Office of Inspector General
Of the Nebraska Correctional System

Annual Report

FY2025-2026

About This Report

This report fulfills the Inspector General's requirements under Neb. Rev. Stat. § 50-1918, and was submitted to the Governor and filed with the Clerk of the Legislature on October 15, 2026.

Complaints to the OIG-CS

Anyone may file a complaint with the Office of Inspector General of the Nebraska Correctional System (OIG-CS). The information provided can be kept confidential, along with the identity of the reporting party. Complaints may be filed via email, phone, or postal mail.

OIG-CS website: nebraskalegislature.gov/divisions/oig_ndcs.php

Email: oigcorrections@leg.ne.gov

Phone: 402-471-4215

Mailing address:

State Capitol
P.O. Box 94604
Lincoln, NE 68509

OIG-CS Staff

Zach Pluhacek
Inspector General

Mackenzie Kottwitz
Assistant Inspector General

Crystal Jones
Executive Intake Assistant

Contents

From the Inspector General **1**

Report Summary **2**

Organizational Overview **4**

Legislative Oversight 4

Correctional System Overview **6**

Department of Correctional Services 6

Board of Parole 8

Office of Probation Administration 9

Critical Incidents & Investigations **10**

Incident Trends 10

Individual Incidents 14

Reviews, Inspections & Audits **17**

Published Reports 17

Ongoing or Upcoming Projects 18

System Developments **21**

Closing of the Nebraska Correctional Youth Facility 21

Work Ethic Camp Converted to McCook Detention Center 22

New RTC Units for Special Needs Populations 23

New Correctional Facility 24

Storm Damage at State Penitentiary 24

Implementation of Legislation 26

Policy and Procedure Changes 27

Key Performance Indicators **28**

Outcome Measures 28

Correctional Population 29

Staffing 31

Health Care 31

Education & Other Programs 33

Restrictive Housing & Other Special Secure Settings 35

Reentry & Community Supervision 37

Other OIG-CS Activities 38
Intakes & Case Volume 38
Facility Visits 41
External Engagement 42
Appendix I: Investigative Report Summaries i
Appendix II: Recommendations vii

From the Inspector General

October 15, 2026

Welcome to the 2026 edition of the Office of Inspector General of the Nebraska Correctional System (OIG-CS) annual report.

The past year has been transformative for the OIG-CS. In 2025, the Legislature established a new Legislative Oversight Committee and Division of Legislative Oversight, which includes this office as well as the Office of Inspector General of Nebraska Child Welfare and the Legislative Audit Office. The new structure has been beneficial, bringing the Legislature's various oversight offices together and providing them with new resources and support. It also reinforces the Legislature's critical, inherent authority to investigate and provide oversight of state government.

Earlier this year, Doug Koebernick left this office for a different position within the division, another significant change. Doug had been Inspector General since the office was formed in 2015 and had a tremendous influence on me, the office, the and correctional system as a whole during that time. I was appointed Inspector General in April, and am fortunate to be working alongside executive intake assistant Crystal Jones and assistant inspector general Mackenzie Kottwitz, the other two members of the OIG-CS team.

Through all this, we kept working. In the past year, the office produced lengthy reports about mental health in the correctional facilities and about geriatric and medical parole, as well as updates for lawmakers on major system changes, such as the closure of Nebraska Correctional Youth Facility in Omaha and the conversion of the Work Ethic Camp in McCook into an immigration detention center.

We appreciate the continued support of the Nebraska Legislature, particularly the Speaker of the Legislature, the Legislative Oversight and Judiciary Committees, the Executive Board, and staff.

This office will continue to promote accountability, transparency, and good government through our work. Thank you for your role in that process, as well.

Sincerely,

Zach Pluhacek
Inspector General of Corrections

Report Summary

The Office of Inspector General of the Nebraska Correctional System (OIG-CS) and the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS) both underwent significant changes in FY2025-26.

- The new Division of Legislative Oversight includes both Inspectors General offices – the OIG-CS and the Office of Inspector General of Nebraska Child Welfare (OIG-CW) – as well as the Legislative Audit Office. This arrangement has been productive, as has engagement from the new Legislative Oversight Committee.
- Zach Pluhacek was appointed Inspector General of Corrections in April 2026.
- NDCS converted one of its facilities into a federal immigration detention center, and closed another facility that previously housed youthful offenders. Construction continues on a new, multi-custody correctional facility in northeast Lincoln.

The OIG-CS completed 19 reports during the fiscal year.

- One report examined treatment of people with serious mental illnesses and related issues within NDCS facilities. This included several recommendations for NDCS as well as the Legislature.
- A second report examined the state's medical and geriatric parole systems, and also included recommendations for the department and the Legislature.
- The remaining 17 reports were of individual investigations completed in 2026. These were issued as part of a new quarterly reporting process the OIG-CS has implemented to help the office better manage its workload and streamline review by NDCS.

This annual report includes recommendations for the Legislature to consider.

- Establishing a correctional system forecasting tool would enable the state to better project future correctional population changes and account for impacts from proposed policy changes.
- Revisiting the reporting and investigation requirements related to the OIG-CS would improve the office's monitoring capabilities and make better use of its resources.

- The OIG-CS believes these recommendations would increase legislative oversight and improve operations of the correctional system.

Although staffing overall has improved within NDCS, behavioral health vacancies remain a critical area of need.

- A staffing analysis NDCS submitted to the Legislature in September calls not only for filling numerous vacant positions but also adding more behavioral health worker positions at the Nebraska State Penitentiary.
- These findings echo concerns about staffing shortages raised in the 2025 OIG-CS report on mental health care within NDCS.

The number of in-custody deaths reported by NDCS continues to decrease.

- Of the 12 deaths reported by the department in FY2025-26, 10 appear to have been of natural causes.
- NDCS also reports serious injury incidents to the OIG-CS, but is not required to notify the office of other critical incidents such as sexual assaults, escapes, major disturbances, excessive uses of force, or events which result significant property damage.

The OIG-CS has a lengthy work plan for FY2026-27.

- The office's plan for the current year includes an audit of two NDCS policies: one on high-security special management units, and the other on responses to group violence incidents.
- The office also plans to examine pathways for release from longer-term restrictive housing, staffing patterns at key facilities, and other topics.

Organizational Overview

The Office of Inspector General of the Nebraska Correctional System (OIG-CS) is an office of the Legislature that provides independent, external oversight of the Nebraska correctional system. The office was established by state statute in 2015, and its statutory authority is described in detail in Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 50-1901 through 50-1921.[1]

The office investigates all deaths and serious injuries of people in the custody or under the supervision of NDCS. At the discretion of the Inspector General, the office also investigates allegations of possible misconduct, misfeasance, malfeasance, or violations of statutes or of rules or regulations of the department by departmental employees or contractors. The office may also conduct other investigations, audits, inspections, and oversight as deemed necessary by the Inspector General or as directed by the Legislative Oversight Committee.

The OIG-CS does not have oversight of county jails. Jail inspections are overseen by the Jail Standards program with the Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice (Crime Commission). Jail-related complaints can be submitted to the Office of Public Counsel (Ombuds).

The Inspector General of Corrections is appointed by the Director of Legislative Oversight with approval from the chairpersons of three committees: the Executive Board of the Legislative Council, the Legislative Oversight Committee, and the Judiciary Committee of the Legislature. The Inspector General is selected without regard to political affiliation, serves a term of five years, and may be reappointed.

Prisons are, by nature, closed spaces. The OIG-CS exists to provide a layer of transparency and accountability for these spaces, and for the state correctional system as a whole.

Legislative Oversight

Division of Legislative Oversight

The Division of Legislative Oversight (DLO) consists of the OIG-CS, the Office of Inspector General of Nebraska Child Welfare (OIG-CW), and the Legislative Audit Office. The division is responsible for conducting oversight

[1] Office of Inspector General of the Nebraska Correctional System Act.

activities of the Nebraska state government to ensure the Legislature has information necessary for legislative and budgetary decisions.[2]

The Director of Legislative Oversight is nominated by the Legislative Oversight Committee and must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the Legislature. The director is selected without regard to political affiliation, and serves a term of six years.

Legislative Oversight Committee

The Legislative Oversight Committee is a special committee of the Legislature tasked with overseeing all aspects of the Division of Legislative Oversight, without regard to special or partisan interests and in accordance with relevant standards and guidelines. The committee directs the division's work through the approval of annual work plans and by ensuring the work is carried out in accordance with statute.[3]

Office of Public Counsel (Ombudsman)

The Ombudsman's office is also housed within the state's Legislative Branch, but is separate from the Division of Legislative Oversight and reports to the Legislature's Executive Board rather than the Legislative Oversight Committee. The Ombuds investigates citizen complaints on a variety of topics related to state government, including those from people incarcerated in state prisons and county jails.

---

[2] Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 50-1703 et seq.
[3] Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 50-1701 and 50-1702.

Correctional System Overview

Nebraska's state correctional system is managed by three agencies: the Department of Correctional Services (NDCS), the Board of Parole, and the Office of Probation Administration. Of these, only NDCS submits mandatory reports to the OIG-CS or is subject to required investigations by the office. However, the office regularly interacts with the Parole Board as well as representatives from Probation as part of its general monitoring activities.

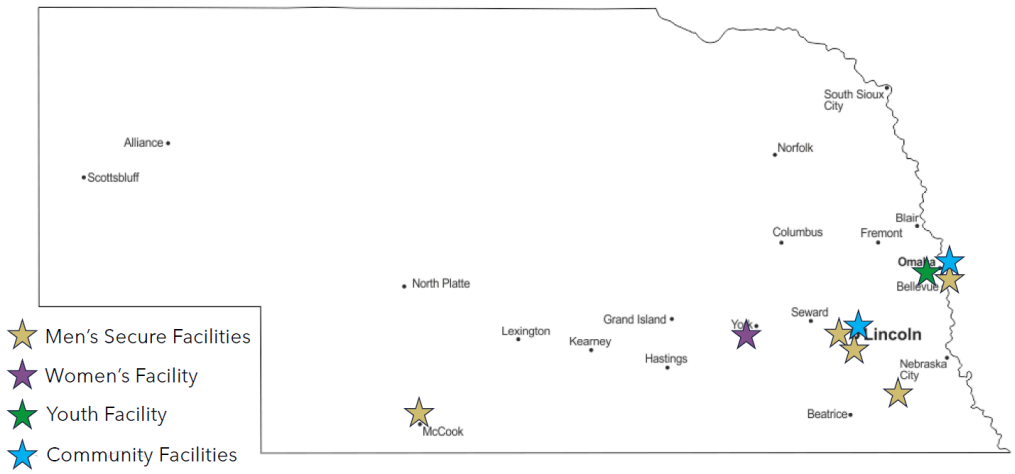
Department of Correctional Services

NDCS is responsible for the custody or community supervision of more than 7,500 people. This primarily includes individuals who are incarcerated for state-level offenses, plus people on parole, convicted sex offenders under lifetime community supervision, a small number of detainees housed on behalf of county jails, and approximately 175 federal immigration detainees.

NDCS has an annual budget of approximately $391 million, mostly from the state's general fund. The agency employs approximately 2,500 and is led by Director Rob Jeffreys, who was appointed to the role in April 2023.

Correctional Facilities

NDCS operated nine correctional facilities during FY2025-26. Parole supervision is divided into three regions, with offices across the state.



Reception and Treatment Center (RTC)

RTC in west Lincoln is the largest facility within NDCS by population, with more than 1,400 occupants. It is a medium- and maximum-

security prison, with a skilled nursing facility and units designated for mental health services, substance use treatment, special management, restrictive housing, and general population. It also serves as the intake facility for men entering NDCS custody. A youth unit was added at the end of June 2026, due to the closure of the Nebraska Correctional Youth Facility.

Nebraska State Penitentiary (NSP)

NSP in Lincoln is a multi-custody-level men's facility and is the state's oldest prison. It consists of an "internal" side with four maximum- and medium-security housing units, including restrictive housing; and an "external" side with five minimum-security units. In total, NSP houses approximately 1,400 people.

Tecumseh State Correctional Institution (TSCI)

TSCI is the system's third-largest facility, with about 1,000 men in maximum and medium security. It consists of a large high-security unit for restrictive housing and special management individuals, including those sentenced to the death penalty (also known as "death row"). The other three TSCI living units house general population and protective management individuals.

Omaha Correctional Center (OCC)

OCC holds about 800 men in a minimum-security environment near Eppley Airfield. It consists of four housing units for people in general population or sex offender treatment, as well as a small restrictive housing unit.

Community Corrections Center-Lincoln (CCCL)

CCCL houses roughly 500 men and 100 women who have been approved for work detail or work release, the lowest levels of security within NDCS. People on work detail may receive approval to leave the center for specific purposes, including jobs for government entities. Those on work release are expected to obtain private employment and/or attend school, and regularly leave the center for those and other purposes. CCCL is located near the RTC, across from Pioneer's Park. Most of its men's units are at double their design capacity, while about a third of the women's beds are typically empty.

Nebraska Correctional Center for Women (NCCW)

NCCW in York is a women's prison with two general population housing units for women classified for maximum, medium, and minimum security, as well as a nursery for new mothers and their children, and a substance use treatment unit. A separate unit houses women in protective custody, as well as those with special mental health or behavioral issues. NCCW also serves as the intake facility for all women entering NDCS custody. NCCW currently houses over 300 women.

