatory retirement age is fifty-seven (57) for persons in Federal law enforcement positions.

Figure 20

Educational Levels of Various Law Enforcement Occupations

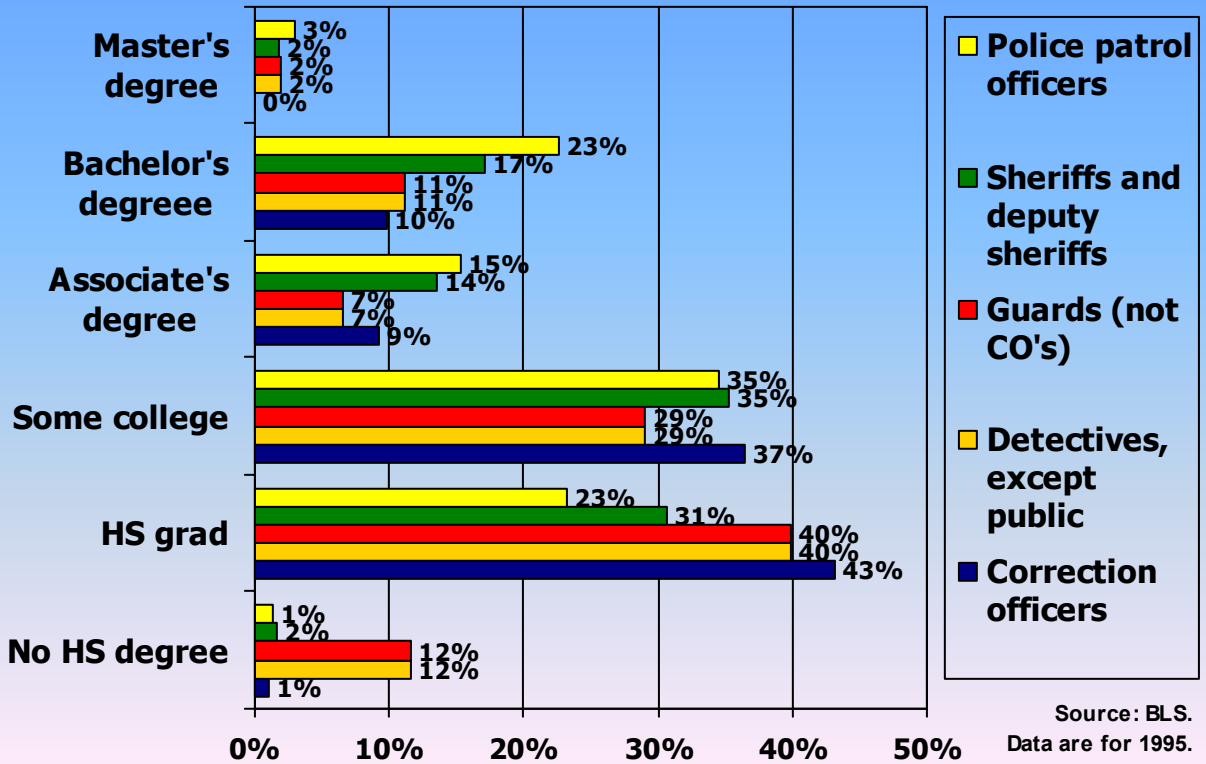
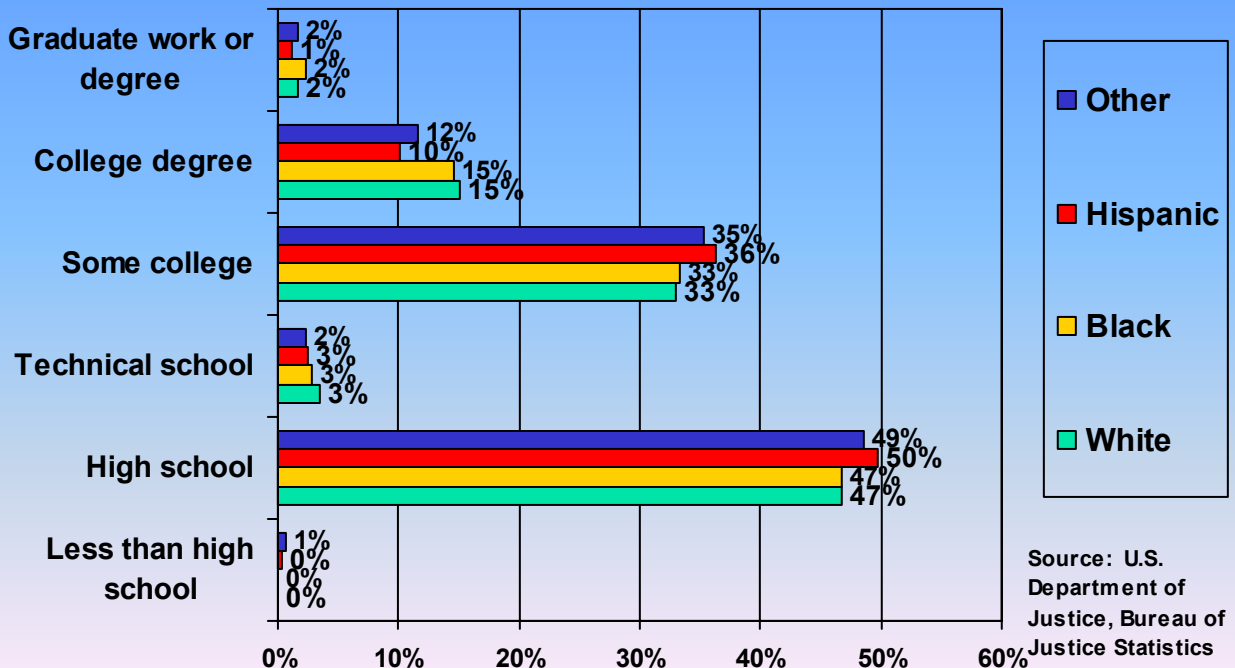


Figure 21

Educational Levels of Federal Corrections Officers, 1999



Corrections officers are modestly well educated.

