**ESSEX COUNTY SHERIFF’S DEPARTMENT**

The Essex County Sheriff’s Department (ECSD) believes reentry preparation begins the moment a person enters our facility. ECSD is committed to providing opportunities for inmates by offering a continuum of care through a diverse myriad of services. Using innovative, evidence-based treatment programs, coupled with extensive medical, mental health, substance use disorder treatment programs, educational, career and college readiness, advising, life skills and vocational training programs, inmates are provided the greatest potential for successful reentry. Prior to release, structured post-release plans are developed to connect the inmate with community-based services such as employment, housing, substance abuse, medical and mental health treatment, and other services to prevent recidivism.

ECSD serves 34 communities and the 800,000 residents of Essex County. We operate three jail facilities (Middleton, Lawrence and Salisbury), a Civil Process Division, and three Offices of Community Corrections. At the start of Fiscal Year 2021, ECSD had 569 full time employees of which 505 are academized staff. The full-time state employees are augmented by approximately 200 contractors and vendors, who provide specialized services in a cost-efficient manner, such as medical, mental health, substance abuse counseling, food services, religious and educational services.

ECSD’s Middleton correctional facility is a 31-year-old modular style campus design that contains eleven (11) inmate housing units and several separate inmate support service buildings. All housing units are staffed by trained Correctional Officers of various ranks on a full-time basis. Correctional Officer posts are responsible for the safety and security of inmates in addition to conducting regular counts, searches, supervising meals, medication distribution, sick calls, visits, laundry, recreation, and inmate movement in/out of the unit for operations and activities.

The ECSD’s annual general appropriation historically does not support the true financial needs of the Department. ECSD has grown reliant on reserve/supplemental appropriations that have surpassed $10 million annually since FY2016. The Department has been level funded for the past three years (FY2020-FY2022) and remains underfunded despite maintaining one of the largest inmate populations of all the Sheriff’s Jails and Houses of Corrections. Unfunded mandates from the legislature such as Criminal Justice Reform, opioid epidemic, substance abuse and mental health requirements, and police reform continue to challenge the budget. ECSD

maintains the second lowest average daily cost per inmate, while still trying to increase and improve reentry and rehabilitative services. Our budget is further challenged by our aging facility infrastructure that has surpassed its intended use occupancy. The inability to fund necessary repairs and preventative maintenance services further compounds the facility’s structural, mechanical, and technological challenges. We are currently experiencing critical security vulnerabilities both at the Middleton and Lawrence facilities. The door locking and camera mechanisms have regularly failed creating a dangerous risk situation for the agency, our staff, our inmates, and the communities around our facilities.

Despite our funding constraints, in FY19, ECSD spent 13% of all funding on medical services for inmates and 8% for services such as counseling, education, vocational training, and reentry services for a combined 21% total spending in FY19 for inmate services.  In FY19, ECSD still had the Regional Emergency Communication Center (RECC) spending that was $4.6M.  The RECC is now part of the Executive Office Public Safety and Security.  Our Medication Assisted Treatment program (MAT) began in FY2020.  Using FY19 spending, if we excluded the RECC spending and added MAT spending (approximately $2M) our percentage of overall spending on inmate services would be closer to 25%.  This demonstrates our commitment to providing services to inmates and our effectiveness in getting grant funding to supplement our continued insufficient state appropriation.

For the past several years, ECSD has been facing barriers in regard to officer recruitment and retention. The department is constantly in competition with Local, State, and Federal Law Enforcement. Corrections is viewed as a steppingstone to other public service agencies. The passage of the ‘Police Reform’ has also had a direct impact as many are reluctant to seek careers in law enforcement and corrections.   Since local and state police are struggling to recruit police officers, many of our correctional officers have left to join these agencies.  Furthermore, as part of ‘Police Reform’, the MPTC (Municipal Police Training Committee) has suspended all Reserve Officer Training which means any current or new, full time, academized corrections officers are no longer able to obtain certification allowing them to work Chapter 90 or mutual aid details as a means to bolster their earnings.

ECSD values its partnership with the cities and towns it serves and is proud of its Community Reinvestment Programs that assist these communities, and the Commonwealth, with valuable services and resources that otherwise would not be available. The programs are HIDTA/DEA Task Force, North Shore Gang Task Force, NEMLEC, Anti-Graffiti Unit, State House Work Crew, Community Service Program, K9 Unit, Youth Leadership Academy, Special Outreach Academy, Honor Guard, TRIAD, and Safe Keeps.