Community Corrections Center-Omaha (CCCO)

CCCO is a smaller community corrections center which houses men only. It is designed to house 90 individuals but typically holds 170 to 180 men on work detail or work release. It is located across the street from OCC.

Work Ethic Camp (WEC) / McCook Detention Center

WEC, a minimum-security facility for men nearing the end of their sentences, was converted to federal immigration detention center in November 2025 but is still owned by the state and operated by NDCS. The department listed 200 beds in service at the McCook facility as of late September 2026.

Nebraska Correctional Youth Facility (NCYF)

This facility, located in Omaha near OCC and CCCO, was the smallest NDCS facility by population and housed mostly teenagers and young men who were adjudicated as adults, as well as a small number of older men who were peer support mentors for the younger people at the facility. It housed approximately 75 people on average. NCYF closed for budgetary reasons at the end of FY2025-26, and the youth from the facility were moved to a new unit at RTC.

Board of Parole

Established in the State Constitution, the Parole Board has the power to grant parole for certain individuals sentenced to NDCS custody, as prescribed by statute. The board consists of five members with a small staff, and conducts monthly hearings at each state correctional facility in addition to regular offender reviews.

More information about the Board of Parole, including its calendar of hearings and an FAQ, can be found online at parole.nebraska.gov.

Office of Probation Administration

Established by the Legislature and housed within the Judicial Branch, the Office of Probation Administration provides probation services for adults and juveniles across the state, including post-release supervision (PRS) for some individuals who have been released from NDCS custody after serving sentences for lower-level felonies.

Additional information can be found online at nebraskajudicial.gov/nebraska-probation-system (for general information) and nebraskajudicial.gov/administration (for reports).

Critical Incidents & Investigations

NDCS notified the Inspector General of 63 deaths and serious injuries (critical incidents) in FY2025-26. *(See Figure 1.)* These included 56 deaths or serious injuries of incarcerated individuals (I/Is) or people on parole, which trigger mandatory investigations by the OIG-CS. The remaining seven cases involved serious injuries of correctional staff, which the office also reviews but is not required to investigate under statute.

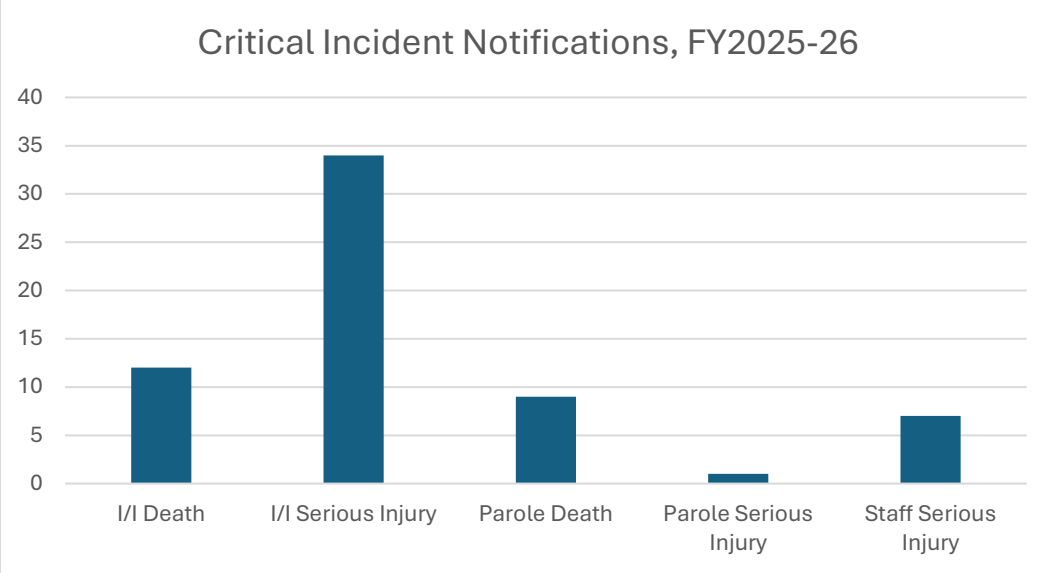


Figure 1

Incident Trends

In addition to case-specific investigations, the OIG-CS monitors these incidents for trends, which may prompt broader examinations by the office or merit specific attention by NDCS or the Legislature. For example, in FY2025-26:

- The 12 deaths reported of people in NDCS custody (not parole) were the fewest in at least five years. *(See Figure 2.)*
- Of these deaths, 10 appeared due to natural causes. The others resulted from a suicide and an accidental overdose. *(See Table 1.)*
- Serious injuries of incarcerated people were the most commonly reported incident. While a majority of these involved fights/assaults, self-harm, and/or intoxication, simple accidents were the single most common cause. *(See Figure 3.)*

- Most reported staff serious injuries were the result of assaults or uses of force involving incarcerated people. *(See Table 5.)*

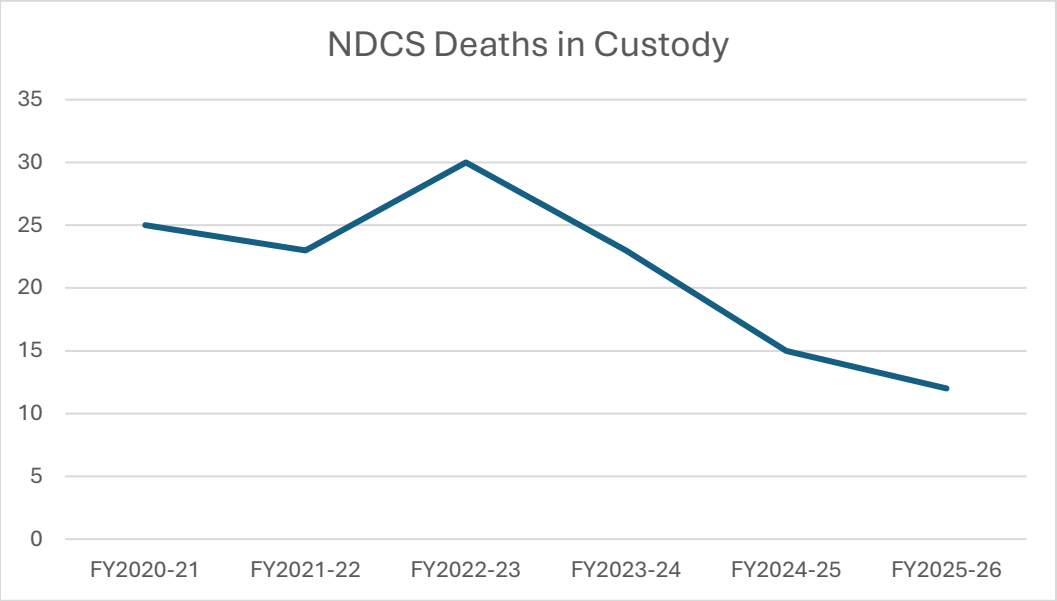


Figure 2

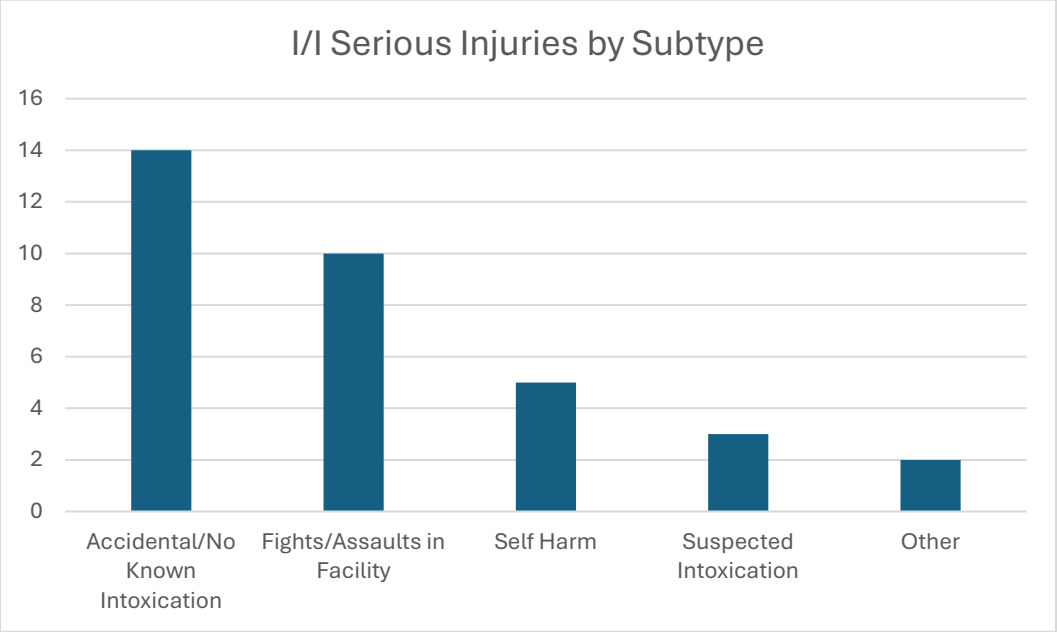


Figure 3

Grand Jury Process

Deaths which occur while a person is in custody of law enforcement or detention personnel in custody are also subject to mandatory grand jury investigations in Nebraska. Grand juries are impaneled in the county where each death occurs, and are tasked with investigating whether the death

involved any violations of state criminal laws. This process is supposed to take place within 30 days of certification of death, but the timeline is regularly extended.[4]

The OIG-CS reviews transcripts from grand jury investigations as part of its normal process, either as part of its own investigations or afterward in case new information emerges. Although grand juries may issue recommendations, their focus is on criminal matters and not the agency's response or potential systemic issues.

Natural Causes Deaths

Even when a death in custody was anticipated and the result of a known medical condition, the OIG-CS has a duty to investigate. These investigations are typically focused on whether the individual received appropriate treatment while incarcerated. The office reviews patient medical records and follows up on concerns shared by survivors, staff, other inmates, or others, or raised as part of the grand jury process.

Unfortunately, the OIG-CS lacks staff with medical expertise, and these deaths are rarely reviewed by outside medical experts through forensic examinations or autopsies. The office has obtained assistance from independent experts on occasion, including for one death investigation documented in this annual report, but lacks the capacity to do this on a regular basis.

The OIG-CS believes medicolegal oversight of these deaths could still be improved, and is engaged in ongoing discussions regarding how this could be achieved.

Mandatory Reporting

NDCS must report all deaths and serious injuries of individuals in the department's custody or under its supervision. These reports must be made to the Inspector General "as soon as reasonably possible after the department learns of such death or serious injury." Additionally, the department must report whenever an employee dies, is seriously injured, or is otherwise hospitalized in response to an injury received while acting in their capacity as an employee of the department.[5]

---

[4] Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 29-1401 and 29-1406.
[5] Neb. Rev. Stat. § 50-1906.

Deaths and serious injuries are the only critical incidents which must be reported to the OIG-CS, and only NDCS is required to report them.[6] This limits the office's oversight.

By comparison, under statute, the Office of Inspector General of Child Welfare (OIG-CW) receives mandatory reports from the Department of Health and Human Services regarding a wide range of incidents: deaths, serious injuries, and allegations of sexual abuse of system-involved youth, as well as assaults, escapes, suicide attempts, self-harm, property damage, use of restraints, significant medical events, and substantiated violations of the Prison Rape Elimination Act which take place at Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Centers. The Office of Probation Administration and each juvenile detention center in the state are also expected to report deaths, serious injuries, and allegations of sexual abuse. The OIG-CW is required to investigate some of these incidents, not all, but monitors them and has discretion to investigate as deemed necessary.[7]

The OIG-CS previously had direct access to an internal incident reporting system managed by NDCS, which allowed the office to passively monitor critical events which took place at correctional facilities, beyond reported deaths and serious injuries. While this was useful in many ways, NDCS has observed that this information was often preliminary or incomplete, and the OIG-CS's monitoring of the information was not done in a systematic fashion.

Amending the reporting and investigation requirements to increase the amount of information shared with the OIG-CS while granting the office greater discretion for investigations would assist with the office's workload while also contributing to better overall legislative oversight.

RECOMMENDATION | Oversight
The OIG-CS recommends the Legislature amend reporting and investigation requirements for the office in order to increase the office's monitoring capabilities while providing more flexibility to prioritize investigations under the Office of Inspector General of the Nebraska Correctional System Act.

[6] NDCS has been diligent in reporting deaths to the OIG-CS, and reporting of serious injuries appears to have improved significantly in recent years. These reports typically are made within a day or two.

[7] Neb. Rev. Stat. § 50-1806.

Individual Incidents

The OIG-CS submitted reports to NDCS regarding 17 investigations of critical incidents which the office completed during FY2025-26. Full summaries of these reports are contained in Appendix I of this annual report.

The tables below list all critical incidents NDCS reported to the OIG-CS during the fiscal year, many of which remain under investigation.