Nearly all corrections officers (99%) in the United States hold at least a high school diploma (Figure 20). Close to half (43%) hold no more than that diploma. A substantial share of them (35%) have had at least some college, and about one in ten hold Associate's degrees.

Advanced education tends to be the exception among corrections officers. Only about 10% of all corrections officers in 1995 (the last year for which such comprehensive data are available) held Bachelor's degrees or higher. That compares to about 25% for police patrol officers. Sheriffs and their deputies also are better educated than corrections officers; police patrol officers are better educated still.

The educational profile of federal corrections officers (DOJ data displayed in Figure 21) appears roughly similar to that for all corrections officers in the nation (BLS data displayed in Figure 20). High school education is predominant in both groups. In fact, it is slightly more prevalent among federal officers than in the all-inclusive category. It is impossible to make comparisons at the post-secondary level since the statistical categories are defined differently.

Summary of this section:

From this survey of the demographics of America's corrections officers, the following points emerge:

- They are mainly male.
- They are mainly white, non-Hispanic.
- There is considerable variation among the states with respect to both gender and ethnicity. Some states are much more diverse than others. Nationally, there appears to be a slow trend toward

greater gender and ethnic diversity.

- They are mainly aged 25 to 44.
- They are moderately well educated. Approximately half have not pursued formal education beyond the high school level.
- In Table 8 we find that there is a slight tendency for states that employ a relatively large proportion of females and minorities among their corrections officers to pay less well than other states. Efforts to achieve greater gender and ethnic diversity generally appears not to be happening in states that pay relatively well.

Section III: Looking Ahead at the Demand Side

In this section, we explore the likely demand for corrections officers as well as that for other occupations whose gender, ethnic, age, and educational characteristics are similar to those of corrections officers.

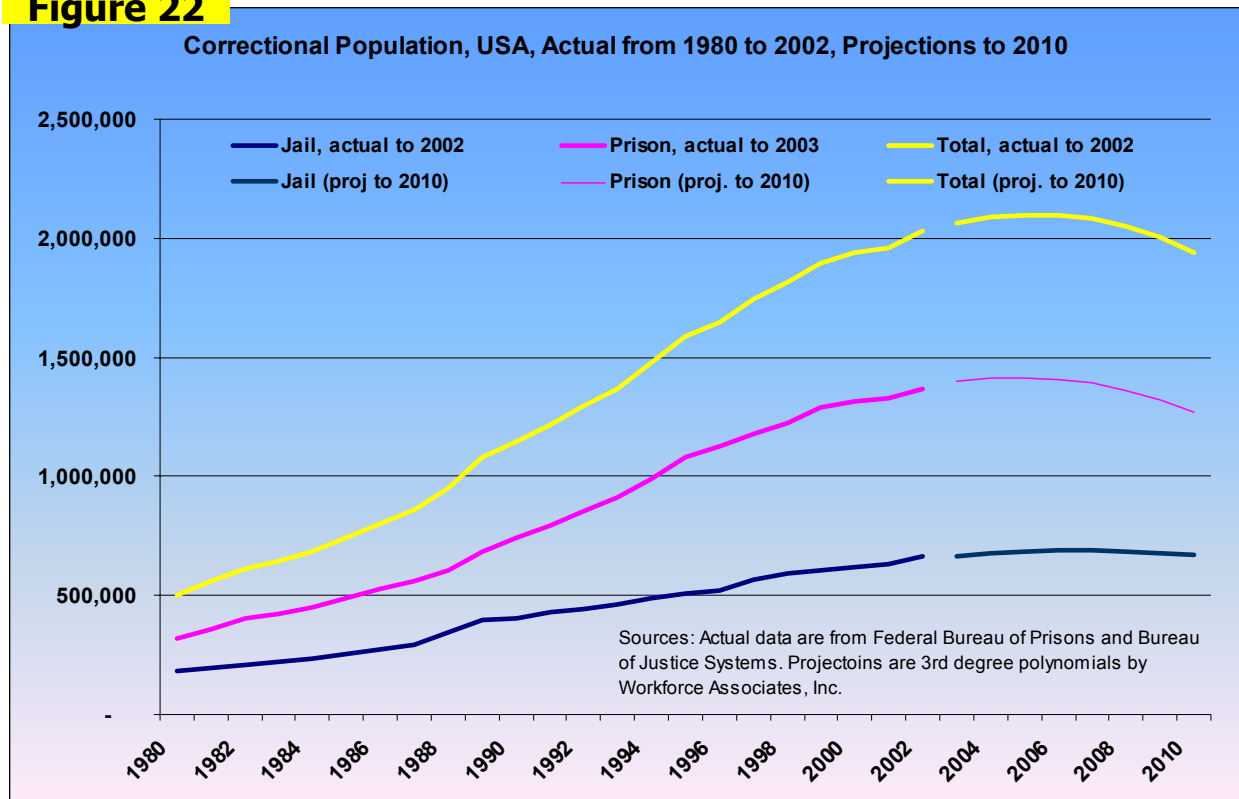
Projecting corrections populations.

A linear projection of U.S. correctional populations would see the total number of inmates reach about 1.85 million by the end of this decade. Of course, such a "straight-line" projection may be too pessimistic but we can take it as the upper boundary of the probable range.

Forecasts are guesses about the future based on the past. Using the past to "see" the future is like driving a car by looking into the rear view mirror. As long as the road is straight or curving in wide arcs, the driver can stay on the road by looking backward. However, if a sharp turn occurs or a bridge is out, the driver will crash. So it is in criminal justice forecasting.

