



MULTNOMAH COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Sheriff Nicole Morrissey O'Donnell

November 26, 2024

District Attorney Michael Schmidt
Multnomah County District Attorney's Office
1200 SW First Ave.
Portland, OR 97204

Re: 2024 Corrections Grand Jury Report

District Attorney Schmidt,

The Multnomah County Sheriff's Office has received the 2024 Corrections Grand Jury Report. I want to personally thank the Grand Jurors and your staff for the hard work that went into this year's review of our Multnomah County correctional facilities.

As an agency, we value the meaningful work by the Corrections Grand Jury, as they review the conditions and management of correctional facilities throughout Multnomah County. This oversight review process provides transparency and accountability into critical jail operations. These community members took time to hear the perspectives of both our staff and the adults in our custody whose voices add value to the overall understanding of the institutional environment.

I appreciate that the Grand Jury called attention to the immediate action needed for addressing staffing issues. This month, Multnomah County Chair Jessica Vega Pederson approved our request for a \$965,885 budget modification to expand our Human Resources Unit and cover multiple unfunded positions. The additional funding, along with a closer partnership with Central Human Resources and implementation of improvements in our HR processes will facilitate meaningful changes that will not only benefit the Corrections Divisions, but the entire agency.

I agree with the Grand Jurors that it is time to begin planning for a study related to the correctional facilities in Multnomah County. We must ensure that our facilities are safe and physically sound, not only to meet constitutional mandates, but also have the infrastructure to offer rehabilitative programs and reentry connections. To that end, the continued use of an aging high-rise, and splitting the incarcerated population between two different buildings, is not the most fiscally responsible.

This year's Grand Jury also highlighted the critical requirement for a strong relationship between the Sheriff's Office and clinical care providers, the County's Corrections Health Division. Through the continued prioritization of our interagency workgroup, we are streamlining shared communication, tackling operational challenges, and supporting the development or expansion of mental health and substance use disorder services. We are committed to this work and our partnership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nicole Morrisey O'Donnell".

Nicole Morrisey O'Donnell

Sheriff

CC: Chair Vega Pederson, Commissioner Meieran, Commissioner Beason, Commissioner Brim-Edwards, Commissioner Stegmann, Chief Deputy Reardon, Chief Deputy Alexander, Captain Kurtiss Morrison, Katie Burgard, Chris Liedle