Incarcerated Individual (I/I) Deaths[8]

Facility	Description
RTC	Died at outside hospital while being treated for medical condition
RTC	Died in medical unit while receiving end-of-life care
RTC	Died in medical unit while receiving end-of-life care
RTC	Accidental overdose, found unresponsive in cell and died in hospital
RTC	Suicide, found hanging in restrictive housing cell
RTC	Died in medical unit while receiving care for medical condition
RTC	Died at outside hospital while being treated for medical condition
CCCL	Died of unexpected medical issue while on work release
RTC	Died in medical unit while receiving end-of-life care
OCC	Died at outside hospital while being treated for medical condition
TSCI	Died at outside hospital while being treated for medical condition
RTC	Died in medical unit while receiving care for medical condition

Table 1

I/I Serious Injuries

Facility	Description
CCCL	Workplace injury at outside employer while on work release
NSP	Injury to hands from attempting to climb razor wire perimeter fence
TSCI	Lip injured in altercation with another I/I
RTC	Fell in cell due to apparent intoxication
RTC	Fell from upper bunk in cell due to possible intoxication
CCCL	Injured in car accident while on furlough
NSP	Nose injured in altercation with another I/I
NCYF	Knee injured in altercation with another I/I
RTC	Face injured in altercation with another I/I which involved a homemade weapon

[8] Individuals who died in an outside hospital are listed according to the most recent NDCS facility where they were housed. RTC and TSCI each have nursing facilities, which can result in higher numbers of deaths at those facilities.

CCCL	Workplace injury at outside employer while on work release
RTC	Serious injury from self-harm
TSCI	Accidental injury from recreational activity
CCCO	Arm injured during use of force while apparently intoxicated
CCCL	Workplace injury at outside employer while on work release
WEC	Head injured from apparent fall in shower
NSP	Face injured in group altercation with I/Is
RTC	Head injured in altercation with another I/I
NCCW	Serious injury from self-harm
CCCL	Head, abdominal injuries from apparent assault in community
RTC	Jaw injury in group altercation with I/Is
NSP	Head injury in altercation with another I/I
CSI	Workplace injury at Cornhusker State Industries
NCCW	Face, shoulder injured by hot water thrown by another I/I
RTC	Workplace injury in facility kitchen
RTC	Serious injury from self-harm
TSCI	Finger injured in doorway
CCCL	Workplace injury at outside employer while on work release
NSP	Accidental injury from recreational activity
RTC	Face injured in altercation with another I/I
RTC	Workplace injury in facility kitchen
CCCL	Workplace injury at outside employer while on work release
RTC	Serious injury from self-harm
OCC	Serious injury from self-harm
NSP	Accidental injury from recreational activity

Table 2

Parole Deaths[9]

County	Description
Lancaster	Crashed motorcycle while speeding during law enforcement stop
Platte	Unexpected death, cause not indicated
Lancaster	Unexpected death, cause not indicated
Douglas	Unexpected death, cause not indicated
Douglas	Unexpected death, cause not indicated
Scotts Bluff	Died in hospital while being treated for medical condition
Douglas	Died during shootout with law enforcement

[9] NDCS was not required to report deaths or serious injuries of individuals on parole until 2025. Additionally, the OIG-CS assumes NDCS itself is not made aware of all serious injuries experienced by people on parole.

Douglas	Unexpected death, cause not indicated
Douglas	Expected death while receiving end-of-life care

Table 3

Parole Serious Injuries

County	Description
Douglas	Serious injury from self-harm

Table 4

Staff Serious Injuries

Facility	Description
TSCI	Serious injury from assault by I/I
NSP	Serious injury from assault by I/Is
RTC	Finger injured in doorway
NSP	Ankle injured in fall
TSCI	Serious injury from assault by I/I
RTC	Serious injury during use of force
NCCW	Foot injured by lawnmower

Table 5

Additional Data

The federal Death in Custody Reporting Act requires national reporting of deaths of people who are incarcerated, under arrest, or being apprehended by law enforcement. In Nebraska, agencies submit quarterly reports with this information to the Crime Commission's Statistical Analysis Center. More information, along with aggregate data, can be found online at ncc.nebraska.gov/deaths-law-enforcement-custody.

Reviews, Inspections & Audits

Published Reports

Two standalone reports issued by the OIG-CS in FY2025-26 examined broader topics within the correctional system. This included a report related to treatment and living conditions for seriously mentally ill individuals in NDCS, and a report related to medical and geriatric parole.

Brief summaries of these can be found below. More detailed versions, including specific findings and recommendations, can be found online at nebraskalegislature.gov/reports/oversight.php. Updates on these recommendations can be found in Appendix II.

Mental Health Care, Conditions and Related Matters in NDCS Facilities *(Report #2025-01)*

This report resulted from more than a year of examination of the NDCS mental health system, including mental and behavioral health staffing, living conditions for individuals with serious mental illnesses (SMI), the use of restrictive housing for those with SMI, the department's process for reviewing people nearing release who may require civil commitment due to being mentally ill and dangerous, and programming for high-risk individuals.

Figure 4. One of the mental health galleries at RTC.

In addition to several recommendations for NDCS, the OIG-CS made the following recommendations for the Legislature to consider:

1. Require NDCS to seek accreditation for its health care system beyond what is currently specified in statute.
2. Review mental health staffing levels across state agencies, with an emphasis on inpatient services.
3. Consider clarifying Neb. Rev. Stat. § 83-173.03, given NDCS' continued use of longer-term restrictive housing for people with serious mental illness.
4. Revise Neb. Rev. Stat. § 83-180 to provide better guidance for discharge reviews. This could include directing NDCS to consult with known Nebraska-based experts in threat assessment when it crafts future rules and regulations pursuant to this section.
5. Conduct a broader review of the role of mental illness in the state's criminal justice system.

Medical Parole, Geriatric Parole, and Recent Deaths in NDCS Custody *(Report #2026-01)*

This report examined two similar programs created by the Legislature – medical parole and geriatric parole – and their implementation at the agency level. While efforts by NDCS and the Board of Parole have resulted in a system that is notably better than in past years, the OIG-CS identified additional areas of possible improvement by NDCS as well as the Legislature. This report also highlighted a lack of access to housing and long-term care for medical parolees and similarly situated individuals.

Ongoing or Upcoming Projects

The Legislative Oversight Committee adopted an annual work plan for the OIG-CS on July 7, 2026. Additionally, by statute and as reiterated in the work plan, the office may conduct other oversight activities as deemed necessary by the Inspector General. Current work plan and discretionary projects are listed below.

Review of Nebraska State Penitentiary Maintenance Issues

Although NDCS intends to close this facility upon completion of the new state prison in 2028, maintenance issues continue to plague NSP in the meantime. This includes a series of utility-related issues which took place in August 2026 and impacted much of the facility for several days. The OIG-CS

is collecting and compiling information related to the history of deferred maintenance at NSP, emergency response plans, and the August incidents.

Anticipated completion date: Late 2026

Examination of Longer-Term Restrictive Housing Placements

Nebraska's restrictive housing practices have been the subject of ongoing discussion and reform in recent years. The OIG-CS is specifically examining the pathways available for individuals who have been assigned to longer-term restrictive housing to transition to less restrictive settings.

Anticipated completion date: Spring 2027

Examination of Mental Illness in Violent Incidents

A significant number of incidents investigated by the OIG-CS involve individuals with serious mental illnesses. The office is examining these and similar incidents more broadly to better contexualize these incidents and identify possible recommendations for systemic improvement.

Anticipated completion date: Spring 2027

Parole Data Review

Recent critical incidents involving individuals on parole and concerns expressed by system stakeholders prompted this review. The OIG-CS is examining data and information related to parole revocations and releases, with assistance from the Legislative Audit Office.

Anticipated completion date: Undetermined

Audit of Group Violence Reduction Strategy and Special Management Units policies

On May 31, 2023, several staff members at the Reception and Treatment Center (RTC) were seriously injured after they confronted three incarcerated men who had apparently been consuming homemade alcohol inside a cell. This incident took place in Housing Unit F1, part of a high-security 384-bed expansion which opened in 2022. During the May 31 incident, staff were beaten and stabbed with homemade weapons.

NDCS implemented a number of operational changes as a result of the incident. This included two major additions to departmental policy:

- **Group Violence Reduction Strategy (GVRS)** - Under this policy, after certain fights or assaults take place in a facility, one or more entire living units are placed under "modified operations," in which the occupants are immediately confined to their cells. These partial lockdowns usually end after a few days, but in some cases have lasted two or more weeks. During this process, facility staff identify people involved in the underlying incident as well as their "close associates," who are then subject to further restrictions, as determined by the facility warden.
- **Special Management Units (SMUs)** - This policy changed how NDCS managed higher-security units at the RTC that are essentially a step between general population and restrictive housing. Similar units have since been added at the Tecumseh State Correctional Institution.

These policies took effect July 31, 2023, and have since impacted large portions of the population within NDCS. The policies have also been the subjects of numerous complaints to the OIG-CS since their implementation. As a result, the office intends to conduct an audit of these policies, with assistance from the Legislative Audit Office.

Anticipated completion date: Undetermined

Review of Staffing Patterns at Key Facilities

The OIG-CS routinely monitors NDCS staffing levels at the system and facility level. However, based on budgetary changes and information the office has received from staff and incarcerated people, a more thorough examination of staff patterns at key facilities is merited to ensure these facilities are able to adequately provide for the custody, control, correctional treatment, and rehabilitation of persons committed to the department as required under statute.

Anticipated completion date: Undetermined

System Developments

The OIG-CS monitors developments within the correctional system and keeps the Legislature advised of significant events as they unfold. This includes the items listed below.

Closing of the Nebraska Correctional Youth Facility

After becoming aware that NDCS and the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) intended to relocate the populations of several of the state's juvenile facilities, the OIG-CS and the OIG of Child Welfare issued a joint memorandum on February 5, 2026, raising a number of questions and observations about the planned moves.

The plan included the following:

- Closing the Nebraska Correctional Youth Facility (NCYF) in Omaha, and relocating the youth from that facility to the Reception and Treatment Center (RTC), a maximum/medium-security adult prison in Lincoln.
- Moving male youth from the Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center in Kearney (YRTC-Kearney) to NCYF.
- Moving female youth from the Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center in Hastings (YRTC-Hastings) to YRTC-Kearney.
- Moving the substance use disorder and youth who sexually harm programs from the Whitehall campus in Lincoln to YRTC-Hastings.

Following further questions from some members of the Legislature and opposition from outside groups and staff at some of the facilities, all but the closure of NCYF was placed on hold and remained so at the time of this annual report.

The NCYF youth are under the custody and control of NDCS, which did not require any outside authorization under the law to move the youth from one of its facilities to another. There was some discussion during the 2026 legislative session about amending statute to prevent the closure of NCYF, but this ultimately did not take place. NCYF closed as planned at the end of June, and the youth from that facility were relocated to RTC.

Statute also does not prevent DHHS from moving the boys from YRTC-Kearney to the now-empty NCYF. However, DHHS agreed to hold off on this

and other remaining parts of the plan pending further engagement with the Legislature. Additionally, it appears legislation would be necessary in order to move the girls from YRTC-Hastings to Kearney, because under state law, YRTC-Kearney may only serve male youth. Legislative Bill 1013 (2026) would have made this change, but the bill did not pass.

The closure of NCYF resulted in the elimination of approximately 70 positions, impacting staff at NCYF as well as OCC and CCCO. NDCS has indicated it expects to save approximately $6 million over the course of two years as a result.

Monitoring Visits and Other Reviews

The OIG-CS has been monitoring the youth and young adults who were previously housed at NCYF, to gather information about the conditions and correctional treatment they have experienced since the move and how the change impacted overall operations at RTC.

Through this process, the office fielded questions from state senators and others who opposed the closure of NCYF, specifically regarding whether moving the youth to RTC was compliant with the federal Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA). PREA requires youthful inmates to be housed separately from adult inmates, but allows youth and adult inmates to interact in areas outside of housing units, as long as direct staff supervision is provided. As a result, because the youth are kept in a separate living unit, moving them to RTC does not appear to inherently violate PREA standards.

Moving youth to RTC has presented some challenges to the operations of RTC, which was already the state's largest and most complex correctional facility. Conditions for the youth are in some ways more restrictive, given that they cannot leave their living unit or adjacent classrooms without direct staff supervision. However, the OIG-CS identified no major concerns with how RTC was accommodating these youth.

The OIG-CS also tracked 53 young adults who had been housed at NCYF – in units separate from the youth unit at that facility – and were relocated to other NDCS facilities in the months prior to NCYF closing. This office found no significant trends.

Work Ethic Camp Converted to McCook Detention Center

In August 2025, the Governor, NDCS, and other state agencies announced that the Work Ethic Camp (WEC), a minimum-security NDCS facility in McCook, would be repurposed to serve as an immigration detention facility

as part of a contract with the federal government. The change involved no formal approval by the Legislature. The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement website now refers to the facility as the McCook Detention Center.

Figure 5. The yard at WEC prior to its conversion into an immigration detention center.

The OIG-CS visited the McCook facility twice in fall 2025, before it was occupied by federal detainees, and provided monthly updates about the transition to members of the Legislature. The office has not returned in 2026, but is exploring this possibility, in part to examine renovations and other changes that have taken place.

Although the facility no longer houses state inmates, it is still owned by the state and staffed by NDCS employees. Additionally, given that the correctional system's population already far exceeds the capacity it was designed to serve, the 200 beds currently in service in McCook are of continued relevance to the system as a whole.

New RTC Units for Special Needs Populations

NDCS opened three new units for special needs populations during FY2025-26, all located at the Reception and Treatment Center. Two of these units house individuals with serious mental illnesses, while the third is intended for elderly individuals.

The OIG-CS has visited each of these units and continues to monitor their operations. This is particularly true with one of the mental health units, as the

office has recommended increased oversight of long-term “restraint status” in these types of settings.

New Correctional Facility

NDCS continues construction of a new, multi-custody correctional facility in northeast Lincoln intended to replace the Nebraska State Penitentiary. The new facility is expected to open sometime in 2028, according to the most recent information shared by NDCS.