Dr. Allen Beck: *Forecasting: Fiction and Utility in Jail Construction Planning*

Figure 22



The growth of correctional populations, especially at the state level, has slowed somewhat during the early years of this decade. There is, of course, no way to be certain that this slowdown will persist. Few of the states' projections of correctional populations, examined as part of this study, appear to anticipate that it will persist.¹

Many factors will influence the future growth (or shrinkage) of a state's correctional population in the years ahead. Those favoring more rapid growth include relatively rapid total population growth, tougher sentencing policies, and unforeseeable "poster criminal" events triggering public demands for new restrictions or "more toughness." Those tending to retard growth include more lenient sentencing and parole guidelines, "pushback" of non-violent felons to local jails, and fiscally induced slow-downs of prison construction. Depending upon the assumptions made with respect to these factors, it is possible to generate widely ranging projections of future correctional populations.

Application of a simple statistical projection model to the historical data from 1980 to 2002 suggests a possible peaking of the nation's total prison population later in this decade at 2.1 million (Figure 22). That may or may not occur but one may take the number yielded for 2010 (1.9 million) as the lower boundary of the probable range within which the actual prison population will fall after peaking in 2006. The midpoint of this "probable" range is 2.4 million inmates which represents an increase of 366,000 or 18% over the 2002 level.

¹ See, for example, Tony Fabelo, "Update in TDCJ Population Projections, Review of Trends and Issues Regarding Capacity," Texas, Criminal Justice Policy Council, May 7, 2003.

Table 9

Projected Employment Increases Among Selected Protective Services Occupations, United States, 2002-2012

Occupation	Average Annual Job Growth		Average Number of Replacements Needed Yearly	Total Annual Number of Job Openings due to Growth and Net Replacements
	Number	In Percent		
First-line supervisors/managers of correctional officers	634	1.9%	985	1,619
First-line supervisors/managers of police and detectives	1,736	1.5%	3,755	5,491
Bailiffs	143	0.9%	312	454
Correctional officers and jailers	10,337	2.4%	8,861	19,199
Detectives and criminal investigators	2,101	2.2%	2,511	4,611
Police and sheriff's patrol officers	15,280	2.5%	16,011	31,290
Private detectives and investigators	1,215	2.5%	1,011	2,226
Security guards	31,711	3.2%	21,664	53,375

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, February 2004

Projecting the number of corrections officers.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), in its most recent employment projections which appeared in February of 2004, projected that an average of 19,199 correctional officers would be needed annually in the decade 2002-2012 to meet the requirements both of growth (10,337) and net replacements of officers leaving the service (8,861).

It seems likely that the BLS may have underestimated the number of corrections officers that will need to be hired in the decade 2002-2012. The number of 19,199 of total job openings is predicated on a growth in the number of corrections officers of only 103,000 officers for the entire period. That total is about a third of the midpoint of the "probable" range described above although it considerably exceeds the growth of 100,000 implied by the lower boundary of that range.

¹ In thinking about these projections, it is important to keep the projected growth (10,337 annually) apart in one's mind from projected net replacements (8,861 annually). The total number of job openings is the sum of these two numbers.

From 1994 to 2000, a period of rapid growth, the average number of corrections officers hired annually by the nation's adult correctional agencies alone was over 55,000. While the annual average for the period 2002-2012 seems likely to be less than that, it could be as much as double the BLS estimate of only 10,337.

One reason that the BLS projection may be too low is that it appears to ignore the fact that over 24% of corrections officers hired leave their new jobs before completing their probationary period.¹

Suppose, then, that the nation's corrections workforce were to grow by 20,000 as an annual average during this decade. Suppose, along with the BLS, that net replacements were to average 8,861. ***The total number of corrections workers that would need to be hired would then be closer to 30,000 every year from 2000 to 2010 rather than the 19,199 projected by the BLS.*** Even that number would well below the average for the period 1993-2000.

Projecting the demand for competing occupations.

The BLS estimated in 2004 that the average annual number of job openings for security guards from 2002-2010 would be 53,375, nearly three times the number as for corrections officers. Police and sheriff officers' job openings were projected at 31,290. All three of these occupations competitively recruit from essentially the same workforce pool.

The beefed up hiring of law enforcement officers, the Transportation Security Administration, other Homeland Security entities, as well as guards for private and public buildings has meant tens of thousands of more job

¹ *Corrections Yearbook*, 2001, p. 171.

Table 10 BLS Employment Projections for Correctional Officers and Selected Other Occupations, 2002-2012				
Occupation	Total employment (in thousands)		2002-2012 change in total employment	
	2002	2012	Number (in thousands)	Percentage change
Bailiffs	15	16	1	9.5%
Correctional officers and jailers	427	531	103	24.2%
Brokerage clerks	78	67	-11	-14.7%
Floor layers, except carpet, wood, and hard tiles	31	35	4	13.4%
Paperhangers	20	21	1	5.9%
Sheet metal workers	205	246	41	19.8%
Rail-track laying and maintenance equipment operators	11	9	-1	-11.5%
Rotary drill operators, oil and gas	14	14	0	1.5%
Earth drillers, except oil and gas	23	25	2	7.7%
Patternmakers, metal and plastic	6	7	0	3.6%
Painters, transportation equipment	50	59	9	17.5%
Truck drivers, heavy and tractor-trailer	1,767	2,104	337	19.0%
Excavating and loading machine and dragline operators	80	87	7	8.9%

Source: BLS projections, February 2004

Note: The BLS categorizes these occupations at roughly the same educational, gender, ethnic, age, and compensation levels

opportunities in the security and law enforcement occupations that draw from the same workforce pools as corrections officers.

