

Proceedings of the Special Commission on Correctional Funding

Section 101 of [Chapter 41 of the Acts of 2019](#) established the Special Commission on Correctional Funding. The Special Commission on Correctional Funding began meeting in November 2019. It held in-person meetings on November 15, 2019; January 10, 2020; January 24, 2020; February 14, 2020; and March 3, 2020. Due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Special Commission stopped meeting until September 2020. The September 2020 meeting and all subsequent Commission meetings took place on Zoom. The Commission met on September 11, 2020; November 11, 2020; December 4, 2020; January 8, 2021; February 5, 2021; March 3, 2021; April 9, 2021; June 11, 2021; July 19, 2021; August 9, 2021; September 10, 2021; October 6, 2021; November 3, 2021; December 3, 2021; December 20, 2021; January 4, 2022; January 13, 2022; January 24 & 26, 2022; and January 31, 2022. Minutes for each Commission meeting, as well as Zoom recordings for all virtual meetings, are accessible [here](#).

The Commission created the Substance Use and Mental Health Subcommittee to collect and analyze data on mental health, substance use, and discretionary programming for each county/DOC during its April 3, 2021 meeting. The Subcommittee met outside of the Commission from May 2021 to December 2021 to collect and analyze programming data.

The Special Commission on Correctional Funding did several data gathering exercises over the course of the Commission to meet various pieces of the charge:

- Members of the Commission conducted a detailed cost analysis to determine staffing ratios and employee costs, as well as health care and programming costs for each county and DOC. Data was collected from the Massachusetts Management and Reporting System (MMARS), the state payroll system, data provided to the Ways and Means Committee, and data provided directly from each county and the Department of Corrections (DOC). All information was vetted by the relevant agency chief financial officer. See Appendix D.
- The Commission contracted with the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) to assist four pilot sites to complete a prototype staffing analysis. NIC provided training and guidance to Hampden, Bristol, and Essex Counties, and one DOC facility (Gardner). Each pilot site created a full staffing report, as well as an Executive Summary, which is available to the public. See Appendix E.
- The Mental Health and Substance Use Subcommittee, working with the Massachusetts Sheriff's Association and with each county and DOC, created a robust inventory of all programming offered by the counties and DOC for the Commission. This information was collected to determine actual spending on mental health and substance use disorder services, as well as to support a review of all discretionary programming offered in state prisons and houses of correction. See Appendices F and G.
- The Commission also collected a list of all county and DOC physical assets, infrastructure, buildings, and communications equipment. Each county and DOC provided its asset inventory report from the MMARS system in August – September 2021. See Appendix H.

- The Massachusetts Sheriffs Association (MSA) provided data on the financial impacts of Chapter 69. Additionally, one Commissioner calculated and submitted an analysis of the Impacts of Chapter 69. See Appendix I.
- Commission Chairs collected information about historical average daily population for each county and DOC, spanning from 1989-2020. Information was pulled from the Quarterly Reports on the Status of Prison Capacity, historically called the Quarterly Reports on the Status of Prison Overcrowding. See Appendix J.
- Commission Chairs also collected information from each county regarding cell and bed counts for each facility, referred to as Comparisons of Capacity Metrics. See Appendix K.