The Legislature has directed NDCS to file a report detailing the department's plan to decommission NSP, including a timeline and related costs. The requirement was included in Legislative Bill 1071, which passed in 2026 as part of the annual adjustments to the state’s biennial budget. This report is due December 31, 2026.

In the meantime, the OIG-CS annual work plan for FY2026-27 includes the task of monitoring construction of the new facility and the status of NSP. The office has requested records related to the new prison construction as part of this process.

NCCW Water Project

The state has taken steps in recent years to address concerns regarding elevated copper levels in the water at the Nebraska Correctional Center for Women in York. This included a corrosion control chemical feed system installed at the facility’s main water well in 2022.

In 2024, the Legislature appropriated $2.5 million for further repairs. NDCS initially planned to refurbish the facility’s backup water well and install a corrosion control system similar to the other well, and gave an estimated completion date of May 2026 for that work. However, according to NDCS, it was later identified that the backup well would need to be replaced entirely, with a deeper well at a different location at the facility. NDCS was preparing to bid the project at the time of this report.

Storm Damage at State Penitentiary

The Lincoln area was hit by a storm on August 9, 2025, causing significant damage to two minimum-security dormitory units at NSP, which housed approximately 400 men.

Figure 6. Men sleeping in gym at NSP following storm damage to the facility in August 2025.

Fortunately, NDCS had recently moved its residential substance use treatment program to RTC, freeing up a former living unit that had been used for treatment space and offices. About 100 men were moved into that gallery, another 50 beds were temporarily added to a different minimum-security dormitory at NSP, and some men were accommodated with existing open beds at the facility. Approximately 200 remaining men were moved into gymnasiums at NSP, Tecumseh State Correctional Institution, and Omaha Correctional Center.

As the OIG-CS noted in its 2025 annual report, "[f]inding over 150 beds and placing them at the other two units at NSP in such a short period of time was no small achievement. The staff at the impacted facilities stepped up to the challenge and responded speedily and appropriately."

This office visited NSP twice soon after the incident, walked through the impacted housing units, and visited with staff and the incarcerated persons who were impacted by the incident. The office also met with those staying in the gym at TSCI during this time. The situation affected morale among the incarcerated population and staff at NSP, and impacted other facilities, as well. In addition to TSCI and OCC temporarily housing these individuals, populations rose in the intake units at RTC, resulting in more individuals sleeping on floor cots.

Repairs were completed in late September 2025, allowing the NSP units to be reoccupied.

Implementation of Legislation

Although several bills related to the correctional system were introduced during the 2026 legislative session, far fewer significant changes were made than in previous years. As a result, the OIG-CS is not aware of any legislation passed in 2026 that will require ongoing monitoring by this office.

By comparison, the office is still monitoring the implementation of a handful of legislative changes enacted in previous years that have yet to be fully implemented or otherwise resulted in ongoing changes within the system:

Streamlined Parole – *LB50 (2023)*

Qualified offenders – those who are not serving sentences for violent felonies – can bypass the normal parole hearing process, provided they meet certain criteria under this system. Such offenders enter into a streamlined parole contract with the Board of Parole and are released automatically upon their parole eligibility date, provided they do not commit any Class I offenses under the NDCS disciplinary code and have completed all recommended clinical programming. The Parole Board still requires individuals to have an approved residence in order to be released.

Streamlined parole was created in law in 2023 but was implemented by the Parole Board and NDCS in 2026. As of August 2026, according to information provided by the Board, NDCS and the Board had identified more than 1,000 individuals who were eligible, and another 1,250 were still being reviewed.

Parole Supervision Move to NDCS – *LB631 (2024) & LB150 (2025)*

Parole supervision went from being a distinct entity under the Board of Parole to a component of NDCS in recent years. In 2024, lawmakers moved the Division of Parole Supervision under the management of Department of Corrections, and in 2025, the Legislature formally dissolved the division and assigned its duties to NDCS more generally.

Although this transition has now taken place, it has resulted in significant operational changes which are ongoing. This is expected to include eventual accreditation of the parole system by the American Correctional Association (ACA).

Work Release and Reentry Centers – LB 631 (2024)

NDCS was also tasked with crafting a plan to contract with one or more privately operated, community-based facilities to house offenders prior to their release on parole or post-release supervision. The Legislature set aside

$1 million per year in funding for this purpose, and directed NDCS to establish a strategic plan and procedure by July 1, 2026, which would allow private providers to submit bids. The OIG-CS has requested this plan but NDCS has not shared it, and the department has indicated it wishes to have the law repealed so the funds can be used elsewhere.

Drug Testing Requirements – LB 519 (2025)

People caught with suspected drug contraband in prison are now entitled to confirmatory lab testing if a preliminary field test was used as evidence against them. This change was made in response to an OIG-CS report from 2024.

Since the passage of this law, NDCS has stopped using preliminary tests as evidence in these cases and is instead relying on observations by correctional staff and circumstantial evidence. The Nebraska Supreme Court has previously upheld discipline based on these types of evidence.

Policy and Procedure Changes

The OIG-CS reviews all new departmental policies and policy revisions implemented by NDCS. This contributes to overall system monitoring and improves the office's ability to respond to complaints and conduct thorough investigations.

These policies cover a wide range of matters relevant to legislative oversight. For example, the department issued a new policy in November 2025 related to the McCook Detention Facility and another new policy in June 2026 to establish a process for determining which offenders are eligible for streamlined parole in accordance with Neb. Rev. Stat. § 83-1,111 and § 83-1,111.01.

Key Performance Indicators

Data and information related to overall correctional system performance has been included in each OIG-CS annual report since the office was created.

Following the adoption of LB 298 in 2025, the Inspectors General and the Division of Legislative Oversight are working to develop formal key performance indicators (KPIs) to assist with short-term and long-term legislative oversight of state agencies and programs, including those within the correctional system. This process will include input from relevant state agencies, members of the Legislature, and other stakeholders – with the goal of presenting these KPIs for consideration by the Legislative Oversight Committee during the next interim.

In the meantime, this year's OIG-CS annual report contains updated information similar to what has been included in previous annual reports.

Outcome Measures

Recidivism is the most commonly used measure of correctional system performance. NDCS calculates its recidivism rate similar to other state prison systems, based on the percentage of people who return to the department's custody within three years of their release.

The most recent NDCS recidivism rate listed in its public quarterly reports, as of early October 2026, was 28.47% for the year 2021.

Some limitations of this measurement include:

- Recidivism does not account for other negative outcomes, such as arrests or convictions which occur in other states or do not result in a person returning to NDCS specifically.
- Different agencies use different definitions for recidivism, even within Nebraska.
- The time window excludes individuals who return to prison beyond the three-year mark.
- It is a fundamentally negative measure, which does not reflect whether formerly incarcerated people are prepared to live productive lives beyond not quickly returning to prison.

Establishing a common Nebraska definition for recidivism, or alternative measurements entirely, could be beneficial for the correctional system as a

whole. The Reentry Continuity Advisory Board, which includes the Inspector General, has indicated this as a goal for continued discussions. The OIG-CS believes there is a continued role for the Legislature in this process, also.

Correctional Population

The size of Nebraska's prison population has remained relatively stable in recent years, although recent snapshot data may indicate some recent growth. Meanwhile, the number of people under parole supervision has trended higher in recent years, and updated figures from the Administrative Office of the Courts and Probation are expected to show post-release supervision (PRS) numbers shrinking.

Population Projection

The most recent population projection available for NDCS was completed in 2019, when The JFA Institute predicted Nebraska's prison population would exceed 6,600 people by 2026. This forecast could not have accounted for unexpected events such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the passage of several major pieces of criminal justice reform legislation, which likely contributed to the actual number being far lower than anticipated.

Establishing an ongoing correctional population forecasting tool would be a useful alternative to one-off projections.

RECOMMENDATION | Oversight & Operations
The OIG-CS recommends the Legislature establish a correctional system forecasting tool to improve oversight of the system and better anticipate population changes that will impact operations. Such a tool could also be used to project the impacts of policy changes being considered by the Legislature.

System Capacity

Nebraska's correctional system continues to experience overcrowding. This is true regardless of how one measures capacity:

- **Design capacity** is defined in statute and means the total designed bed space in facilities operated by NDCS, as certified by the agency director. By this measure, every current NDCS facility is overcrowded, with some housing twice the number of people for which they were designed.

- **Operational capacity** is also defined in statute and means 125 percent of design capacity. By this measure, all facilities aside from TSCI are above or essentially at operational capacity.
- **Bed capacity** is determined by the agency director and "reflects the number of people a facility can realistically manage at a given time."[10] Most facilities are nearly full by this measure, and some still exceed capacity. This appears most acute at RTC, where many individuals still sleep in floor cots in the intake units.

Average Daily Population (ADP) by NDCS Facility FY2025-26, Quarter 3 (January - March 2026)							
Facility	**ADP (Q3)**	**Design Capacity**	**%**	**Operational Capacity**	**%**	**Bed Capacity**	**%**
CCCL	608	460	132%	575	105%	660	88%
CCCO	176	90	196%	113	155%	179	97%
NCCW	333	275	121%	344	98%	420	78%
NCYF	61	76	80%	95	84%	141	49%
NSP	1,372	818	168%	1,023	130%	1,352	95%
OCC	775	396	196%	495	158%	789	99%
RTC	1,340	884	152%	1,105	126%	1,250	109%
TSCI	1,045	960	109%	1,200	86%	938	111%
Total	5,711	4,059	141%	5,075	113%	5,929	98%

Figure 7. Operational and Bed Capacity figures and percentages according to NDCS Quarterly Population Summary for FY26 Quarter 3. Design Capacity information calculated by OIG-CS based on statute.

Additional Data

NDCS publishes quarterly statistical reports on its website which include department-generated information about the correctional population, programs and staffing. At the time the OIG-CS was completing this annual report, the most recent of these reports available was from Q3 of FY2025-26 (January-March, 2026).[11]

Additionally, the Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, also known as the Crime Commission, produces a required annual report through its Community Corrections Division with data regarding probation, problem-solving courts, parole, and reentry programs within

---

[10] Office of the NDCS Chief Inspector. (2025). *Semiannual Report: January 1, 2025 – June 30, 2025.* Nebraska Department of Correctional Services. corrections.nebraska.gov/sites/default/files/2025-09/Semiannual%20Report.pdf

[11] These reports can be found online at corrections.nebraska.gov/news-information/research-reports

NDCS. The 2025 version of the report was filed with the Legislature on March 20, 2026.[12]

Staffing

The state of staffing within NDCS varies widely by facility and type of service, and data available to the OIG-CS does not present a clear picture of the situation, particularly given significant changes within the system over the past year.

For example, the Nebraska State Penitentiary and more recently the Reception and Treatment Center have been able to transition staff from 12-hour shifts – which were the result of staffing emergencies at those facilities – to mainly 8-hour shifts. However, Tecumseh State Correctional Institution still relies primarily on 12-hour shifts.

Behavioral health remains and area of significant need within NDCS. A recent staffing analysis noted not only substantial vacancies at the department's main mental health facility, but also a need to add more positions in some cases. More information is included in the 'Health Care' section below.

Overall, vacancies within the agency as of the end of FY2025-26 were slightly higher than those reported the previous year: 335 versus 295, according to the State of Nebraska Agency Vacancy Report. However, this measure lacks context related to changes such as the repurposing of the Work Ethic Camp in McCook, the closing of the Nebraska Correctional Youth Facility in Omaha, and shifts in staffing patterns at other facilities.

Health Care

Health services staffing has been a major concern within NDCS in recent years. Delays or perceived delays in obtaining timely medical and mental health care result in far more complaints to the OIG-CS than the office has the capacity to investigate.

---

[12] Community Corrections Division. (2026). *Community Corrections Division Annual Report 2025*. Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice. nebraskalegislature.gov/FloorDocs/109/PDF/Agencies/Crime_Commission/518_20260320-134618.pdf

Statutory Requirements

State statute requires NDCS to provide all inmates with a community standard of health care, meaning the care provided must be "of the type, quality, and amount that any individual residing within the community in question could expect to receive in that community." This and other requirements are established under the Nebraska Correctional Health Care Services Act.[13] The Act covers medical, surgical, pharmaceutical, nursing, dental, optometric, and audiological care, as well as physical therapy, mental health care, and substance use counseling and treatment.

The Act also specifically requires the NDCS medical director to "ensure that each facility has at least one designated medical doctor on call at all times and that each facility housing more than five hundred inmates has at least one full-time medical doctor assigned to that facility as his or her primary employment location."

Staffing Analysis

As noted in the Staffing portion of this report, NDCS recently obtained a staffing analysis of all non-custodial positions, including health services.[14] The analysis, which was conducted by Abt Global and submitted to the Legislature in September 2026, took particular issue with the state of behavioral health staffing within the department.

For example, RTC – the department's largest facility and hub for care of men with serious mental illnesses – had just 9.2 of 28.6 authorized Behavioral Health Practitioners (BHPs) full-time equivalents (FTEs) filled, which the staffing analysis called "particularly drastic":

> *Operational demands further magnify the effects of these staffing shortages. Due to the facility's size, physical layout, and the need to separate multiple housing populations, transporting individuals to behavioral health appointments and programming requires a significant amount of staff time. Behavioral health staff estimate that approximately two hours of each workday is spent escorting residents throughout the facility rather than providing direct clinical services.*

---

[13] Neb. Rev Stat. §§ 83-4,153 to 83-4,165.