Beyond the directly competing security and law enforcement occupations are other occupations whose workers share gender, ethnic, age, and educational characteristics that are similar to those of correctional officers. The BLS projects that total job openings (counting growth and net replacements) for truck drivers will average 299,000 per year from 2002 to 2012. Table 10 shows projected employment growth for corrections officers and twelve other occupations that approximately fit into the same educational, gender, ethnic, age, and compensation categories.

In addition to job growth in the occupations listed in Table 10 come large projected numbers of job openings for construction workers, allied health care workers and other occupations that compete in the same work-

force pool. That cannot but intensify the competition that correctional institutions face in recruiting and retaining staff in the years ahead.

Summary of this section:

From this survey of the demand side for corrections officers and competing occupations in this decade, the following points emerge:

- The total number of corrections officers jobs to be filled in this decade will be very large, an estimated total of 490,000.
- That number includes both the new jobs required by the growth in the prison population and the replacement of officers who leave the service after completion of their probationary periods.
- It seems likely that the annual number of corrections jobs to be filled in this decade will be substantially below that of the 1990s.
- The War on Terrorism dramatically alters the demand for security and law enforcement workers. It is not clear that this increased demand has been fully taken into account in the most recent BLS occupational projections.
- Demand will be brisk in other occupations where workers share the same characteristics as corrections officers.
- The economic slowdown of 2001–2003 temporarily obscured the growth in demand for civilian sector workers that will become apparent as the economy recovers in 2004 and beyond.
- The demand for corrections officers and occupations that compete in the same workforce pool will grow rapidly in the years ahead.

Section IV: Looking Ahead at the Supply Side

This section examines the workforce pool from which corrections officers may be recruited. It focuses on the demographic groups that have traditionally supplied the bulk of the corrections workforce. We pose the question: "Is it likely that those traditional reservoirs will be adequate to supply future needs of the corrections workforce?"

The nation's pool of 25-44 year olds is shrinking.

Between 2000 and 2010, the U.S. Census Bureau projects that the number of Americans aged 25 to 44 will drop by over 4 million (Figure 23). This dramatic decrease has two causes: (1) The huge Baby-Boomer Generation will all have aged into their late forties and beyond; and (2) the younger generation that follows the Baby-Boomers is numerically much smaller.

Figure 23

Projected Change in the 25-44 Year-Old Population, 2000-2010, by Ethnic Group, in Thousands

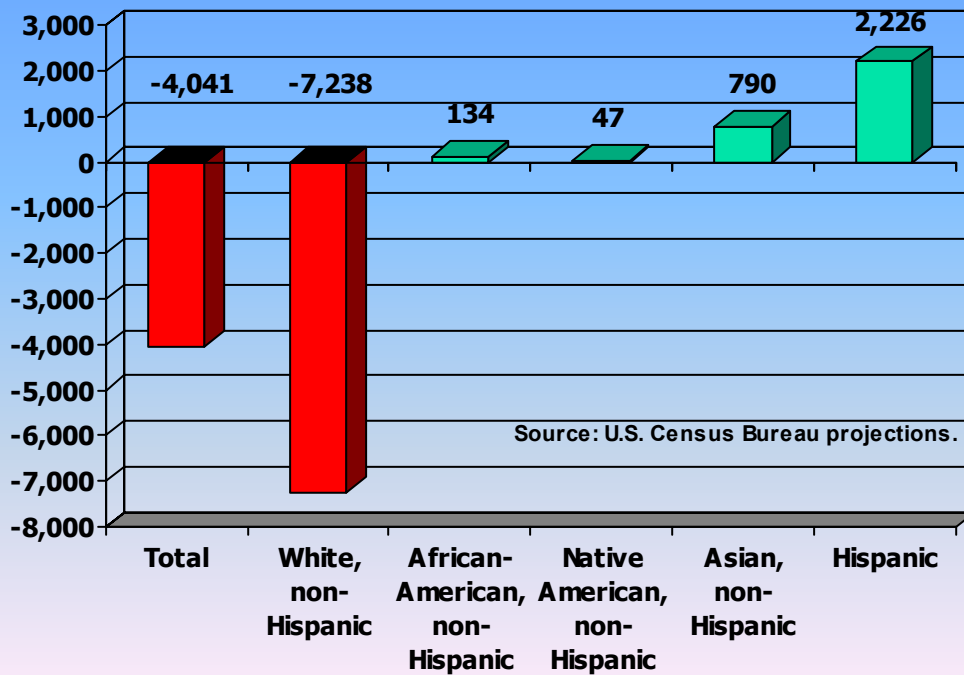
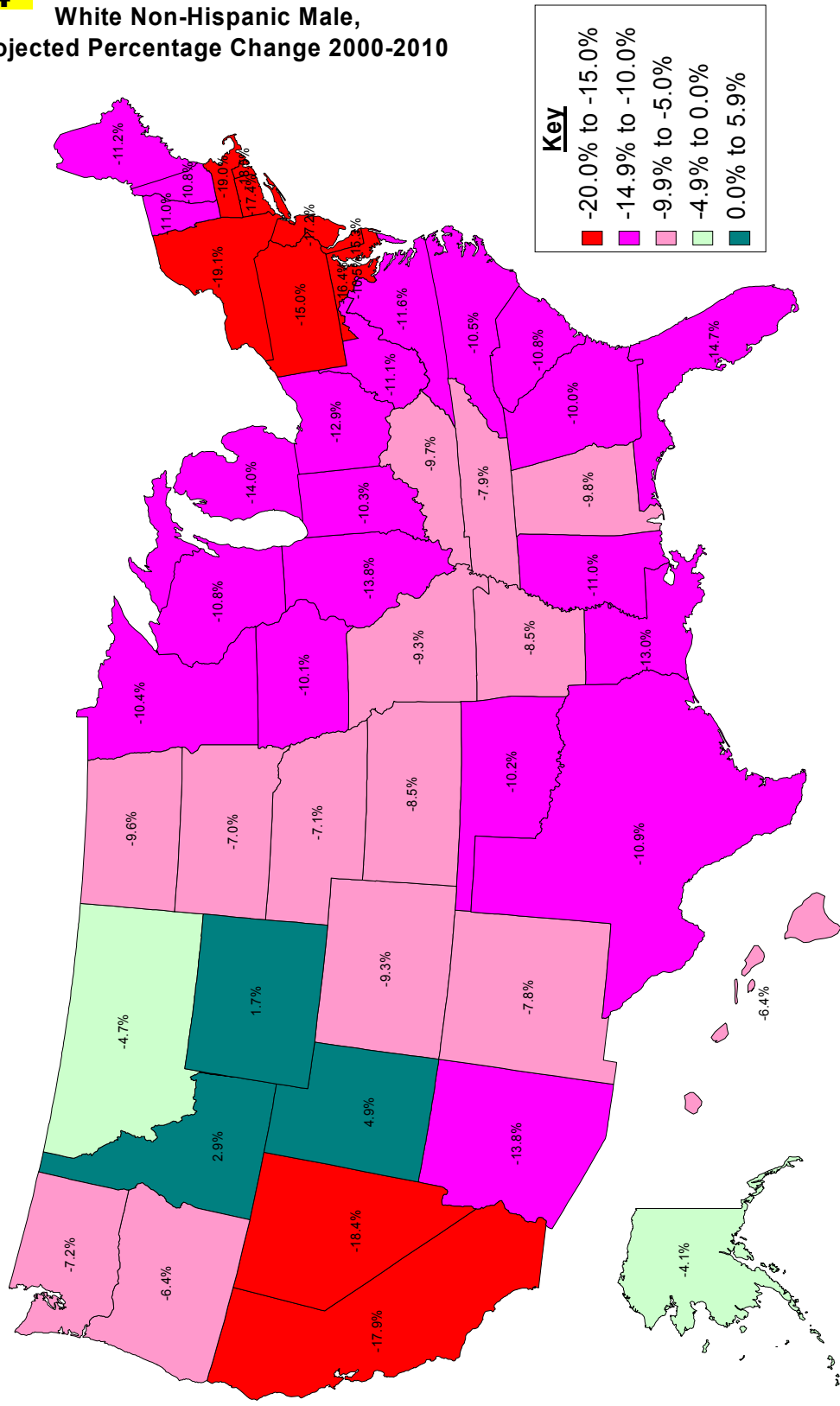


