



Public Safety Trends and 2025 Session Outlook

November 22, 2024

Public Safety & Homeland Security Agencies



- This presentation focuses on the correctional agencies, which are the Department of Corrections (DOC) and the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ).
 - These agencies comprise 66.4 percent of the Secretariat's total appropriation (FY 2025).

Source: Department of Planning and Budget (DPB), Operating Plan for Fiscal Year 2025, accessed November 14, 2024.

Outline

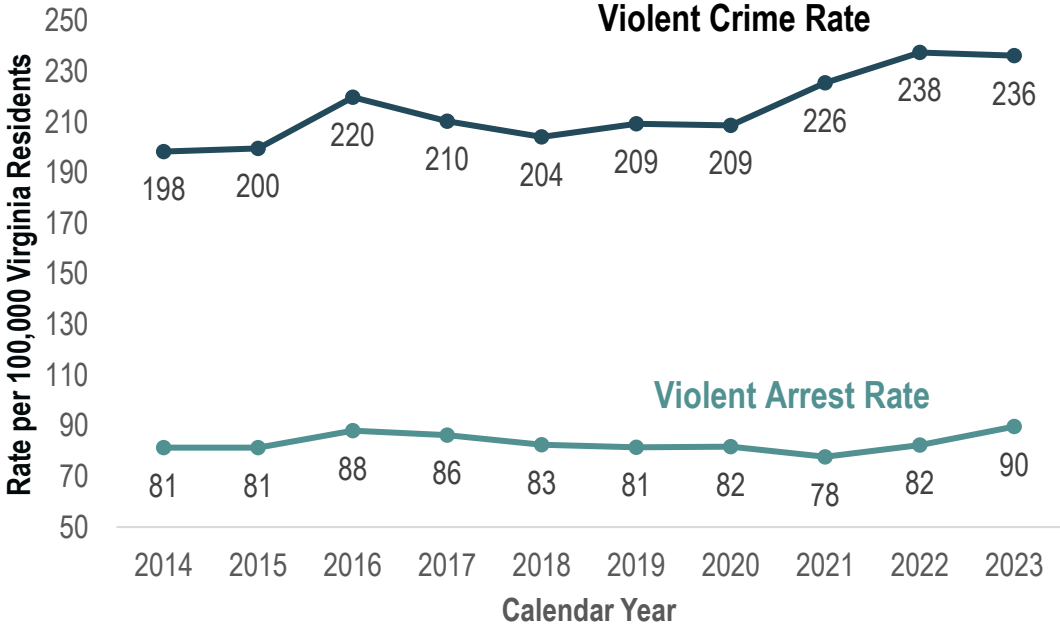
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Crime Rates in Virginia



2023 Virginia Violent Crime Rate Remained Relatively Steady After Increasing for Two Years

In 2023, Virginia's violent crime rate decreased by 0.5%.

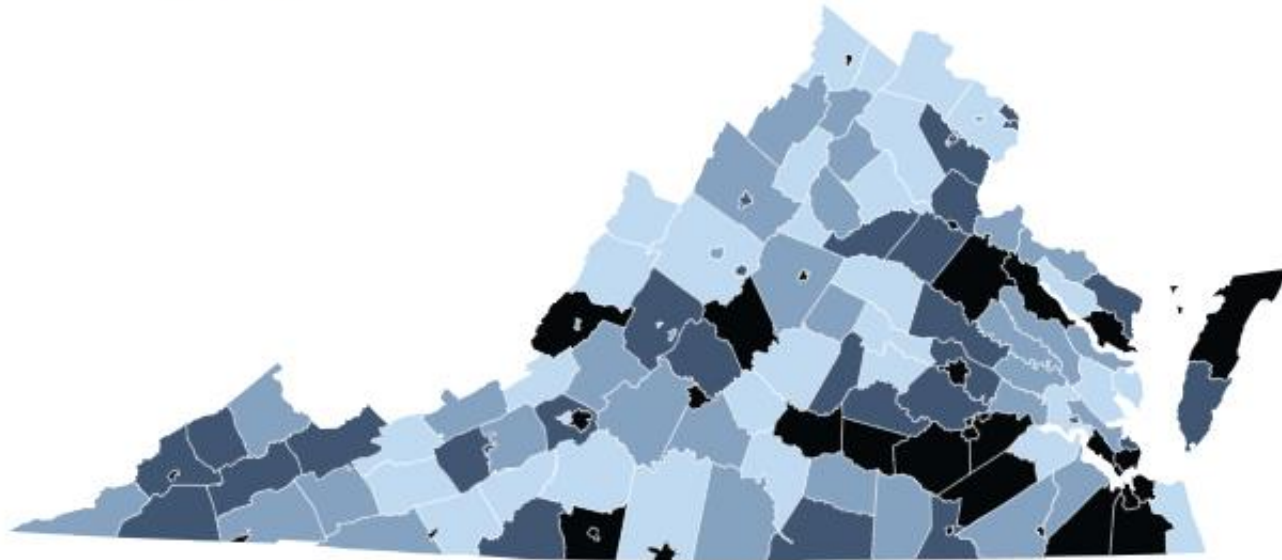
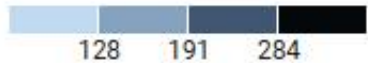


- Preliminary, partial year data indicates a decline in the Virginia violent crime rate of ~9.9 percent from 2023 to 2024.
- Of all violent crimes, the largest percentage decrease was the homicide rate (7.4 in 2022 to 6.0 in 2023).
- Violent crime rates over the past decade are lower than pre-2005 rates.
- Arrest rate increased 15.3 percent from 2021 to 2023, which is considered when forecasting future inmate populations.

Note: Difference between crime rate and arrest rate is due to individuals committing multiple offenses and the clearance rate, crimes that are solved or closed.
 Sources: Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Summary Report System dataset, September 23, 2024; VSP, staff email communications, October 3 and October 30, 2024.

Violent Crime Rate Varies by Locality

In 2023, violent crime rates in localities ranged from 23.9 to 902.5 per 100,000 residents.