[14] Abt Global. (2026). *Non-Custodial and Behavioral Health Staffing Analysis*. Produced for Nebraska Department of Correctional Services. nebraskalegislature.gov/FloorDocs/109/PDF/Agencies/Crime_Commission/518_20260320-134618.pdf

This analysis was apparently conducted prior to the opening of a new youth unit at RTC, which added another layer of operational complexity to the facility. NDCS has indicated that no new mental health positions were added at RTC as part of that change.

Also, beyond filling vacant positions across the system, the staffing analysis identified the need for more authorized BHP positions. This includes eight (8) more BHP positions at the Nebraska State Penitentiary. This is noteworthy because NSP had 2.6 vacant FTEs already, and its location in Lincoln would likely mean it is competing for the same pool of practitioners as RTC. According to the report:

> *Insufficient behavioral health staffing limits the facility's ability to provide timely assessments, treatment planning, crisis intervention, ongoing counseling services, and support for individuals with mental health and substance use needs. The shortage may contribute to longer wait times for services, increased strain on existing clinicians, and greater operational challenges for custody staff managing individuals with unmet behavioral health needs.*

Education & Other Programs

A variety of rehabilitative programs are available to people in Nebraska's correctional system. These include:

- Inpatient and outpatient programs for those with substance use disorders, and programs for those who committed sexual offenses or exhibit similar behaviors. These programs are provided by NDCS clinicians for people in prison, and by outside providers for people on parole.
- Other programs facilitated by non-clinical NDCS staff, such as education programs, a domestic violence intervention called Achieving Change Through Value-Based Behavior (ACTV), and programs based on the 5-Key Model for Reentry developed by Colorado-based Wellbeing and Equity Innovations, which NDCS has promoted heavily in recent years.
- Programs offered within NDCS facilities by outside providers.
- Programs available for people upon release, largely through outside providers but in some cases funded by the state.

Under statute, structured programming must be planned for all adults committed to NDCS.[15] Additionally, statute requires people sentenced to NDCS for substance use violations to attend "appropriate treatment and counseling on drug abuse" and that the department "shall provide [this treatment] … prior to the first parole eligibility date of the committed person."[16] Nebraska's Sex Offender Registration Act requires that anyone convicted of a registerable offense and committed to NDCS "shall attend appropriate sex offender treatment and counseling programming offered by the department" or risk being civilly committed after prison.[17]

In addition to these requirements, because of their potential to address underlying behaviors and issues and ultimately benefit public safety, the quality and availability of evidence-based programming has been a subject of continued attention by the OIG-CS.

Programming-related data and information can be found in the quarterly population summaries published by NDCS.[18]

Violence & Aggression Programming

As noted in this office's 2025 report on mental health-related issues, NDCS terminated its version of the Violence Reduction Program (VRP) in early 2024 and has yet to implement a replacement. In addition to VRP, which was intended for those at high risk for violence, the department also eliminated its anger management program. These changes were made after a statutorily required program evaluation found the programs, although effective in other systems, were not effective as implemented by NDCS.

Efforts to find direct replacements for these programs have not been successful, according to NDCS.

Required Evaluations

Statute requires NDCS to contract with a Nebraska-based academic institution to conduct regular evaluations of all programs funded by the department, including their effectiveness at reducing recidivism and their availability throughout the system. These evaluations are supposed to include feedback to the department as well as the OIG-CS. Clinical programs

---

[15] Neb. Rev. Stat. § 83-182.01.
[16] Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 28-416 and 83-1,110.01.
[17] Neb. Rev. Stat. § 29-4014.
[18] See corrections.nebraska.gov/news-information/research-reports

must be evaluated at least once every three years, and other programs must be evaluated every eight years.[19]

A version of this requirement has been in law since 2015, and the Legislature has provided $237,900 per year in funding for this work.[20] To date, only one such evaluation – the one related to VRP and anger management programming – has been shared with the OIG-CS.

Restrictive Housing & Other Special Secure Settings

Nebraska statute defines restrictive housing as "conditions of confinement that provide limited contact with other offenders, strictly controlled movement while out of cell, and out-of-cell time of less than twenty-four (24) hours per week."

Reducing the use of restrictive housing has been a focus of efforts by NDCS, the Legislature, and others for several years, and overall restrictive housing numbers have trended down as a result. In turn, increasing attention has been paid to other settings which are generally less restrictive than restrictive housing, but still provide more limited access to programming and services available to the general inmate population. A significant amount of data and information about these settings is available in the 2026 Restrictive Housing Annual Report produced by NDCS.[21]

Of particular note recently, NDCS has also managed to significantly reduce the number of people in protective custody (PC). A population that used to consume an entire unit (approximately 375 beds) at Tecumseh State Correctional Institution now consists of only a few dozen individuals, taking up just part of one living gallery at TSCI. This was noted and explained in more detail in the OIG-CS annual report from 2025.

The OIG-CS has several recent or ongoing projects related to restrictive housing and special secure settings.

SMI in Restrictive Housing

In 2025, the office found NDCS may be violating state statute by placing individuals with serious mental illnesses (SMI) in longer-term restrictive

---

[19] Neb. Rev. Stat. § 83-182.01.

[20] See fiscal note and "A" bill for LB896 (2022).

[21] https://nebraskalegislature.gov/FloorDocs/109/PDF/Agencies/Correctional_Services__Department_of/602_20260915-092656.pdf.

housing. This finding, part of a broader examination of mental health-related matters within NDCS, hinges on how one interprets Nebraska's specific statutory definition of serious mental illness. Interpretations of SMI can vary by treating providers, and actual definitions of SMI differ between states, federal agencies, and outside organizations.

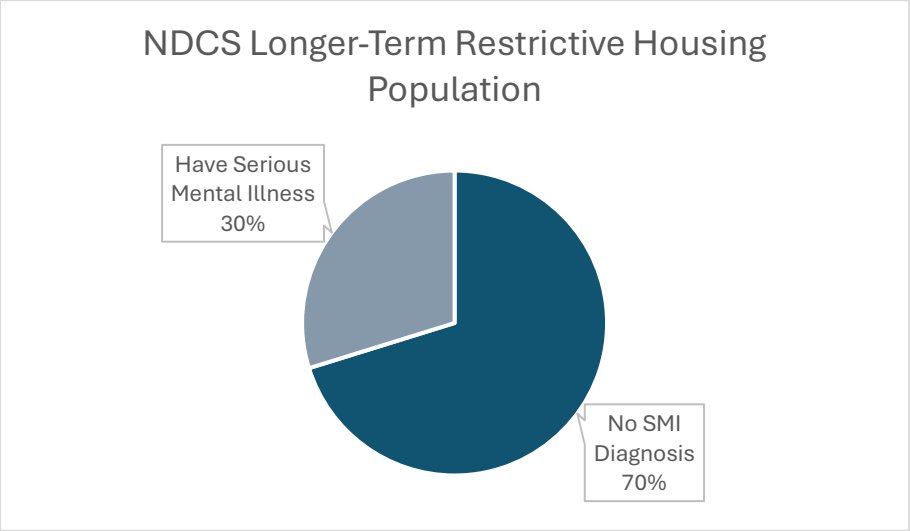


Figure 8. Based on OIG-CS review of NDCS data as of October 6, 2026.

NDCS disagreed with the OIG-CS's finding, and has indicated that complying with a stricter interpretation of this law would present significant operational and safety challenges. This is a topic of ongoing discussion between NDCS, members of the Legislature, and the OIG-CS.

Alternatives to Restrictive Housing

Special management units present an alternative to, or step down from, restrictive housing in many cases. NDCS uses these units to manage individuals who are still seen as safety or security risks but, unlike those in restrictive housing, are able to leave their cells for a few hours each day and interact in small groups.

Because these units are less restrictive than restrictive housing, they are subject to less stringent rules under statute and departmental regulations. However, they still offer limited access to programming and services, and are used for longer-term placements for many individuals. An audit of these placements is part of the OIG-CS work plan for FY2026-27.

Longer-Term Restrictive Housing Placements & Pathways

Another item on the OIG-CS work plan is a review of longer-term restrictive housing (LTRH) placements and pathways for release. This includes an

examination of the "Pathways" programs which NDCS assigns for individuals to complete while on LTRH.

Reentry & Community Supervision

Approximately 2,000 people are released from Nebraska correctional facilities each year. A majority of these individuals (e.g. 62.6% in 2025, 56% in 2024) remain under some form of supervision in the community.[22]

Since 2016, NDCS and the Board of Parole have been required to submit information to the Legislature, the Supreme Court, and the Governor on an annual basis regarding people who are released from custody without supervision (otherwise known as mandatory discharge or "jamming"). These reports were required as part of the state's efforts at reducing recidivism. However, there was no requirement for the agencies to report other potentially valuable information, particularly about those released on parole.

During the 2026 legislative session, in response to a recommendation by the OIG-CS, the Legislature voted to expand this report to include information about the following:

- Those eligible for parole who remain incarcerated
- Parole revocations
- Parole hearings
- Efforts for rehabilitating and reducing recidivism of parolees
- Cost savings to the state resulting from individuals being paroled rather than incarcerated

The changes were actually included in two bills which passed in 2026. LB 518 passed first, but then LB 1048 incorporated the changes into a much broader overhaul of requirements for a variety of state agencies.

The first of these new reports will be due in February 2027.

[22] OIG-CS calculations based on data from NDCS Mandatory Discharge Reports.

Other OIG-CS Activities

Intakes & Case Volume

The OIG-CS receives hundreds of phone calls, letters, emails, and other contacts each year. These include complaints and updates from incarcerated people, correctional staff, family members, advocates and others, as well as required notifications of critical incidents from NDCS.

Incarcerated individuals may contact the OIG-CS using the NDCS privileged mail process or by calling a confidential tip line. Each of these contacts is logged individually, although repeated contacts from a single individual on the same day or span of days are in some cases logged together.

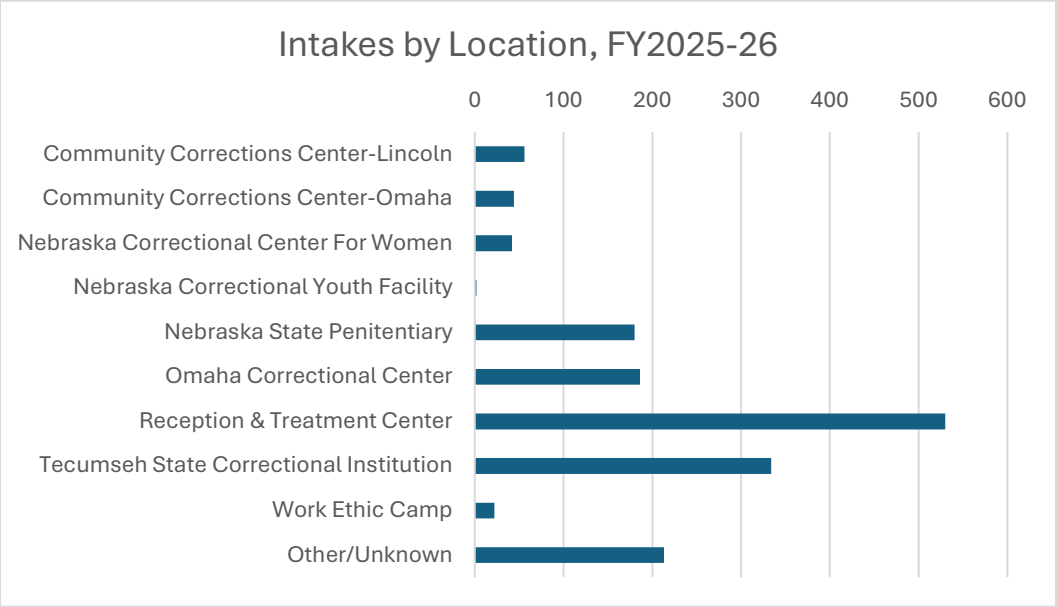


Figure 9

In FY2025-26, the office logged 1,609 intakes. These are each tagged to an NDCS facility or other location. *(See Figure 9.)* Those labeled "Other/Unknown" include intakes related to individuals on parole, county jails, or other locations – or, most often, contacts about specific facilities from people who are not actually housed at those facilities. For example, while the number of intakes from the Nebraska State Penitentiary is low relative to its incarcerated population, many of the "Other/Unknown" are from family members of men at that facility. The OIG-CS is adjusting its intake process so more specific locations are included for these intakes going forward.