Figure 24

**White Non-Hispanic Male,
Projected Percentage Change 2000-2010**



White non-Hispanics will account for all of this shrinkage...and then some.

Nationally, the number of white non-Hispanics aged 25 to 44 is projected to decline by over 7 million in this decade. White non-Hispanic males ages 25 to 44, the group from which the bulk of America's correctional officers have been recruited, is projected to drop by 12.5% or 3.6 million.

Some states will see a much sharper decline in the white non-Hispanic population than others (Figure 24). That would be the case with populous states on both coasts including California, New York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and others. All of these states will see the number of white non-Hispanic males decline by from 15% to 20%.

Table 11

Degree of Alignment of States' Corrections Recruitment with Their Projected Demographic Change														
States seriously out of alignment	Projected change in white non-Hispanic male population, 2000-2010		Percent white hired, 2000	States out of alignment		Projected change in white non-Hispanic male population, 2000-2010		Percent white hired, 2000	States in reasonable alignment		Projected change in white non-Hispanic male population, 2000-2010			
	Hispanic	male		Hispanic	male	Hispanic	male		Hispanic	male	Hispanic	male		
NH	-10.8%	98.7%	98.7%	NV	-18.4%	79.9%	79.9%	CT	-17.4%	65.4%	65.4%	LA	-13.0%	50.0%
ND	-9.6%	98.9%	91.0%	NE	-7.1%	83.9%	83.9%	IN	-10.3%	72.1%	72.1%	DE	-15.3%	47.4%
MA	-19.0%	89.3%	83.9%	MI	-14.0%	87.9%	87.9%	FL	-14.7%	65.9%	65.9%	OR	-6.4%	53.7%
ME	-11.2%	94.4%	77.4%	KS	-8.5%	77.4%	77.4%	TN	-7.9%	71.5%	71.5%	GA	-10.0%	47.2%
MN	-10.4%	92.8%	77.7%	IL	-13.8%	69.7%	69.7%	NJ	-17.2%	61.0%	61.0%	AL	-9.8%	45.5%
IA	-10.1%	93.1%	77.7%	OH	-12.9%	77.3%	77.3%	AZ	-13.8%	64.2%	64.2%	SC	-10.8%	37.8%
SD	-7.0%	95.4%	74.8%	RI	-18.5%	77.3%	74.8%	NC	-10.5%	56.9%	56.9%	AR	-8.5%	38.4%
PA	-15.0%	87.0%	79.6%	OK	-10.2%	79.6%	79.6%	VA	-11.6%	54.7%	54.7%	NM	-7.8%	32.5%
KY	-9.7%	91.5%	79.6%	CO	-9.3%	74.8%	74.8%	TX	-10.9%	54.8%	54.8%	MD	-16.4%	21.7%
MO	-9.3%	90.2%	79.6%	AK	-4.1%	79.6%	79.6%	NY	-19.1%	44.9%	44.9%	MS	-11.0%	26.6%
												HI	-6.4%	11.4%
												DC	-10.5%	0.0%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau population projections; The Corrections Yearbook 2001, p. 162.