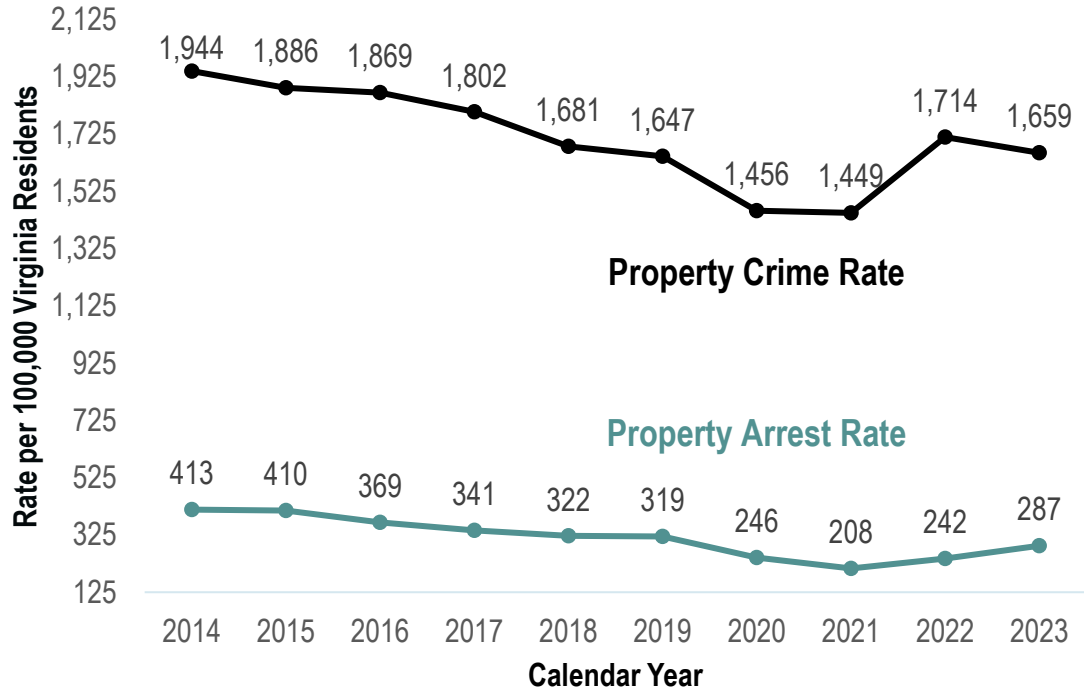


- Localities with violent crime rates over 500 are (from largest to smallest):
 - Newport News City
 - Portsmouth City
 - Petersburg City
 - Emporia City
 - Roanoke City
 - Franklin City
 - Suffolk City
 - Bristol City
 - Norfolk City
 - Fredericksburg City

Source: SFAC staff analysis of va.beyond2020.com data accessed October 13, 2024.

Property Crime Rates Decreased in 2023

Virginia's property crime rate decreased by 3.2% between 2022 and 2023.

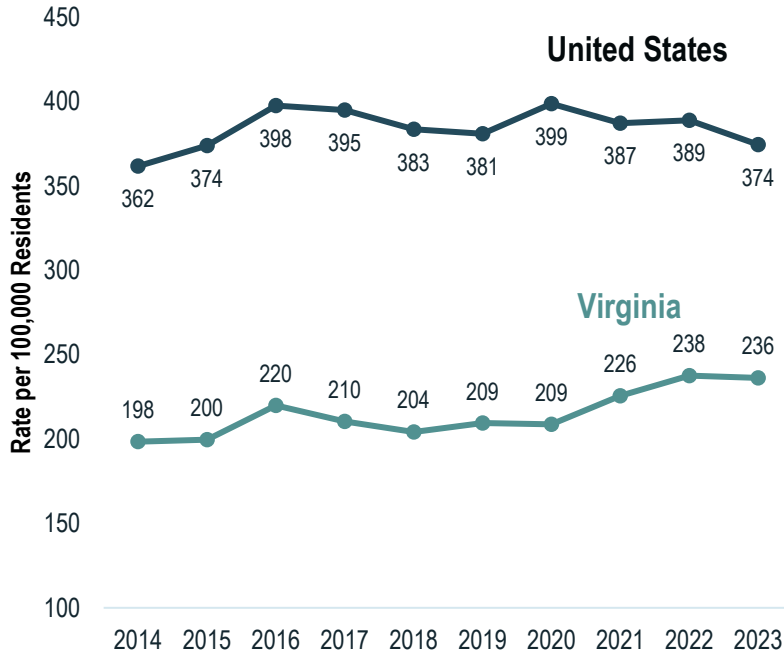


- Preliminary, partial year data shows a continued decline of approximately 4.2 percent from 2023 to 2024.
- Larceny* has comprised the majority of the property crime rate in Virginia, accounting for 82.2 percent in 2023.
 - Larceny crime rate decreased by 4.4 percent in 2023 after increasing 19.2 percent in 2022.
- Arrest rate increased 38.1 percent from 2021 to 2023 after decreasing each year since 2014.

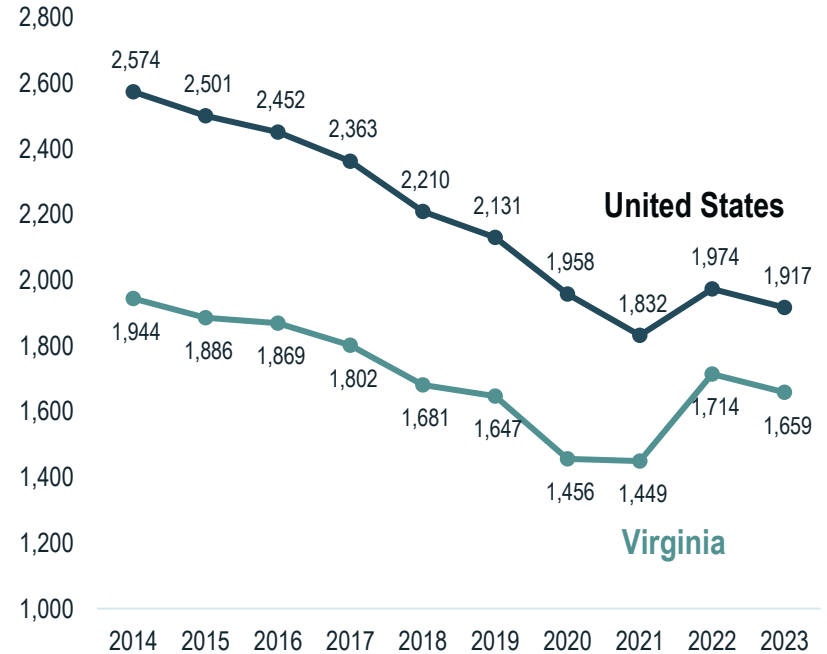
*Note: The FBI defines larceny as the unlawful taking, carrying, leading, or riding away of property from another person's possession.
Sources: FBI, Summary Report System dataset, September 23, 2024; VSP, staff email communication, October 3, 2024.

Crime Rates are Lower in Virginia than in the U.S., but Gap is Narrowing

Virginia's violent crime rate was 36.9% less than the national rate in 2023, compared to 45.3% less in 2014.



Virginia's property crime rate was 13.5% less than the national rate in 2023, compared to 24.5% less in 2014.