The office has also worked over the past year to reduce the overall number of intakes it receives about individual issues which do not rise to the level of investigation by the OIG-CS. That has resulted in slightly lower numbers, particularly compared with the third quarter of 2025. *(See Figure 10.)*

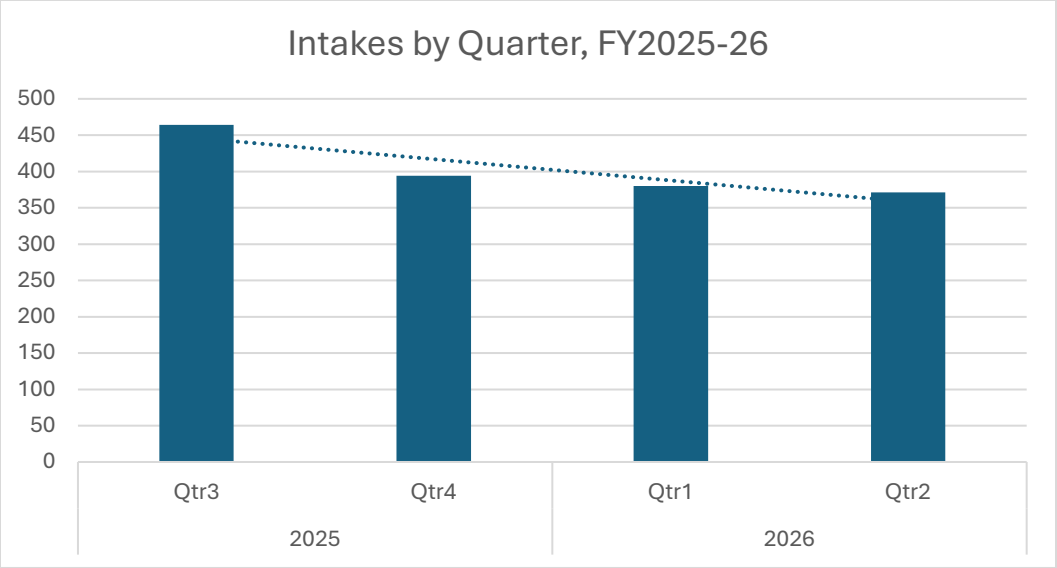


Figure 10

OIG-CS staff respond to nearly all intakes. Complaints are considered for investigation based on their significance, potential systemic nature, and office resources. If the Inspector General determines the office will not investigate a specific complaint, the office can and often does recommend alternative means to resolve the issues involved. In many cases, individual complaints are added to broader examinations of possible systemic issues.

Process & Resources

Intakes are reviewed routinely throughout the week, and case files are opened for critical incidents and prioritized complaints. Assigned staff then conduct an initial review of documentation that is already available or easily accessible, such as incident reports and video obtained from the facility, relevant items within the NDCS case management system, and information provided by complainants. This initial review is generally completed within 30 days.

Further investigation is then conducted as needed based on detailed work plans approved by the Inspector General. Broader monitoring, review, or audit projects are also conducted according to work plans approved by the Inspector General.

Over the past year, due to high caseloads and a need to ensure the office's work is adequately documented, the OIG-CS has intentionally reduced the number of new cases it opens which are not required under the law, particularly individual complaints. *(See Figure 11.)* The Legislative Oversight Committee has also authorized the office to triage and close older cases so the office may focus on providing timely information to the Legislature.

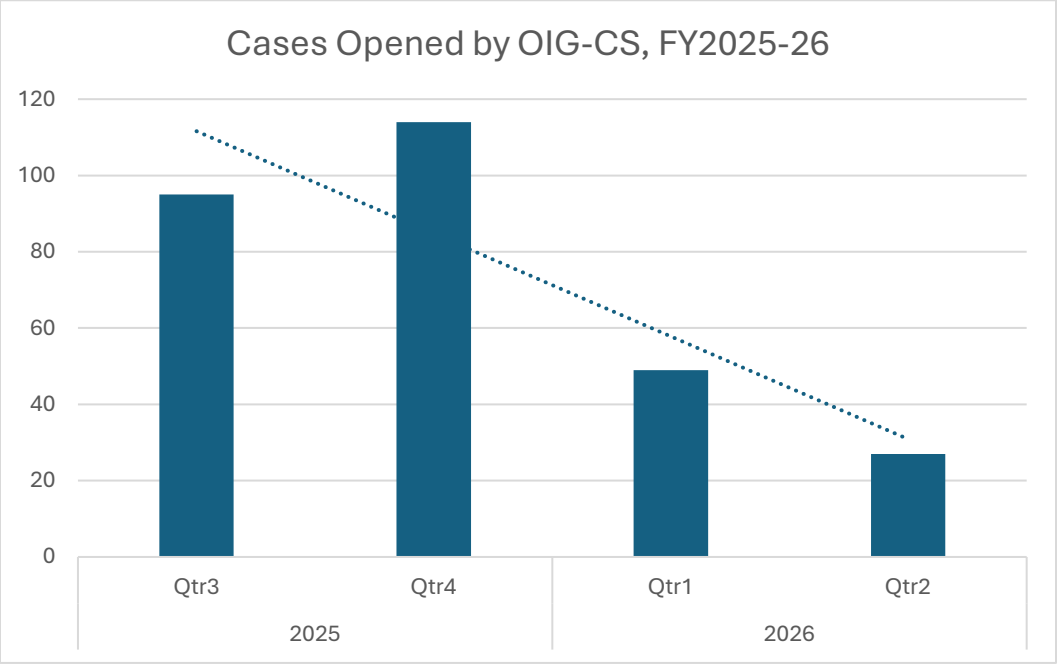


Figure 11

Intakes and investigative capacity are both high areas of need for the office.

Although most intakes do not result in full investigation by the office, they can involve complex issues and routinely require significant review by intake staff and the Inspector General. Most intake duties are performed by an executive intake assistant, who splits her time between the OIG-CS and the OIG-CW. This workload leaves limited time for this staff member to assist with preliminary information gathering and vetting of complaints, which would be beneficial for the office as a whole.

Additionally, the office's investigative capacity presents a significant limitation, particularly with complaints. An additional assistant inspector general, along with more discretion in investigating critical incidents, would help prevent future backlogs and allow the office to conduct more meaningful investigations.

Facility Visits

Being physically present in correctional facilities and related locations is essential for the OIG-CS to conduct its work effectively, and the office visits these sites routinely. State statute allows the office to make announced or unannounced visits to any NDCS facility for the purposes of an audit, inspection, investigation, or review.

Common reasons for conducting facility visits include:

- Interviews with witnesses for investigations or other cases
- Monitoring conditions and/or operations
- Discussions regarding sensitive or complicated complaints
- Meetings with NDCS staff or administrators

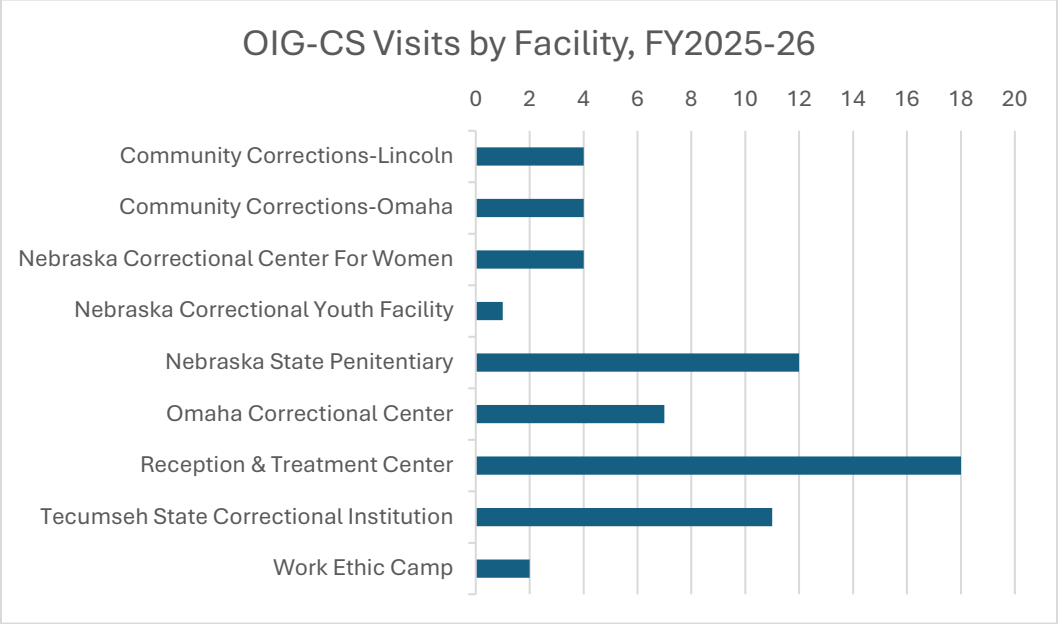


Figure 12

Although the office is responsible for monitoring all NDCS facilities, the "Big 3" men's facilities – Reception and Treatment Center, Nebraska State Penitentiary, and Tecumseh State Correctional Institution – are the largest facilities by population and tend to have the most critical incidents and complaints. This results in the OIG-CS visiting these facilities more often than the others. *(See Figure 12.)*

Process & Resources

All facility visits are coordinated in advance by OIG-CS staff, with the specific reason(s) for each visit documented internally. Visits must be approved by the Inspector General. The OIG-CS generally notifies NDCS at least 24 hours

prior to each visit. However, unannounced visits may take place in coordination with the Director of Legislative Oversight and the chairperson of the Legislative Oversight Committee.

Significantly increasing the frequency of facility visits would likely require an increase in staff.

External Engagement

Beyond the office's core duties, the Inspector General and the OIG-CS regularly engage with correctional system and oversight stakeholders. Some of these activities are mandated by statute, while others are not but nonetheless further the office's mission:

- **Association of Inspectors General (AIG)** – The OIG-CS is active within AIG, an organization which provides support and training for independent offices of inspector general across the U.S. and internationally. The OIGs conduct their work in accordance with AIG standards, and statute requires the Inspector General to obtain certification through the AIG within two years of being appointed. The AIG has been a critical source of information and assistance for both of Nebraska's offices of inspector general.
- **Reentry Continuity Advisory Board (RCAB)** – The Inspector General is a statutory member of RCAB, which also consists of the NDCS director, the chairperson or designee from the Board of Parole, the state probation administrator, and five additional members appointed by the governor. This board meets regularly throughout the year and is tasked with promoting effective reentry and reintegration into the community for people who have been incarcerated.
- **Legislative Engagement** – Given its location within the legislative branch of state government, the OIG-CS inherently serves as a source of information and insights for the Legislature. This includes providing updates on system developments for members of the Judiciary Committee and other interested lawmakers, and providing technical feedback for individual members of the Legislature, to the extent appropriate and possible within the office's resources.
- **Prison and Jail Innovation Lab (PJIL) Peer Learning Community** – This group consists of directors of statewide corrections inspectors general, ombudsmen, and similar offices from across the country. Based at the University of Texas at Austin's Lyndon B. Johnson School

of Public Affairs, the Peer Learning Community and PJIL as a whole have provided the OIG-CS with tremendous support and insight into corrections and corrections oversight in other states.

- **Other Stakeholder Engagement** – The OIG-CS's work brings the office into contact with a variety of individuals with interest in the Nebraska correctional system. For example, in recent months, the Inspector General has given presentations to the Reentry Alliance of Nebraska, a class at Nebraska Wesleyan University, and a program organized within the Episcopal Diocese of Nebraska.

Key Recommendations

This annual report features two recommendations for the Legislature which the OIG-CS believes will help increase accountability and legislative oversight of the Nebraska correctional system:

1. **Amend reporting and investigation requirements for the office in order to increase the office's monitoring capabilities while providing more flexibility to prioritize investigations under the Office of Inspector General of the Nebraska Correctional System Act.** *(See "Mandatory Reporting," Page 12.)*

2. **Establish a correctional system forecasting tool to improve oversight of the system and better anticipate population changes that will impact operations. Such a tool could also be used to project the impacts of policy changes being considered by the Legislature.** *(See "Population Projection," Page 29.)*

The OIG-CS also believes the following recommendations issued in FY2025-26 merit continued attention from the Legislature:

3. **Review mental health staffing levels across state agencies, with an emphasis on inpatient services.** *(See OIG-CS Report #2025-01.)* Mental and behavioral health staffing remains an acute problem within the correctional system. Any solution involving pay or reclassification of these workers would require action beyond just NDCS. The OIG-CS appreciates the Legislature's continued attention to this area.

4. **Clarify Neb. Rev. Stat. § 83-173.03, given NDCS' continued use of longer-term restrictive housing for people with serious mental illness (SMI).** *(See Report #2025-01.)*

Appendix II of this report contains numerous additional recommendations issued by the OIG-CS in FY2025-26 or previous years, and an update on the status of these recommendations.

Recommendations for NDCS

Most recommendations the OIG-CS issues are for NDCS, which has an opportunity to respond to the recommendations via a formal process

outlined in statute.[23] This included 11 formal recommendations from FY2025-26, all of which are listed in Appendix II.

In reviewing these recent recommendations as well as those from previous years, the OIG-CS believes the following merit special attention from NDCS:

1. **Require central office review of long-term "restraint status."** *(See Report #2025-01.)* Although more attention has arguably been given to the placement of seriously mentally ill individuals in longer-term restrictive housing, the OIG-CS believes the use of "restraint status" for similar populations could benefit from additional transparency. Reforms in this area could also potentially be easier to implement from an operational perspective than those involving restrictive housing. NDCS rejected this recommendation, but the OIG-CS believes it may be worth revisiting.

2. **Develop a plan to improve recruitment and retention of licensed mental and behavioral health staff, in cooperation with the Behavioral Health Education Center (BEHCN) and other stakeholder groups.** *(See 2023 report on RTC use of force complaint.)* The staffing analysis completed in September 2026 emphasizes the department's continued struggles in this area. Unfortunately, the analysis did not include specific recommendations for how to address the problem. The OIG-CS knows NDCS is aware of the significance of this issue and believes the agency is trying to address it, but a more detailed plan may indicate or facilitate progress.

3. **Implement limits on overtime and back-to-back 16-hour shifts.** *(See 2016 annual report.)* These are two of the first recommendations the OIG-CS issued when the office was formed. They were not implemented. The OIG-CS and the State Auditor have since continued to raise cost and safety concerns related to excessive reliance on overtime with NDCS, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic is over and staffing has improved, which may make this a good time to implement longer-term safeguards in this area.