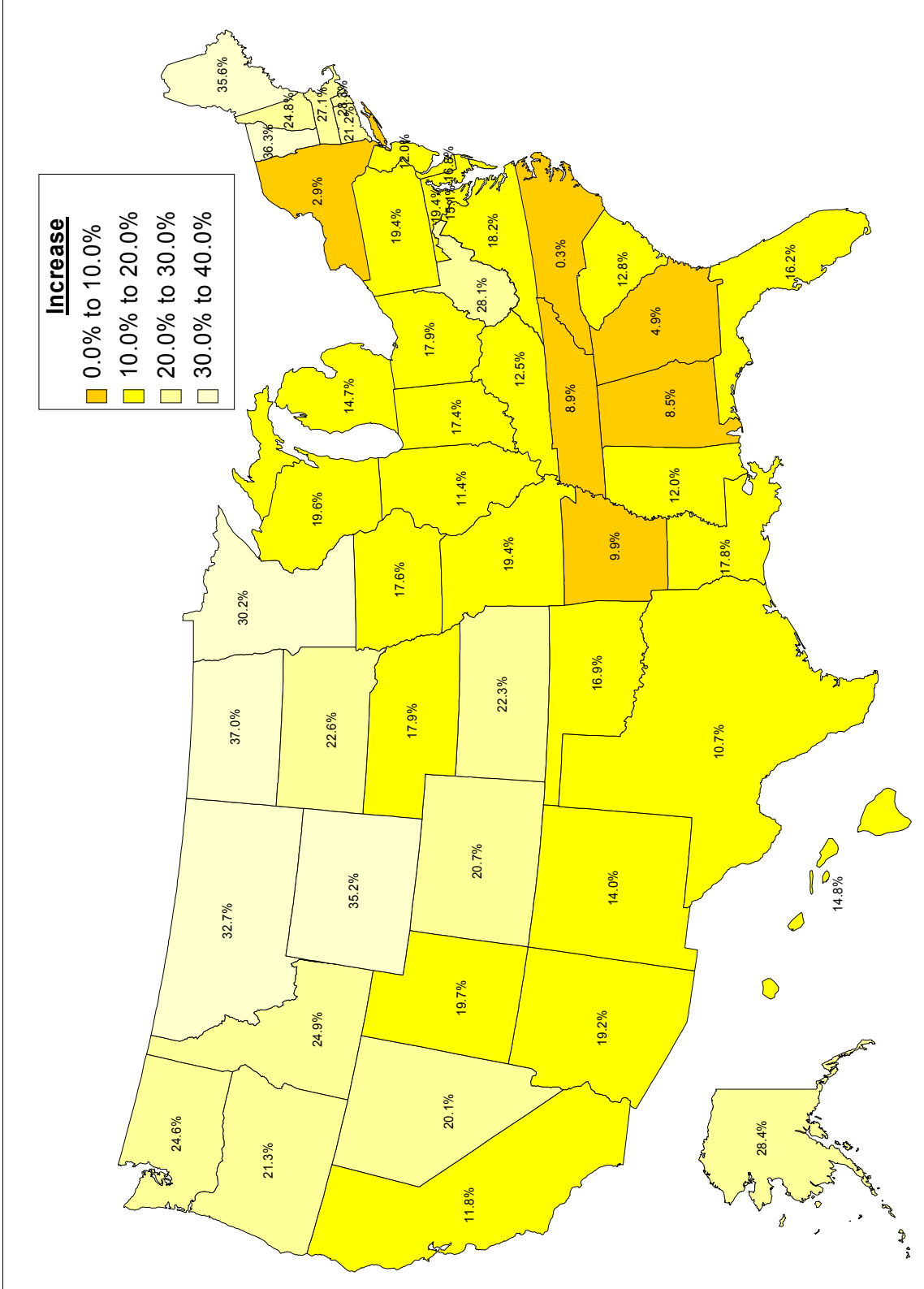
Some states' recruitment practices focus more on diversity.

Table 11 displays all states for which data are available on the ethnicity of corrections personnel hired in 2000. Displayed also for each state is the projected change in its male, white, non-Hispanic population for the period 2000-2010.

States judged "out of alignment" are those that recruit overwhelmingly from the workforce pool of male, white non-Hispanics but which also face sharp declines in the numbers of persons in that same pool during this decade. In New Hampshire, for example, 98.7% of corrections officers hired in 2000 were white non-Hispanic (71.1% were also male). But New Hampshire faces a nearly 11% drop in its male, white, non-Hispanic population in this decade.

Figure 25

Hispanic Males; Projected Percentage Change, 2000-2010



Summary of this section:

From this survey of the demographics of workforce supply for America's corrections institutions, several key points emerge:

- The nation's pool of 25-44 year olds is shrinking. The Census Bureau projects it to decline by over 4 million in this decade.
- White non-Hispanics are the most rapidly shrinking demographic pool. The Census Bureau projects a drop of over 7 million between 2000 and 2010.
- Hispanics are the most significantly growing demographic group followed by Asians.
- This is equivalent to saying that the workforce pool from which many, although not all, states continually endeavor to recruit most of their corrections officers is declining.
- Despite nationwide movements toward diversity in recent decades, this diminishing workforce pool is the same one that many employers continue to favor in their recruitment practices.
- Some states have aligned their corrections recruitment practices with the emerging demographic realities much more than others.
 - ⇒ Those states that attempt to recruit from a familiar male, white, non-Hispanic workforce pool, which face sharp declines in the years ahead, will confront some difficult challenges.
 - ⇒ These states will either need to realign their recruiting practices with demographic realities or they will need to make corrections a much more attractive employment option....or both.

Section V: Promising Human Resource Practices From Around the Nation

Recruitment and retention of corrections officers constitute significant challenges for correctional institutions all over the nation. Turnover is a difficult problem in many states. It undermines staff morale and raises the costs for recruiting in each facility. However, many states are conscientiously working to lower their rates and improve retention of their corrections officers both to control costs and to enhance safety.