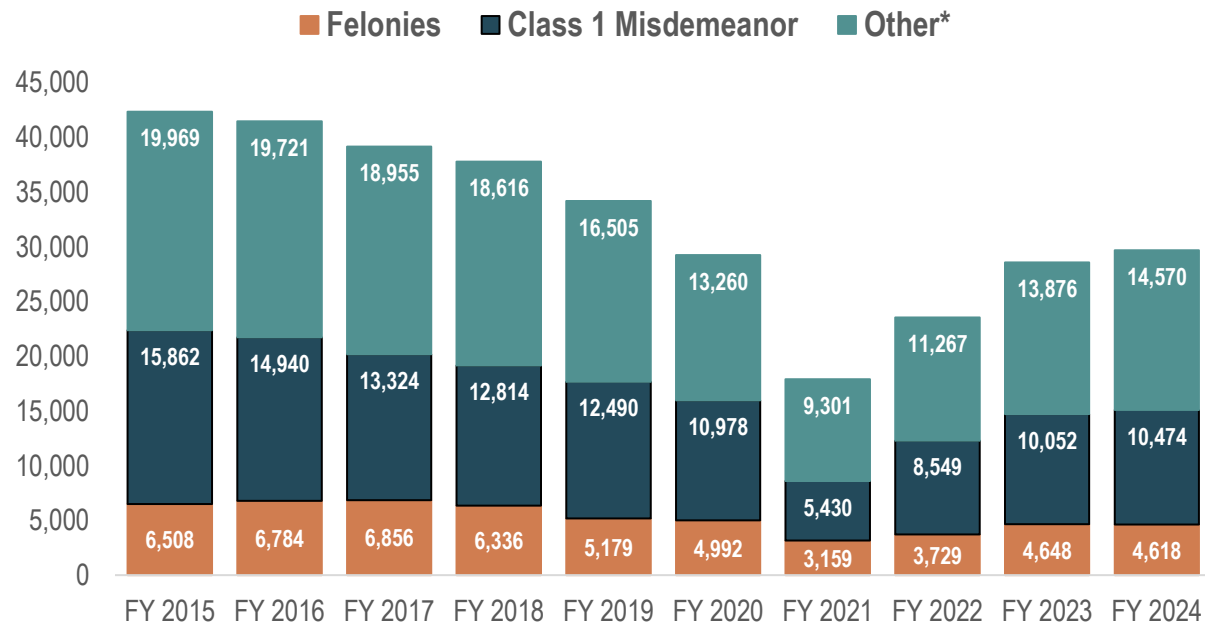


Note: Caution should be used in interpreting national crime statistics, especially in 2021 and 2022, since not all localities nationwide report to the FBI.

Source: FBI, Summary Report System dataset, September 23, 2024.

Juvenile Intake Cases Continue to Rebound after the Pandemic, but Growth Rate Has Slowed

Intake cases, a measure of the juvenile crime rate, increased by 3.8% in FY 2023, but are still 29.9% lower than FY 2015 levels.



- Total intake cases dropped from 34,174 in FY 2019 to 17,890 in FY 2021 (during the pandemic) and have partially rebounded, largely due to high growth rates in FY 2022 (31.6 percent) and FY 2023 (21.4 percent).
- In FY 2024, felony intake cases decreased but Class 1 misdemeanors and other* offenses have increased.

*Note: "Other" includes probation violations, failure-to appear, contempt of court, and other offenses.

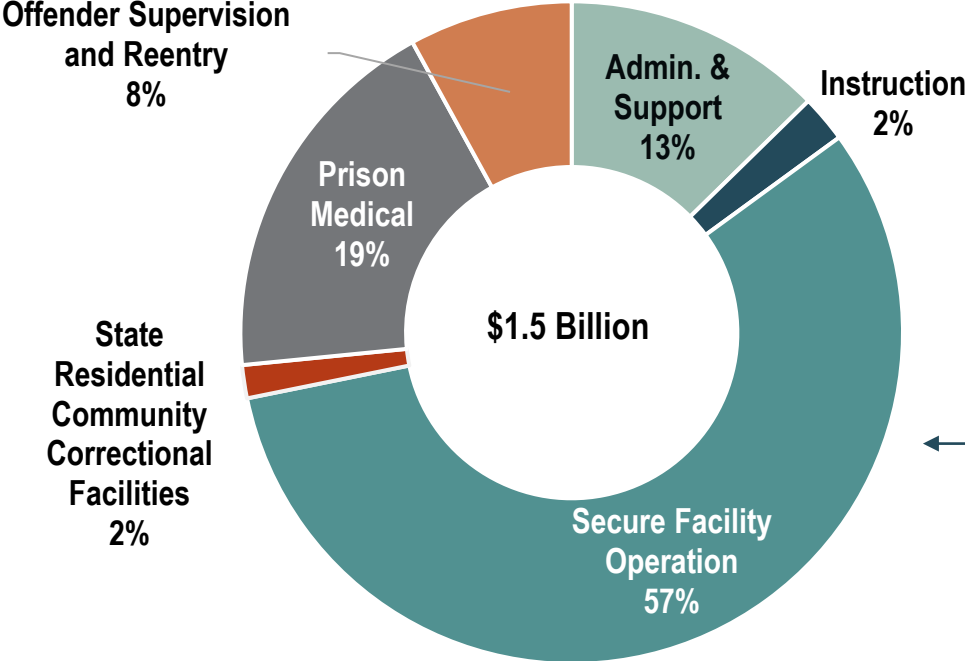
Source: DJJ, staff email communication, July 22, 2024.

State-Responsible Adult Population



State-Responsible (SR) Inmates Drive DOC Spending

In FY 2024, 57% of DOC expenditures were for secure facility operations.



SR Inmates

- Convicted of a felony offense with a sentence of one year* or more.
- All state-responsible inmates are in DOC custody.

DOC Secure Facilities (Prisons)

