

MSA COST SAVINGS MEASURES

A) DEVELOPING INNOVATIVE PERSONNEL INITIATIVES, INCLUDING REDUCING OVERTIME COSTS AND THE RATIO OF PERSONNEL TO SUPERVISORS

As can be seen in the individual submissions, many offices have been using various strategies to achieve personnel savings.

- Closed units
- Positions left vacant
- Limiting backfills
- Monetary retirement incentives

As a group, the MSA has sought to achieve efficiencies and reduce staff needs by collaborating on training, both in the officer training academies and in-service review. The MSA Education and Training Committee is comprised of the training directors from each sheriff's office and meets monthly to share best practices, troubleshoot issues, learn of current risks and liabilities, and to share training resources. Rather than each sheriff's office needing a full complement of instructors trained in all the requisite disciplines, the ETC works to develop a team of qualified teachers and certified instructors across the MSA. The instructors in each discipline will then lead classes, as necessary, to keep an adequate number of MSA-wide staff trained as trainers. These trainers are then available to teach classes at any county, as well as to hold regional and statewide training opportunities.

The ETC has also completed work over the past few years to institute a uniform, core basic recruit training academy curriculum for all sheriffs' offices across the state. This core curriculum not only insures that all county correctional officers in Massachusetts receive a uniform level of instruction in the training academy, but it allows a relocating county correctional officer to be hired by another sheriff's office without requiring that person to go through the time and expense of a new academy class. It also allows basic recruit training academies to be run regionally, as multiple counties can train a smaller group rather than waiting for a full classroom of their own. This can help reduce overtime costs at each of those offices. Finally, the ETC is now working on expanding regional training opportunities and creating more formal regional training academies.

Overtime costs and the ratio of personnel to supervisors could also be addressed more immediately if sheriffs had an option to encourage some of their senior supervisors to retire early and then replacing those officers with entry-level corrections officers. This would favorably affect the ratio of officers to supervisors, reduce total salaries, and provide additional officers to reduce the need for overtime. Sheriffs' offices, through the MSA, would like to propose that a one-time, targeted ERIP be authorized for counties that can benefit from it. The MSA would be willing to work with, and to provide data to, the Administration and the Legislature to help construct the most effective parameters of an ERIP.

The MSA also believes that additional personnel and overtime savings is possible with the resolution of two initiatives involving the judiciary. First, a future interface with MassCourts, the case management system used in the state's court system, will realize savings on staffing and overtime. The introduction

of electronic documents, such as a mittimus, will greatly improve scheduling, transportation, and record keeping at the sheriffs' offices, and, in turn, allow staffing to be adjusted in a way that reduces payroll and overtime. The MSA has been part of an external stakeholder's group under MassCourts for the past few years and looks forward to working with all its partners to create these efficiencies.

Video conferencing court sessions offers another opportunity to save on staff and overtime costs. After discussions and meetings with court administrators, sheriffs are ready, willing and able to utilize this technology to the greatest extent possible. The reduction in transportation trips for offenders will save on personnel costs, cut transportation expenses, and greatly reduce liability and safety issues that are unavoidable when taking an offender outside of the facility. In addition, health care and security costs can be lessened, and the introduction of contraband, such as illegal drugs, will be greatly reduced due to the offender remaining in a secure, rather than public, facility.

B) CONSOLIDATING INMATE MEDICAL AND OTHER VENDOR SERVICES

Sheriffs, acting through the MSA, have begun taking steps that they hope might lead to a consolidation of some vendor services, including some medical services. These steps include:

- Procurement policies are being reviewed to ensure that, whenever possible, future contract bids will be solicited as open to all sheriffs so any MSA member can utilize a favorable contract.
- Sheriffs are compiling a report of all the contracts used at each office over the past fiscal year. Said report will specify which procurements are made off a state contract, and which are done under different terms. Offices not using a state contract for any particular good or service shall investigate the possibility of joining the state contract or collaborate with other sheriffs' offices to investigate if a collective procurement might yield increased purchasing power and greater savings.
- The MSA is currently pursuing a shared document environment that will allow sheriffs to post and share their contract information for review and use by all other sheriffs' offices. This will allow offices to compare contracts and align service dates to allow offices to pursue additional collective procurements in the future.
- The shared document environment will also include a listing of all equipment (law enforcement, training or facility maintenance) available at each sheriff's office. Sharing these resources may provide opportunities to reduce purchase and lease costs for many of these items. Currently, a mobile firearms trailer owned by one sheriff's office is being shared with other MSA offices to allow necessary training and re-certifications to take place on site.
- The MSA is planning a full day procurement workshop to allow offices in the same region, with the same vendors, or procuring the same goods and services to compare rates, costs and requirements in an effort to find other opportunities to develop additional cost-effective strategies.
- Similarly, medical directors from across the MSA will also confer in the workshop setting to review ways shared medical service contracts might be utilized while maintaining appropriate service levels. The medical directors will also meet to investigate other service delivery models, some making more extensive use of emerging technologies, to reduce costs, travel and

overtime. Consideration may be given to various pilot programs to test the effectiveness of these alternative models.

- Offices are preparing for an effort to do an MSA-wide review of practices in each county in order to maximize all available MassHealth-related savings. Teams will be formed to perform a quality review of practices at each sheriff's office. Best practices related to medical billing will be put in place as necessary.
- The MSA also believes that additional savings might be realized once MassHealth implements its electronic portal to enroll inmates into its program under "suspension vs. termination". The MSA also believes that savings from prior fiscal years are being lost due to the new billing system utilized by MassHealth. MSA representatives have been in conversation with representatives from MassHealth and the Office of the State Comptroller for the past year and hope to formulate a remedy.
- All offices have already undertaken an effort to implement electronic medical records, which will hopefully reduce costs by keeping current, accurate medical files that will eliminate repeating various tests and treatment protocols. In addition, most offices have undertaken implementing a single electronic medical records system, CorEMR, as part of the new inmate management system. Eventually we expect that the counties using CorEMR will be able to electronically and securely transfer an inmate's medical records when transferred or admitted at another county. This, again, will realize a savings on many of the routine tests and treatments.

C) ESTABLISHING UNIFORM STANDARDS AND PROGRAMMING ACROSS OFFICES

The MSA is currently attempting to undertake an effort to develop a consensus around the establishment of uniform standards and programming across all offices. Such an effort requires extensive discussion from both practitioners and policy makers at each department. With fourteen elected sheriffs and many more corrections professionals speaking for their offices, these discussions have proven to be quite complex. Given the many other reporting activities facing the sheriffs, as well as the spending plan submission and the close of the Fiscal Year 2017, it has been difficult to complete this evaluation.

Working groups of custody, medical, mental health and programming are meeting to attempt to collaborate on a uniform description of the primary care and custody operation across all offices. In turn, these efforts will then be review by a committee of facility superintendents and given final approval by the sheriffs. The MSA respectfully requests your patience on this substantial request. We would expect to provide you with a final definition as part of the upcoming December 1st deadline.