What follows in this section are examples of some of the many promising practices around the country that are effectively addressing the turnover problem and the interrelated challenges of recruiting and retaining corrections officers.

1. Illinois publicly recognizes its corrections officers.

As one of the largest states in the country, Illinois has kept the turnover rate of corrections officers at a comparatively low 8.3% while its hiring rate also stands at 8.5%. One of the reasons for this low rate is how Illinois recognizes the contribution of its officers to public safety in the state. Recently Governor Rod R. Blagojevich recognized four front line employees of the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) as recipients of the Correctional Officer of the Year Award. He also commended and thanked all corrections employees for the important work they do in protecting the public from danger. This year's top four employees were presented with a \$500 check, membership in the American Correctional Association and given the opportunity to address those present for the award. The nominees are judged on leadership, initiative, professionalism and service to their community and career.

2. Michigan has extensive training for its new corrections officers.

Michigan has also kept its turnover rate to a respectable 4.5% with new hiring rate at 14%. One of the major reasons for such low turnover is the attention that Michigan gives to new employee training that amounts to 640 hours for officers. New employee training is held at the employee's worksite and at the Michigan Corrections Academy. The core new employee training is basic correctional training programs that are applicable to all new employees. New employees hired for corrections officer positions begin their new employee training at the academy and receive an orientation to their worksite later during their training program. Following this, employees receive additional training depending on the amount of offender contact and specific job assignment they will have. For more information, see:

<http://www.michigan.gov/corrections/1,1607,7-119-1438-5506--,00.html>

3. New Jersey extensively screens potential corrections officers.

The Garden State has a very low turnover rate for its corrections officers of 5% with a lower than average hiring rate of 10.7%. It has particularly targeted its website to give extensive information to potential candidates to let them know the high standards and extensive testing that they will be required to undergo. The website also includes competitive salaries and opportunities for advancement and other opportunities in the corrections field. For more information about New Jersey's approach to recruiting, go to: <http://www.state.nj.us/corrections/careers.html>

4. Oklahoma has many excellent programs designed to improve its recruiting and retention practices among corrections officers.

The Oklahoma Department of Corrections (ODOC) has developed a variety of strategies to attract talented, qualified, and well-informed applicants. The ODOC promotes the agency's mission and values; emphasizes the outstanding employee benefits package; provides enhanced access to vacancy announcements; provides a streamlined application process with multimedia availability; provides enhanced accessibility to merit system testing; utilizes employees to help in the recruitment effort; leverages all key advertising components; uses creative incentive items to increase name recognition; showcases agency employees in the agency's recruitment video as well as recruitment displays; establishes partnerships within local communities; maximizes the employee retention program to recruit new employees; and benchmarks trends nationwide.

The cornerstone of the agency's recruitment efforts is its web page accessible at the following link:

<http://www.doc.state.ok.us/humanresources/recruitment.htm>

The website provides immediate access from the agency's home page to employment information; features employee testimonials about the favorable working conditions; provides information about the testing and interviewing process including sample test questions and interview tips; provides e-mail access to the Human Resources senior staff team from every page; includes an Any Time Job Information Line phone number on every page; provides access to a resume builder; provides links to other websites about life in Oklahoma; and provides extensive information about the agency's work/life programs including employee wellness, eldercare, employee assistance as well as employee recognition. Opportunities for part-time work and flexible schedules are particularly popular. Internships have

proved an excellent way of introducing young people to corrections and encouraging them to stay in the field after completion of their degree.

The department also reaches out to retired military personnel and those looking for second or third careers through program partnerships such as the Veterans On-the-Job Training Program and career fairs conducted around the state. All serious correctional officer candidates must watch a video about realistic scenarios within the corrections environment and complete a willingness checklist before they are permitted to test for the position.

Oklahoma also works hard to adequately address employee retention. Feedback is solicited from new hires in an effort to evaluate the effectiveness of recruitment efforts. Feedback is solicited from current employees through periodic administration of an employee attitude survey. Survey results are provided to agency managers who are then required to establish employee committees who are responsible for developing specific strategies to address areas identified as needing improvement. Managers routinely report retention plan progress to the agency director. Feedback is also solicited from employees who separate from the agency via a two-part employee exit survey system.

The Oklahoma Department of Corrections also has an outstanding leadership/management development program designed to provide career development opportunities to every level of supervisor and manager in the agency. The plan is progressive in design, supporting the values, mission, and vision of the agency at every level. Information about the agency's leadership development program can be found at the following link:

<http://www.doc.state.ok.us/Training/leadership.htm>.

For additional information about Oklahoma's recruitment and retention program, contact Debbie Boyer at 405-425-2844 (phone) or deb-bie.boyer@doc.state.ok.us.

5. Pennsylvania offers a comprehensive booklet about corrections jobs.

Pennsylvania also enjoys a low turnover rate of 4.8% and a hiring rate of 12.4%. It has invested in the production of an 18-page booklet that describes in great detail about the corrections field, the environment a new employee can be expected to work in, as well as benefits and opportunities for career advancement. For a copy of this booklet, see:

<http://www.cor.state.pa.us/CiC%202002.pdf>. It is unique in highlighting the nearly one hundred different jobs and their respective educational requirements that are necessary to the successful functioning of a correctional facility.

6. Utah is working to equalize pay for its law enforcement and corrections officers.

In part to deal with the turnover rate, and to recognize the value of the peace officer work performed by correctional officers, Utah is restructuring its salary structure. The new structure recognizes the difficult nature of providing law enforcement services to an incarcerated population and the resulting contribution to public safety. For more information go to:

<http://www.slsheriff.org/html/org/corrections-bureau.html>

7. Virginia places emphasis on a strong orientation and training program for its incoming and incumbent corrections officers.