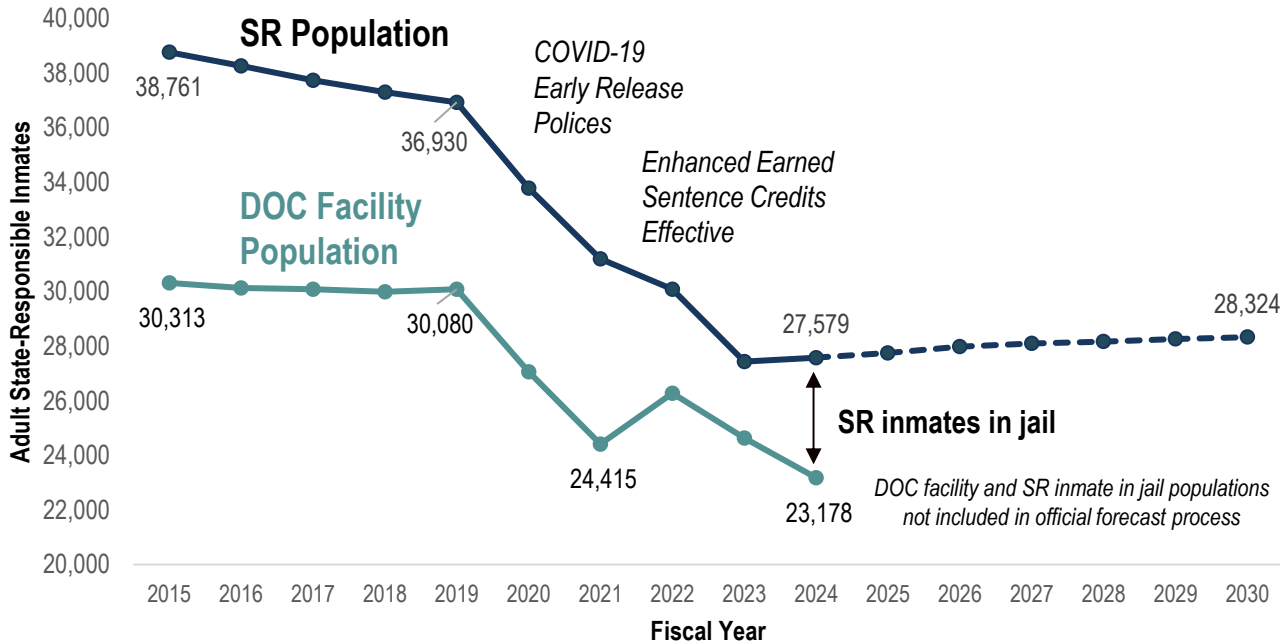
Local and Regional Jails

Source: DPB, Expendwise data, accessed October 21, 2024.

*Note: Or two years for inmates committed before 1995.

State-Responsible Inmate Population Expected to Remain Below Pre-2020 Levels

SR inmate population declined by 11,182 over the past decade (FY 2015 - FY 2024) and is projected to increase modestly by 745 over the next six years (FY 2024 - FY 2030).

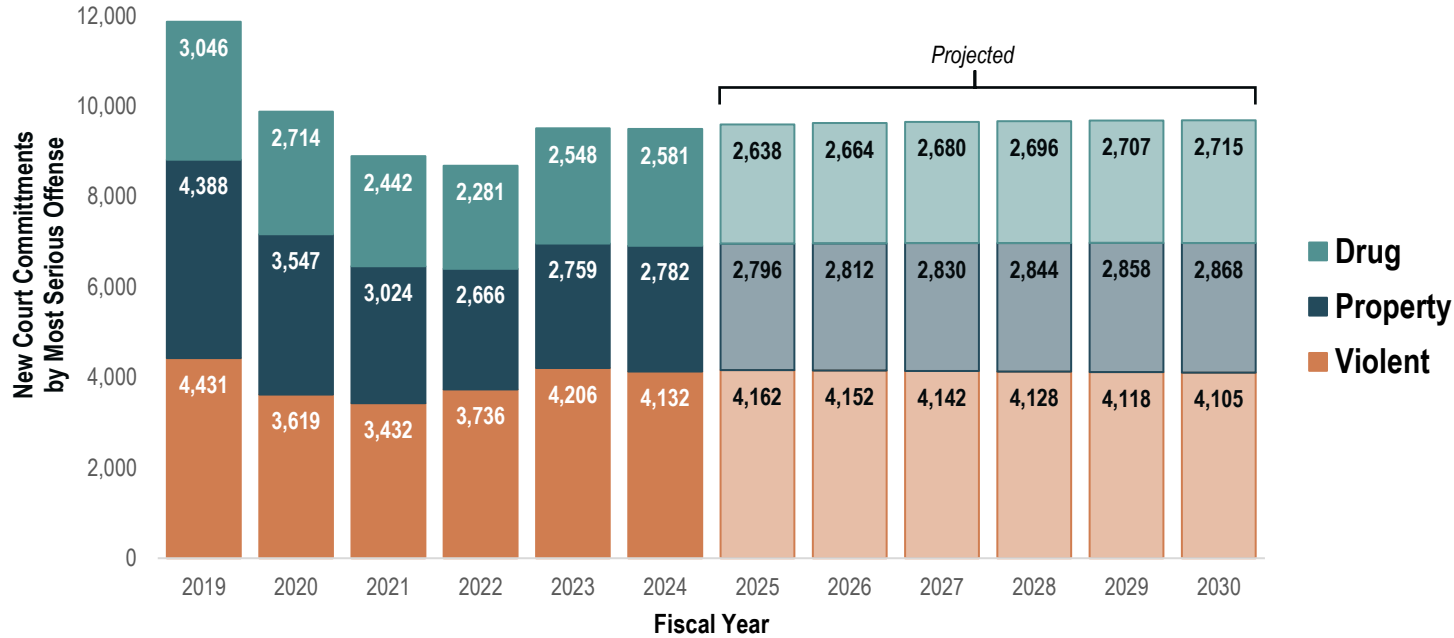


- DOC tracks the number of SR inmates in jails that have been in jail for more than 60 days after commitment to state custody.
 - 60 days allows time for classification and transfer to state facilities.
 - Over the past decade, SR inmates in jails for 60+ days have ranged from 192 to 5,088.

Sources: Office of the Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security (OSPSHS); Offender Population Forecasts, October 15, 2024; DOC, staff email communications, October 25, 2023. June 26, 2024; Compensation Board, staff email communication, October 24, 2024.

Property and Drug Convictions Driving the Modest Projected Increase in the Inmate Population