---

[23] Neb. Rev. Stat. § 50-1915. Past recommendations issued within OIG-CS annual reports did not utilize this process, therefore many older recommendations for NDCS did not receive formal responses from the agency.

Appendix I: Investigative Report Summaries

The following are summaries of investigative reports completed by the OIG-CS in FY2025-26 which did not result in standalone public summary reports. Reports are listed in the order in which the documented incidents occurred:

Death of NCCW Incarcerated Individual (Report #2026-04)

On December 2, 2024, NDCS notified the OIG-CS that an incarcerated individual housed at NCCW had died at an outside hospital after experiencing a heart attack and undergoing a failed surgical procedure. The OIG-CS reviewed NDCS documentation of the death as well as the results from the autopsy and the grand jury investigation. The OIG-CS also reviewed the incarcerated individual's medical records and case file information and interviewed their power of attorney. The OIG-CS's investigation was delayed due to the timeline for the grand jury proceedings and release of the grand jury transcript, as well as the process of hiring an outside consultant.

Prior to their death, the incarcerated individual had complained about being denied an echocardiogram to rule out a potential source for an existing medical condition. Because this concern was not addressed as part of the grand jury investigation, which found no evidence of criminal conduct, the OIG-CS hired an independent cardiologist to review whether the denied echocardiogram may have contributed to the incarcerated individual's death. The independent cardiologist determined that the denial of an echocardiogram was not the reason for and did not contribute to the death of the incarcerated individual. The OIG-CS found no potential systemic issues in need of further review and offered no recommendations at that time.

Hand Injury on Work Release I (Report #2026-15)

On June 23, 2025, NDCS notified the OIG-CS that an incarcerated individual on work release, housed at CCCL, cut several of their fingers while at their place of employment and received stitches for the injury. The OIG-CS reviewed documentation of the incident provided by CCCL as well as the incarcerated individual's case file. Review of the incident indicated the incarcerated individual caught their hand in the hood of a pipe puller during the completion of standard work duties. The OIG-CS found no potential systemic issues in need of further review and offered no recommendations at that time.

Fall on Work Release (Report #2026-14)

On July 2, 2025, NDCS notified the OIG-CS that an incarcerated individual on work release, housed at CCCL, broke their tibia and fibula when stepping down from a ladder at their place of employment. The OIG-CS reviewed documentation of the incident provided by CCCL as well as the incarcerated individual's case file. Review of the incident indicated that the incarcerated individual was injured during the completion of standard work duties at their place of employment. The OIG-CS found no potential systemic issues in need of further review and offered no recommendations at that time.

Hand Injury from Escape Attempt (Report #2026-18)

On July 3, 2025, NDCS notified the OIG-CS that an incarcerated individual, while attempting to climb the inside perimeter fence of NSP, cut their hand on the razor wire and received stitches for the injury. Review of the incident indicated the incarcerated individual gave up climbing the fence after injuring their hand and surrendered to responding staff. The OIG-CS found no potential systemic issues in need of further review and offered no recommendations at that time.

Car Accident During Furlough (Report #2026-12)

On July 21, 2025, NDCS notified the OIG-CS that an incarcerated individual housed at CCCL was in a car accident with their sponsor and received staples for a head wound. The OIG-CS reviewed documentation of the incident from CCCL and the Lincoln Police Department (LPD) as well as the incarcerated individual's case file. The OIG-CS notified CCCL of some inconsistencies in what was reported to NDCS in this case, but found no potential systemic issues in need of further review and offered no formal recommendations at that time.

Fall While Inside Cell (Report #2026-13)

On July 8, 2025, NDCS notified the OIG-CS that an incarcerated individual fell inside their cell at RTC and sustained a facial fracture. The OIG-CS reviewed documentation of the incident from RTC as well as the incarcerated individual's case file and grievances. Review of the incident indicated the incarcerated individual fell due to substance use. The individual was initially seen by medical staff before being taken to a hospital for further care. The OIG-CS found no potential systemic issues in need of further review and offered no recommendations at that time.

Altercation at Youth Facility (Report #2026-17)

On July 23, 2025, NDCS notified the OIG-CS that an incarcerated individual sustained a fractured kneecap during an altercation with another incarcerated individual at NCYF. The OIG-CS reviewed documentation and video footage of the incident provided by NCYF as well as the case files for the youth involved. Review of the incident indicated the incarcerated individual started the fight due an argument over a basketball game. Staff intervened and separated the two without further incident. The OIG-CS found no potential systemic issues in need of further review and offered no recommendations at that time.

Fight in Facility Bathroom (Report #2026-11)

On July 24, 2025, NDCS notified the OIG-CS that an incarcerated individual sustained a broken nose during an altercation with another incarcerated individual at NSP. The OIG-CS reviewed documentation and video footage of the incident provided by NSP as well as the case files for the incarcerated individuals involved. Review of the incident indicated the two individuals were bunkmates in a dormitory unit and appeared to have had a disagreement in their sleeping area before fighting in the bathroom. Staff intervened, and the injured incarcerated individual was taken to a hospital to be assessed. OIG-CS found no potential systemic issues in need of further review and offered no recommendations at that time.

Attack with Razor Blade (Report #2026-10)

On July 30, 2025, NDCS notified the OIG-CS that an incarcerated individual was injured during an altercation with another incarcerated individual at RTC and received stitches on their neck and eyebrow. The OIG-CS reviewed documentation and video footage of the incident provided by RTC as well as the case files for the incarcerated individuals involved. Review of the incident indicated that the incarcerated individual had been sitting in the dayroom of their housing unit when the other incarcerated individual came up behind them and attacked them with a razor blade before transitioning to hitting and kneeing them in the face. Staff intervened and separated the two without further incident. The OIG-CS found no potential systemic issues in need of further review and offered no recommendations at that time.

Hand Injury on Work Release II (Report #2026-09)

On August 10, 2025, NDCS notified the OIG-CS that an incarcerated individual on work release, housed at CCCL, cut one of their fingers while at their place of employment and received stitches for the injury. The OIG-CS reviewed documentation of the incident provided by CCCL as well as the incarcerated individual's case file. Review of the incident indicated that the incarcerated individual was injured due to an item coming loose and falling during the completion of standard work duties. The incarcerated individual's supervisor notified NDCS before taking them to the hospital. The OIG-CS found no potential systemic issues in need of further review and offered no recommendations at that time.

Hand Injury on Work Release III (Report #2026-08)

On August 26, 2025, NDCS notified the OIG-CS that an incarcerated individual on work release, housed at CCCL, cut one of their fingers while at their place of employment and received stitches for the injury. The OIG-CS reviewed documentation of the incident provided by CCCL as well as the incarcerated individual's case file. Review of the incident indicated the incarcerated individual cut their right index finger with a bread knife while completing standard work duties at their place of employment. After returning to CCCL, the incarcerated individual was seen by medical staff and sent to the hospital. The OIG-CS found no potential systemic issues in need of further review and offered no recommendations at that time.

Altercation on Yard (Report #2026-16)

On October 21, 2025, NDCS notified the OIG-CS that an incarcerated individual sustained a laceration below their right eye during an altercation at NSP. The OIG-CS reviewed documentation and video footage of the incident provided by NSP as well as the case files for the incarcerated individuals involved. Review of the incident indicated the incarcerated individual approached a group of other incarcerated individuals while on the yard and began fighting one of them. Staff intervened and escorted the incarcerated individuals from the yard without further incident. The OIG-CS found no potential systemic issues in need of further review and offered no recommendations at that time.

Altercation in Special Management Unit (Report #2026-03)

On January 16, 2026, NDCS notified the OIG-CS that an incarcerated individual sustained a broken jaw in a multi-person altercation at RTC. The OIG-CS reviewed documentation and video footage of the incident provided by RTC, as well as the case file information for those involved. Review of the incident indicated the incarcerated individual had initially been assaulted by another incarcerated individual before their respective social groups became involved, escalating the assault into a multi-person altercation. Concerns about the staff response to the incident were identified and addressed by facility administration. The OIG-CS found no potential systemic issues in need of further review and offered no recommendations at that time.

Hand Injury at Cornhusker State Industries (CSI) (Report #2026-05)

On February 24, 2026, NDCS notified the OIG-CS that an incarcerated individual, housed at CCCL, received stitches on their finger for an injury they received while working at Cornhusker State Industries. The OIG-CS reviewed documentation of the incident provided by NDCS. Review of the incident indicated that the incarcerated individual had smashed their finger under a box of steel while assisting other incarcerated individuals dump said box into the designated scrap dumpster. Medical staff assessed the injury and sent the incarcerated individual to the hospital. The OIG-CS found no potential systemic issues in need of further review and offered no recommendations at that time.

Staff Fall Due to Weather Conditions (Report #2026-02)

On February 24, 2026, NDCS notified the OIG-CS that a staff member broke their ankle at NSP during a snowstorm after slipping and falling. The OIG-CS reviewed documentation and video footage of the incident provided by NSP. After an initial review of the incident, the OIG-CS determined that no further review was required and offered no recommendations at that time.

Hand Injury from Facility Door (Report #2026-06)

On April 13, 2026, NDCS notified the OIG-CS that an incarcerated individual caught their finger in a door at TSCI and received stitches for the injury. The OIG-CS reviewed documentation and video footage of the incident provided by TSCI and the incarcerated individual's case file. Video evidence suggested the incarcerated individual may have sliced their hand on the door rather than caught their hand between the

door and the doorframe. The OIG-CS notified TSCI in case of a potential safety hazard but found no potential systemic issues in need of further review and offered no recommendations at that time.

Hand Injury from Exercise (Report #2026-07)

On April 27, 2026, NDCS notified the OIG-CS that an incarcerated individual dropped a weight plate on their finger at NSP and received stitches for the injury. The OIG-CS reviewed documentation and video footage of the incident provided by NSP as well as the incarcerated individual's case file. Review of the incident indicated that the incarcerated individual had been exercising on the outdoors weight pile when they dropped the weight plate on their finger. The OIG-CS found no potential systemic issues in need of further review and offered no recommendations at that time.

Appendix II: Recommendations

The recommendations listed on the following pages were included in reports from FY2025-26 or previous years. Other recommendations from previous years have been discontinued by the OIG-CS due to being redundant with other recommendations, no longer relevant, or similar reasons. Discontinued recommendations are not listed in this appendix.

The status of the listed recommendations is updated to the best of the OIG-CS's knowledge as of this report.

Note: This version of the appendix is revised from the original, which was missing a column indicating whether each recommendation was made to NDCS or the Legislature.

Recommendations Appendix

Year	*Report Title/Source*	*Recommendation*	*Status*	*Agency*	*Response*	*Notes*
2026	Medical parole, geriatric parole, and recent deaths in NDCS custody	Further examine the geriatric parole statute to determine whether it is serving its intended purpose or if it should be amended.	Not Completed	Legislature	Did Not Accept or Reject	
2026	Medical parole, geriatric parole, and recent deaths in NDCS custody	Clarify the meanings of "terminally ill" and "permanently incapacitated" in the medical parole statutes.	Not Completed	Legislature	Did Not Accept or Reject	
2026	Medical parole, geriatric parole, and recent deaths in NDCS custody	Examine ways to improve access to housing and long-term care for medical parolees and similarly situated individuals.	Not Completed	Legislature	Did Not Accept or Reject	
2026	Medical parole, geriatric parole, and recent deaths in NDCS custody	Discontinue use of the Karnofsky Performance Scale as an additional criterion for people who are otherwise eligible for medical parole. Instead, this information can be submitted to the Board of Parole for consideration.	Not Completed	NDCS	Rejected	
2026	Medical parole, geriatric parole, and recent deaths in NDCS custody	Revise policy to clarify that NDCS medical providers and administrators have an affirmative obligation to identify those who might be eligible for medical parole.	Not Completed	NDCS	Rejected	
2025	Mental health care, conditions and related matters in NDCS facilities	Conducting a broader review of the role of mental illness in the state's criminal justice system.	Not Completed	Legislature	Did Not Accept or Reject	
2025	Mental health care, conditions and related matters in NDCS facilities	Revise Neb. Rev. Stat. § 83-180 to provide better guidance for discharge reviews. This could include directing NDCS to consult with known Nebraska-based experts in threat assessment when it crafts future rules and regulations pursuant to this section.	Not Completed	Legislature	Did Not Accept or Reject	
2025	Mental health care, conditions and related matters in NDCS facilities	Clarify Neb. Rev. Stat. § 83-173.03, given NDCS' continued use of longer-term restrictive housing for people with serious mental illness.	Not Completed	Legislature	Did Not Accept or Reject	