To keep its turnover rate below 10%, the Virginia Department of Corrections has stressed continuous improvement and training. Its Academy for

Staff Development works actively with the 11,000 plus DOC employees to help them become highly trained. It does this with a curriculum development and delivery process that includes on-going needs assessment, state-of-the-art methods of training presentation, and multifaceted program evaluation. For more information about this comprehensive program, go to: <http://www.vadoc.state.va.us/about/training/default.htm>.

Appendix I

ACA Correctional Officers Workforce Project

Questionnaire

Based on your own experience, please give us your own perception of these issues:

How difficult is it now to **recruit** properly qualified applicants for correctional officers' positions? (please check only one)

Extremely difficult	<input type="radio"/>	Not particularly difficult	<input type="radio"/>
Fairly difficult	<input type="radio"/>	Easy	<input type="radio"/>
Don't know	<input type="radio"/>		

How difficult is it now to **retain** correctional officers? (please check only one)

Extremely difficult	<input type="radio"/>	Not particularly difficult	<input type="radio"/>
Fairly difficult	<input type="radio"/>	Easy	<input type="radio"/>
Don't know	<input type="radio"/>		

If you perceive significant difficulty in **recruiting** properly qualified applicants for correctional officers' positions, what do you think are the three most important reasons for that difficulty? Please indicate **only** three (3)!

Poor recruitment practices	o	Inadequate pay & benefits	o
Perceived lack of career prospects in recruitment	o	Competition for recruits including that from security, law enforcement, etc.	o
Hours and shift work	o	Personal safety of corrections officers	o
Poor public image of the corrections profession	o	Inability of too many applicants to meet job requirements	o
Location of corrections facilities	o	Shortage of applicants; work-force pool is too shallow and/or applicants are poorly qualified	o
Young people lack knowledge of corrections as a profession	o	Other aspects of working conditions	o
Other (please specify)			

If you perceive significant difficulty in **retaining** correctional officers, what do you think are the three most important reasons for that difficulty? Please indicate **only** three (3)!

Corrections supervisors poorly qualified to supervise rank & file	o	Inadequate educational and training possibilities	o
Perceived lack of career prospects in corrections	o	Competition from other security and law enforcement agencies.	o
Onerous hours and shift work	o	Personal safety concerns	o
Violation of work rules and/or rules of conduct by employees	o	Wrong initial selection; employee not suited or qualified for the job	o
Officers promoted up & out of position	o	Stress & burnout	o
Inadequate pay & benefits	o	Lack of occupational prestige	o
Other (please specify)			

If you perceive significant difficulty in **recruiting or retaining** correctional officers, what do you think are the three most important **consequences** of that difficulty? Please indicate **only** three (3)!

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More litigation	o	Diminished security within facili-	o
High turnover costs (recruitment,	o	Diminished security for society.	o
More expensive overtime shift work	o	Inadequate and/or inexperienced staffing	o
Must pay higher wages	o	Complicates personnel manage-	o
Compromises inmate manage-	o	Greater stress & burnout on re-	o
Makes recruitment harder	o	Results in low morale	o
Other (please specify)			

What studies and/or research are you aware of that has been done, or is underway (locally, statewide, nationally, or by an association) that might provide valuable information for this project and who can be contacted for this information?

Do you know of "Best Practices" or "Promising Practices" in recruiting and/or retaining correctional officers that we should be aware of? If so, what are they and who can we contact to learn more about them?

As we enter the "Discover Phase" of this project, list below other areas that you believe should be looked into that will help to better understand and respond to the issue of attracting and retaining individuals to the corrections professions.

If you would like to actively participate in this project, how might your services best be utilized?

Your name: _____ Position: _____

Organization _____

Mail address: _____

Email address: _____

Telephone: _____

Thanks very much for your help!

Appendix II

State & Federal Agencies Responding to the Survey

Organizations Responding to the ACA 2003 Employer Survey
Alabama Department of Corrections
Alaska Department of Corrections
Arizona Department of Corrections
Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections
Arkansas Department of Correction
California Department of Corrections
California Youth Authority
Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Correction
Connecticut Department of Corrections
Connecticut Juvenile Training School
Delaware Department of Corrections
Federal Bureau of Prisons
Florida Department of Juvenile Justice
Georgia Department of Corrections
Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice
Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections
Illinois Department of Corrections
Indiana Department of Corrections
Kansas Juvenile Justice Authority
Kentucky Department of Corrections
King County Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention
Louisiana Dept of Corrections - Swanson Correctional Center
Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections
Maryland Department of Juvenile Services
Maryland Department of Public Safety & Correctional Services
Miami-Dade Corrections & Rehabilitation Department
Michigan Department of Corrections
Minnesota Department of Corrections
Mississippi Department of Corrections
Missouri Department of Corrections
Mountain View Youth Development Center
Nebraska Department of Correctional Services
Nevada Youth Correctional Services
New Hampshire Department of Corrections
New Jersey Juvenile Justice Commission
New Mexico Corrections Department
New York City Department of Correction
New York Department of Correctional Services
North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation
Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction
Oregon Department of Corrections
Pennsylvania Bureau of State Children and Youth Program
Pennsylvania Department of Corrections
Philadelphia Prison System
Rhode Island Department of Corrections
South Carolina Department of Corrections
South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice
South Dakota State Penitentiary
Texas Department of Criminal Justice
Vermont Department of Corrections
Virginia Department of Corrections
Washington State Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration
West Virginia Division of Corrections
Wisconsin Department of Corrections
Wisconsin Department of Corrections, Division of Juvenile Corrections
Wyoming Boys' School
Wyoming Girls' School
Wyoming Department of Corrections