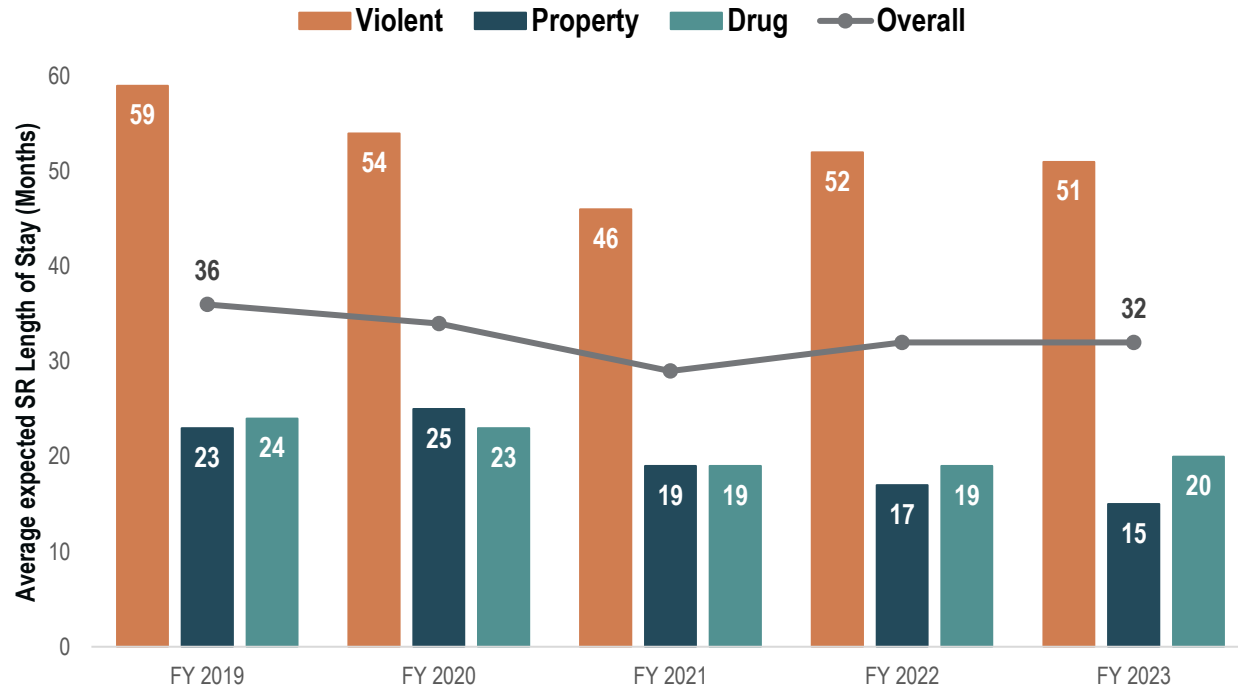
New commitments to state custody are projected to increase by 2.0% over the six-year forecast, with a 4.1% increase in property and drug offenses (combined) offset by a 0.7% decline in violent offenses.



Source: OSPSHS, Offender Population Forecasting Policy Committee, September 3, 2024. Forecasted using statistical methods and reviewed by the Offender Population Forecasting Technical Advisory and Policy Committees.

Average Length of Stay Decreased in Recent Years

Average expected length of stay in state-responsible (SR) custody decreased from 36 months in FY 2019 to 32 months in FY 2023.

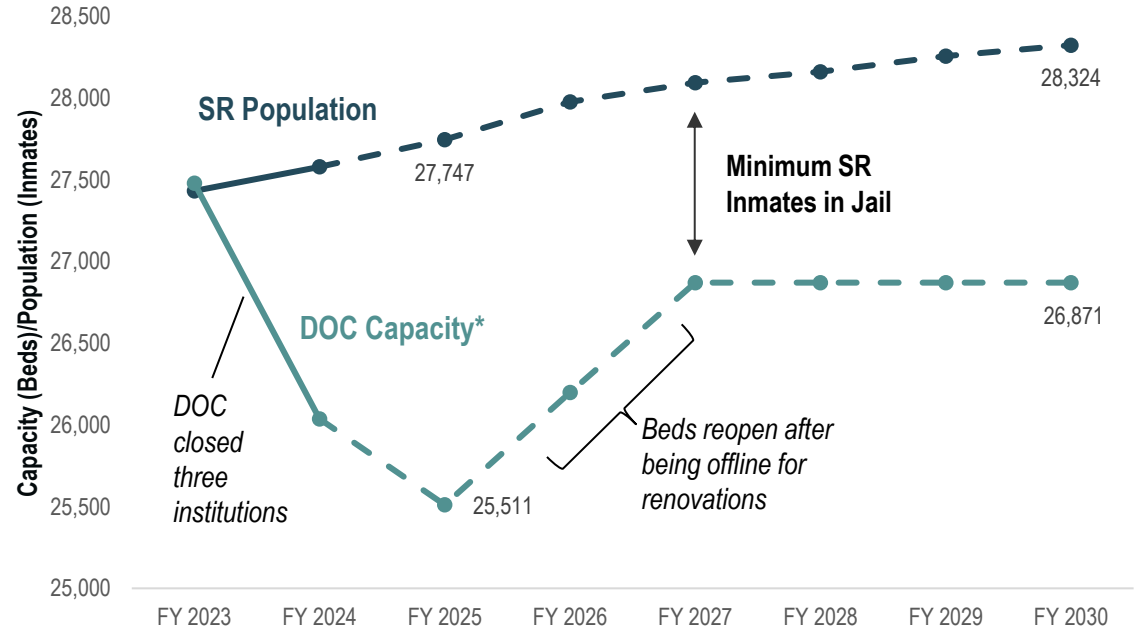


- The decline is partially due to enhanced earned sentence credit legislation that became effective in FY 2023 and was retroactively applied.
 - Increased maximum amount of “good time credits” from 4.5 to 15 days a month for certain offenses.
 - Based on FY 2023 sample data, the change resulted in an estimated average reduction of 5.1 months.
- The dip in FY 2021 may be due to temporary early release policies adopted during COVID-19.

Source: DOC, staff email communication, July 23, 2024; DOC, staff email communication, October 30, 2023.

DOC and Jail Capacity Are Sufficient to House Projected State-Responsible Inmates

State-responsible (SR) inmate population is expected to result in at least 1,453 SR inmates in jails by FY 2030, compared to 3,857 over the past year.

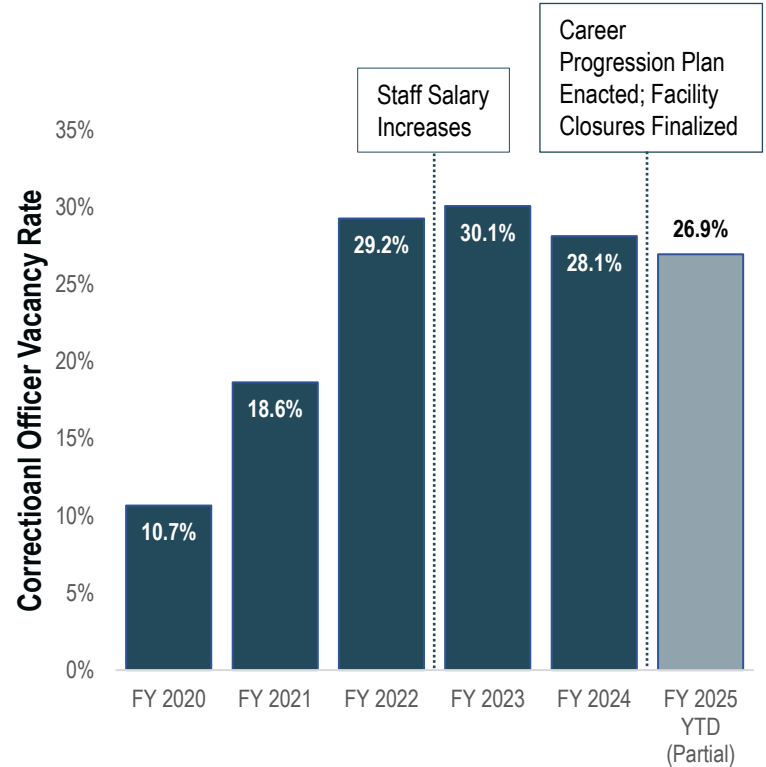


- Of the 3,857 average SR inmates in jail over the past year, 995** have been in jail for more than 60 days after state commitment (on average).
- DOC facility vacant beds averaged 2,922 over the past year, including 1,389 vacant general population beds and 1,533 vacant special purpose beds.
 - Even with vacant beds, DOC may leave inmates in jail past 60 days if beds at a specific security level are full or if their sentence will end shortly (~30 days).
- If additional capacity is needed, DOC is able to double bunk beds to return to pre-2021 capacity.

Notes: *DOC capacity includes special purpose beds (e.g. medical) but does not include facilities that are offline due to staffing shortages; **Does not include inmates in jail by agreement. Sources: OSPSHS, Offender Population Forecasts, October 15, 2024; SFAC staff analysis of DOC staff email communications, November 17, 2024, and October 2023 – September 2024.

26.9 Percent Vacancy Rate for Correctional Officers Impacts Available Capacity

- According to the Administration, the three 2023 facility closures were driven by staff shortages, and at least 336 additional beds remain offline due to staffing levels.
 - Two of the three closed facilities remain under DOC ownership and could be brought back online with staffing and restored funding.
- DOC uses savings from vacant, funded positions for both personnel and non-personnel expenditures.
- Budget language directed DOC to re-examine its established position levels in light of its lower inmate population.
 - DOC contracted with a third party to complete the study and submit it by December 1, 2024.



Source: DOC staff email communications, October 30, 2024, November 7, 2024, and FY 2023 – FY 2025.

DOC Continues to Emphasize High-Need Medical Bed Capacity as a Concern

- In 2022, the General Assembly directed the Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security to assess and provide recommendations for a long-term operating and capital plan for the provision of inmate healthcare services.
- DOC reports that 39 infirmary beds at the State Farm Correctional Complex are outdated and there is a shortage of infirmary and long-term care beds across the prison system, but has not provided a long-term plan.
 - Inmate population over 50 years of age has increased 7.0 percent over the past decade (from 6,248 in calendar year 2014 to 6,685 in CY 2023).
- DOC is making upgrades to the Beaumont Correctional Center (“Beaumont”) and has proposed to relocate State Farm infirmary inmates to Beaumont while a long-term plan is developed.
 - DOC acquired Beaumont from DJJ in 2020 through the surplus property process and has since spent \$11.4 million upgrading the facility to use for general population beds and medical services.



Beaumont Correctional Center Complex

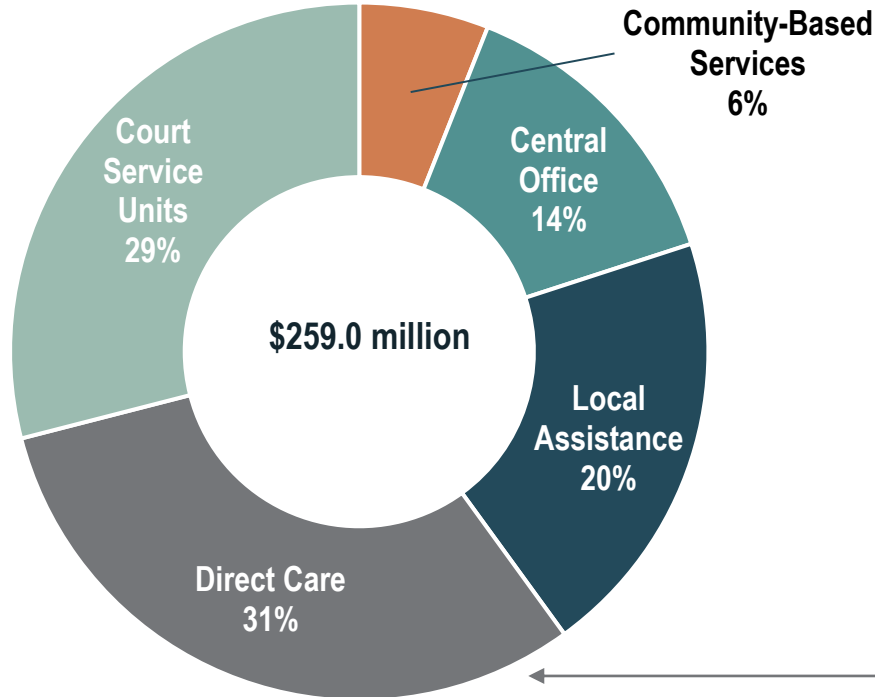
Source: OSPSHS, 2024 Special Session I Chapter 2 Item C-48 J.1 Workgroup Report, November 1, 2024.

State-Responsible Juvenile Population



DJJ Provides a Continuum of Services

In FY 2024, 31% of DJJ expenditures were for youth in direct care.



Juvenile Offenders

- Less than eighteen years of age and held in state-, local-, or commission-operated facilities.

State
Custody
(Direct Care)

Local
Custody

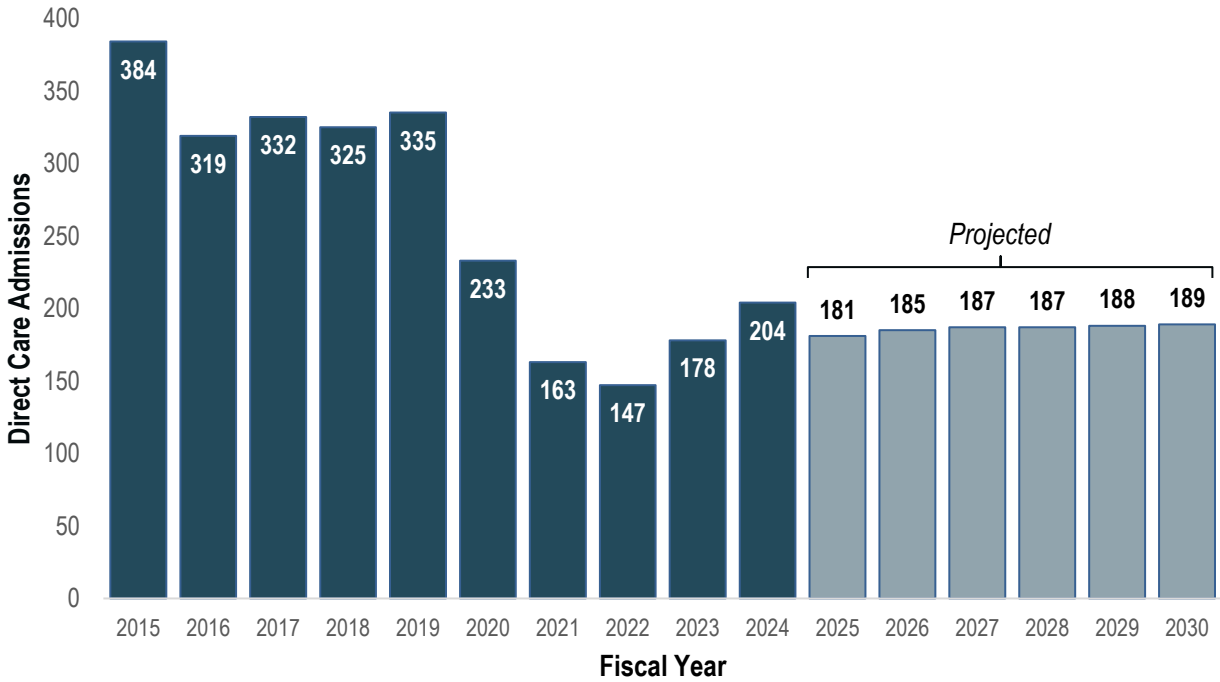
Bon Air Juvenile
Correctional
Center (JCC) &
Alternative
Placements

Local Juvenile
Detention
Centers

Source: DJJ, FY 2023 Data Resource Guide.

Compared to a Decade Ago, Fewer Juveniles are Committed to Direct Care

Direct care admissions have decreased 46.9% since FY 2015 and are expected to remain relatively steady over the next six years.

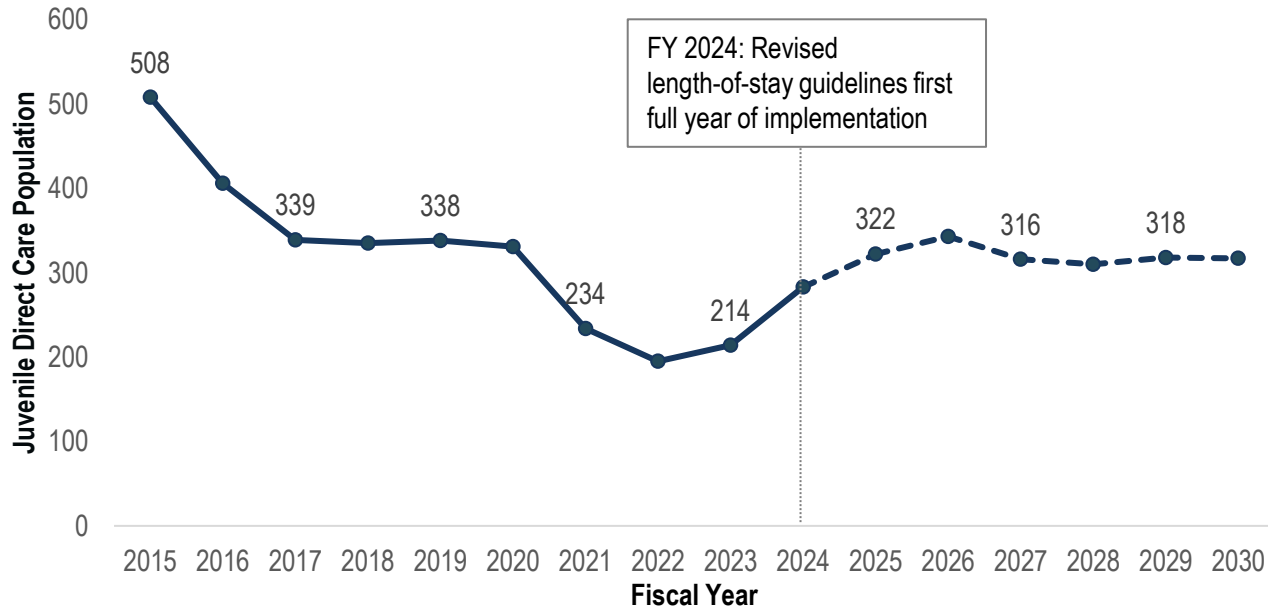


- Factors driving the decrease in admissions over the past decade include:
 - 29.9 percent decrease in intake cases (2015 - 2024); and
 - Increase in the percentage of intake cases that are diverted from 15.5 to 21.3 percent (2014 - 2023).
 - Diverted cases are handled informally instead of being referred to the official court process.

Sources: OSPSHS, Offender Population Forecasts, October 15, 2024; DJJ, FY 2023 Data Resource Guide.

DJJ Direct Care Population Projected to Increase Through FY 2026, Then Remain Relatively Steady

After declining 61.6% between FY 2015 and FY 2022, the juvenile direct care population is projected to increase by 62.6% between FY 2022 and FY 2030.



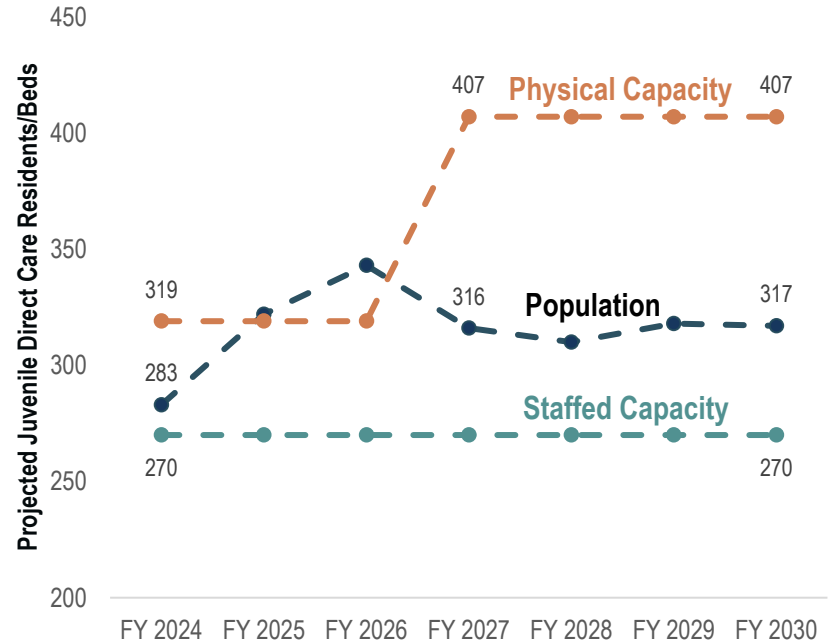
Source: OSPSHS, Offender Population Forecasts, October 15, 2024.

- Population increase from FY 2023 (actual) to FY 2025 (projected) primarily due to longer lengths of stays.
 - In that time period, the increase in the population is 50.5 percent, compared to an increase in new admissions of 1.7 percent.
 - The revised length-of-stay guidelines implemented beginning March 2023 increase the average time spent in DJJ custody, with the stated goal of allowing youth more time to complete treatment.

DJJ is Expanding its Secure Capacity

- DJJ's direct care physical bed capacity is 319*, but staffed capacity is 270 due to a 50.8 percent staff vacancy rate at Bon Air JCC.
- 2024 General Assembly approved bond authority to expand capacity at Bon Air JCC by 88 beds.
- Direct care capacity includes Bon Air JCC and Community Placement Programs. When direct care capacity is insufficient, or when deemed appropriate based on treatment needs, youth are placed with third-party providers.
 - **In October 2024, 88 youth were placed with third-party providers, even though 41 state-managed, direct care beds were vacant and operational.**

The direct care population exceeds staffed capacity.



*Assumes single room occupancy.

Sources: OSPSHS, Offender Population Forecasts, October 15, 2024; SFAC staff analysis of DJJ staff email communications, October 31 and November 1, 2024.

Increased Population Drives Operating Costs for Security Staff and Treatment Programs

- Once renovations are complete in FY 2027 (estimated), DJJ estimates it will need an additional ~\$22.2 million annually for staff and other operating costs in the renovated units.
- Increased population and longer stays necessitate additional rehabilitative services.
 - The 2024 General Assembly directed DJJ to evaluate its direct care programming to ensure alignment with evidence-based practices, with a report due to the General Assembly on December 1, 2024.
- In 2021, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) found that direct care rehabilitative programming lacked some key elements related to treatment program design and evaluation.
 - According to the Administration, DJJ has changed some of its practices in response to the JLARC report.

JLARC 2021 Recommendations

- General Assembly direct DJJ to base treatment programs on the best available evidence of effectiveness.
- DJJ improve residential specialist training to address the therapeutic responsibilities of their role.
- DJJ improve reentry and step-down programs, as recommended by the Successful Transitions workgroup.
- DJJ create a new position to oversee Community Placement Programs.

Sources: DJJ staff email communication, November 16, 2024; JLARC, Virginia's Juvenile Justice System, December 13, 2021.

Community Violence Reduction Grants



In 2022, the General Assembly Established Two Grant Funds for Community Violence Reduction

	Firearm Violence Intervention and Prevention Fund	Operation Ceasefire Fund
Eligible Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street outreach • Hospital-based violence intervention • Firearm suicide prevention • Safe firearm removal practices* • Other violence intervention programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violent crime reduction strategies • Training for law-enforcement officers and prosecutors • Law-enforcement equipment** • Group violence intervention grants
Amount Appropriated (GF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2022-24 biennium: \$13.0 million • 2024-26 biennium: \$18.0 million 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2022-24 biennium: \$20.0 million • 2024-26 biennium: \$20.0 million
Amounts Awarded (FY 2023 – FY 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$10.2 million, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 49% to hospital-based violence intervention ○ 21% to local governments ○ 20% to non-profit programs ○ 10% for local planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$15.2 million, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 60% to prosecutorial programs ○ 38% to law enforcement ○ 3% to non-profit programs

*Applies to firearm removal “from persons prohibited from possessing a firearm.”

**Beginning in FY 2025, may only be used for “forensic and related analytical equipment.”

Sources: DCJS, Report of the Office of Safer Communities: Gun Violence Intervention Programs, November 2024; Ch. 1, 2023 Spec. Sess. I; Ch. 2, 2024 Spec. Sess. I.

In 2023, the General Assembly Established the Safer Communities Grant Program

FY 2024

- \$9.5 million GF to localities experiencing disproportionate levels of homicides, including Norfolk, Portsmouth, and Richmond.
- \$500,000 GF to establish the Office of Safer Communities in the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS).

FY 2025 – FY 2026

- An additional ~\$4.1 million each year to increase grants to localities and add Roanoke as a recipient.
- An additional \$400,000 GF for a contract with Virginia Commonwealth University to support grant recipients with planning and evaluation.

Local Expenditures

- FY 2024 recipients have each hired a violence reduction coordinator and conducted planning activities.
- FY 2024 recipients received their allocations in December and were unable to spend the majority of funding before it reverted to the general fund on June 30th. However, planned activities for their FY 2025 grants include youth leadership academies, credible messenger training, and grants to non-profits.
 - Administration redirected \$3.0 million GF of DCJS reverted balances to establish a First Responder Wellness Office.

Source: DCJS, Report of the Office of Safer Communities: Gun Violence Intervention Programs, November 2024; Ch. 1, 2023 Spec. Sess. I; Ch. 2, 2024 Spec. Sess. I.

Public Safety Budget Outlook



Public Safety Agencies Have Requested \$151.5 Million GF in Additional Funding

Requested Items (\$ in millions)	Biennial GF
DOC Security Technology Enhancements	\$31.6
VDEM Substitute Federal Funding with GF	15.7
DCJS Continue Civil Commitment Law Enforcement Reimbursement Program	12.1
DCJS School Resource Officer Grants	10.9
DOC Utility Cost Increases	9.8
VSP New Positions	9.2
DOC Offender Drug Testing	6.8
DOC Increase Career Progression Program	6.3
VDEM Public Safety Communications Infrastructure	5.2
DOC Increases in Inmate Medical Costs	4.1
Other Public Safety & Homeland Security Items	<u>39.7</u>
Total	\$151.5

Source: DPB, Agency Operating Requests, accessed November 14, 2024.

Key Takeaways and 2025 Session Outlook

- Virginia's violent crime rate improved slightly in 2023 after increasing each year since 2018.
 - General Assembly has made significant investments in community-violence reduction grants.
- The adult state-responsible (SR) inmate population is projected to increase modestly over the six-year forecast but remain significantly below pre-pandemic levels.
 - DOC capacity is sufficient after accounting for SR inmates still in jail while being classified and transferred.
 - DOC needs to develop a long-term plan to address its stated shortage of high-need medical beds.
- Juvenile direct care population is expected to continue to increase but remain below pre-2020 levels.
 - DJJ has a significant number of youth placed with third-party providers as it expands direct care capacity. The General Assembly may wish to evaluate the optimal mix of state facility beds and private provider contract beds.
 - DJJ should continue to focus on providing evidence-informed treatment for juveniles.
- Security staff vacancy rates are persistent at both DOC and DJJ.
 - At DOC, salaries have increased over the past few years and DOC is now evaluating its established position levels.
 - DJJ has requested \$1.6 million GF annually to increase security staff salaries and estimates needing an additional ~\$22.2 million each year in the next biennium to operate its approved capital project to renovate closed beds.