Year	*Report Title/Source*	*Recommendation*	*Status*	*Agency*	*Response*	*Notes*
2025	Mental health care, conditions and related matters in NDCS facilities	Review mental health staffing levels across state agencies, with an emphasis on inpatient services.	Not Completed	Legislature	Did Not Accept or Reject	
2025	Mental health care, conditions and related matters in NDCS facilities	Require NDCS to seek accreditation beyond what is currently specified in statute.	Not Completed	Legislature	Did Not Accept or Reject	
2025	Mental health care, conditions and related matters in NDCS facilities	Continue process improvement efforts, with emphasis on streamlining digital records. The discharge review process is just one example of the many mental health-related processes which require significant documentation by the staff involved. Going forward, NDCS should seek to streamline documentation and reduce the existence of redundant or siloed records.	In Progress/ Partially Complete	NDCS	Accepted	
2025	Mental health care, conditions and related matters in NDCS facilities	Adopt one or more programs and/or interventions for individuals with aggression histories, including those who previously would have been recommended for VRP or AMHRN. Once NDCS identifies these services, it is essential they be implemented with fidelity to the model and be made available to the populations most in need.	Not Completed	NDCS	Accepted	
2025	Mental health care, conditions and related matters in NDCS facilities	Keep statute in mind when tweaking rules and regulations. Although NDCS is right to seek updates to its discharge review rules and regulations, statutory changes might also be necessary. For now, NDCS is still required to have “evidence-based criteria” to identify those nearing release who may be mentally ill and dangerous.	Not Completed	NDCS	Accepted	
2025	Mental health care, conditions and related matters in NDCS facilities	Identify alternative placements for people in restrictive housing with serious mental illnesses. Current placement of these individuals in longer-term restrictive housing is arguably contrary to statute.	Not Completed	NDCS	Rejected	

Year	*Report Title/Source*	*Recommendation*	*Status*	*Agency*	*Response*	*Notes*
2025	Mental health care, conditions and related matters in NDCS facilities	Review conditions of inpatient mental health units. While there is reason to believe this is taking place in connection with the opening of the new “special needs” units at the RTC, it is essential that this process involve behavioral health staff and administrators and that emphasis be placed on ensuring a treatment-focused environment in new and existing mental health units.	In Progress/ Partially Complete	NDCS	Accepted	
2025	Mental health care, conditions and related matters in NDCS facilities	Pursue reclassification of mental health positions in secure facilities. Providing mental health care in a maximum-security prison is different from providing this care in the community or other institutional settings. NDCS might consider engaging with the Department of Administrative Services and other stakeholders to examine reclassifying key behavioral health positions to reflect this difference.	Not Completed	NDCS	Rejected	
2025	Mental health care, conditions and related matters in NDCS facilities	Require central office review of long-term "restraint status." Weekly facility-level reviews are a positive step toward more oversight of the use of custody restraints for mental health patients. However, when a person remains on “restraint status” for six months, a year or more, review by NDCS administration is merited. This review should be conducted by a multidisciplinary team, similar to the process for reviewing LTRH placements.	Not Completed	NDCS	Rejected	
2025	Mental health care, conditions and related matters in NDCS facilities	Survey former staff. NDCS should conduct an anonymous survey of former mental health staff who have left the Department for other agencies or to work in the community.	Not Completed	NDCS	Rejected	

Year	*Report Title/Source*	*Recommendation*	*Status*	*Agency*	*Response*	*Notes*
2025	Mental health care, conditions and related matters in NDCS facilities	Pursue a higher level of accreditation. NDCS is currently accredited by the American Correctional Association (ACA) and has retained that accreditation despite concerns related to mental health care and living conditions for people with serious mental illnesses. Additionally, in past years, mental health has often taken a backseat to other correctional considerations within the agency. NDCS could elevate and protect this vital component of its mission going forward by obtaining additional accreditation for mental health and other health services. This is particularly important at the RTC, NCCW, and possibly TSCI, as these are the main locations for inpatient mental health and medical care within NDCS.	Not Completed	NDCS	Rejected	
2024	2024 Annual Report	Consider amending statute to provide for confirmatory testing of suspected drug contraband in NDCS disciplinary cases, similar to what is permitted for urine.	Completed	Legislature	Did Not Accept or Reject	This recommendation was completed with the passage of LB 519 during the 2025 legislative session.
2024	2024 Annual Report	Expand reporting requirements related to individuals on parole.	Completed	Legislature	Did Not Accept or Reject	This recommendation was completed with the passage of LB 518 during the 2026 legislative session.
2024	2024 Annual Report	Examine the measures of recidivism currently utilized in Nebraska.	Not Completed	Legislature	Did Not Accept or Reject	

Year	*Report Title/Source*	*Recommendation*	*Status*	*Agency*	*Response*	*Notes*
2024	2024 Annual Report	Consider conducting a legislative audit or funding an outside study of the use of "good time" sentence reductions by NDCS.	Not Completed	Legislature	Did Not Accept or Reject	
2024	2024 Annual Report	Establish a correctional population forecasting tool to assist with future planning.	Not Completed	Legislature	Did Not Accept or Reject	
2024	Deaths of Natural Causes in NDCS Custody, 2020-2023	Engage with community partners and the Reentry Continuity Advisory Board to identify appropriate community-based housing for formerly incarcerated people who are terminally ill or require significant ongoing medical care. The passage of the Community Work Release and Reentry Centers Act in 2024 may expand the options available to the Department in this regard.	Not Completed	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	
2024	Deaths by Suicide: An Investigation of the Deaths of Three Individuals in NDCS Custody	NDCS should review the past work of the 2018 suicide work group and determine whether a special team should be established to focus on deaths by suicide and attempted deaths by suicide.	Unknown	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	NDCS did not provide a substantial response to this recommendation.

Year	*Report Title/Source*	*Recommendation*	*Status*	*Agency*	*Response*	*Notes*
2024	Deaths by Suicide: An Investigation of the Deaths of Three Individuals in NDCS Custody	NDCS should review the requirement regarding psychological autopsies found in Policy 115.30 and determine whether these have been done in the past and whether this requirement should continue to be in NDCS policy.	In Progress/ Partially Complete	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	NDCS did not provide a substantial response to this recommendation. After this report was submitted, NDCS issued a policy directive, effective immediately, outlining a process for completing psychological autopsies.
2024	NDCS Reliance on Drug Field Tests for Discipline of Incarcerated People	Ensure that all staff are trained regarding the aforementioned policy change and made aware of the limitations of drug field tests.	Completed	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	NDCS did not provide a substantial response to this recommendation.

Year	*Report Title/Source*	*Recommendation*	*Status*	*Agency*	*Response*	*Notes*
2024	NDCS Reliance on Drug Field Tests for Discipline of Incarcerated People	Revise departmental rules and regulations to provide access to confirmatory testing of suspected drug contraband, similar to what is permitted for urine tests.	In Progress/ Partially Complete	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	LB 519 (2025) required NDCS to conduct confirmatory testing in these cases. However, NDCS no longer conducts testing of any kind in most such situations and instead basis disciplinary action on other observations and evidence.
2024	NDCS Reliance on Drug Field Tests for Discipline of Incarcerated People	Identify a provider of affordable and credible confirmatory testing for administrative disciplinary cases.	Completed	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	NDCS did not provide a substantial response to this recommendation.

Year	*Report Title/Source*	*Recommendation*	*Status*	*Agency*	*Response*	*Notes*
2024	NDCS Reliance on Drug Field Tests for Discipline of Incarcerated People	Present, in writing, information about the limitations of field testing and the option to request confirmatory testing to each incarcerated person who faces potential discipline following a field test.	Not Completed	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	NDCS did not provide a substantial response to this recommendation.
2024	NDCS Reliance on Drug Field Tests for Discipline of Incarcerated People	Consult independent experts in forensic analysis or forensic toxicology before adopting new field testing technologies or revising policies related to those technologies.	Not Completed	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	NDCS did not provide a substantial response to this recommendation.
2023	Reception and Treatment Center Use of Force Complaint, May 23, 2023	Maintain a list of individuals at each facility who, per mental health and/or medical staff, require a health porter escort when they are away from their housing unit, and ensure this information is shared with other facility staff.	Unknown	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	NDCS did not provide a substantial response to this recommendation.
2023	Reception and Treatment Center Use of Force Complaint, May 23, 2023	Revamp the health porter program at RTC.	Completed	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	NDCS did not provide a substantial response to this recommendation.
2023	Reception and Treatment Center Use of Force Complaint, May 23, 2023	Return to on-unit distribution of medications for people residing in the RTC's chronic care mental health unit.	Completed	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	NDCS did not provide a substantial response to this recommendation.

Year	*Report Title/Source*	*Recommendation*	*Status*	*Agency*	*Response*	*Notes*
2023	Reception and Treatment Center Use of Force Complaint, May 23, 2023	Develop a plan to improve recruitment and retention of licensed mental and behavioral health staff, in cooperation with the Behavioral Health Education Center of Nebraska (BEHCN) and other stakeholder groups.	Unknown	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	NDCS did not provide a substantial response to this recommendation.
2023	Use of Force Incident at Tecumseh State Correctional Institution	Update the Department's use of force policy to include attempts at de-escalation by a licensed mental health professional, when time allows, for incidents involving people with known mental health issues.	Completed	NDCS	Accepted	
2023	Use of Force Incident at Tecumseh State Correctional Institution	Implement a policy to develop individualized de-escalation plans for people with serious mental illnesses who have histories of volatile interactions with staff.	Not Completed	NDCS	Rejected	NDCS requested modification to this recommendation. The modification was not accepted by the OIG.
2023	Use of Force Incident at Tecumseh State Correctional Institution	Implement a reimbursement policy for on-call mental health staff by May 1, 2023.	Not Completed	NDCS	Rejected	

Year	*Report Title/Source*	*Recommendation*	*Status*	*Agency*	*Response*	*Notes*
2023	Use of Force Incident at Tecumseh State Correctional Institution	Contract with an outside entity which specializes in training of first responders who interact with individuals with a serious mental illness to provide additional training for staff.	Not Completed	NDCS	Accepted	NDCS requested modification to this recommendation, stating that this recommendation would be forwarded for consideration during its next annual review of the Department's training curriculum. The OIG accepted this modification but requested notification upon completion of the review. This did not take place.

Year	*Report Title/Source*	*Recommendation*	*Status*	*Agency*	*Response*	*Notes*
2022	Use of 'Controlled Movement Units' Within NDCS facilities	Establish a real "yard" adjacent to the BIPU.	Completed	NDCS	Rejected	NDCS responded stating it would determine the cost and scope of such a project, then later indicated the project would not be done due to costs of $25,000. However, this project has since been completed.
2022	Use of 'Controlled Movement Units' Within NDCS facilities	Develop clear processes for determining who should be assigned to live in the new RTC unit and when they should be released to the general population.	Completed	NDCS	Rejected	NDCS rejected this recommendation, but has since implemented the change. These units are now considered special management units (SMU).

Year	*Report Title/Source*	*Recommendation*	*Status*	*Agency*	*Response*	*Notes*
2022	Use of 'Controlled Movement Units' Within NDCS facilities	Issue body-worn cameras to all floor staff in the new unit.	Not Completed	NDCS	Rejected	
2022	Use of 'Controlled Movement Units' Within NDCS facilities	Ensure that all staff working the unit have adequate experience.	Not Completed	NDCS	Rejected	
2022	Use of 'Controlled Movement Units' Within NDCS facilities	Provide information on controlled movement units in reports to the Legislature.	Completed	NDCS	Rejected	This is now a requirement under Neb. Rev. Stat. § 83,4,114.
2022	Use of 'Controlled Movement Units' Within NDCS facilities	Clearly define the goals of these units and study their effectiveness in accomplishing these goals.	Not Completed	NDCS	Rejected	
2022	Death of NCCW Inmate Niccole Wetherell	Promptly ensure all facilities have a method of tracking when patients are due for preventative and chronic care and that the method of tracking follows them should they transfer to a different facility.	Completed	NDCS	Accepted	
2022	Death of NCCW Inmate Niccole Wetherell	If EHR is not expected to be fully implemented by July 31, 2025, cease efforts to build an EHR system internally and request funds in the next biennial budget to purchase a system from an outside vendor.	Completed	NDCS	Accepted	NDCS has since contracted with an outside vendor to implement an EHR system. Core features of the system went live in 2024.

Year	*Report Title/Source*	*Recommendation*	*Status*	*Agency*	*Response*	*Notes*
2022	Fire at Lincoln Correctional Center Restrictive Housing Unit	Develop a specific plan to ensure all housing units at NDCS facilities are consistently monitored in the event of critically low staffing levels. This plan should be crafted in consultation with the labor unions representing NDCS workers and other stakeholders, and should be completed by July 1, 2023.	Not Completed	NDCS	Rejected	
2022	Fire at Lincoln Correctional Center Restrictive Housing Unit	Improve fire safety at the RTC.	In Progress/ Partially Complete	NDCS	Accepted	While this recommendation was accepted by NDCS, specific items mentioned as part of the recommendation have not been completed.
2022	Fire at Lincoln Correctional Center Restrictive Housing Unit	Use chronic care mental health housing only for inmates who required that form and level of care.	Not Completed	NDCS	Rejected	
2022	Report on CCC-L Complaint	NDCS should review how the policy regarding the waiver process and the appeal process is currently being followed at CCC-L and CCC-O and implement any necessary changes so that the actual policy is followed at each facility no later than June 1, 2022. The OIG is only recommending this for the two community facilities because of the unique nature of each of them when compared to the other correctional facilities.	Unknown	NDCS	Accepted	
2022	Report on CCC-L Complaint	NDCS should review their process for dismissing guilty findings which are found to have been in error outside of the formal appeals process, and determine whether NDCS rules and regulations should be modified to provide for these situations no later than June 1. 2022.	Not Completed	NDCS	Rejected	

Year	*Report Title/Source*	*Recommendation*	*Status*	*Agency*	*Response*	*Notes*
2022	Report on CCC-L Complaint	NDCS should amend its current policy related to the proper use of drug detection devices and the use of the results of tests involving such devices that accurately reflect their proper use no later than June 1, 2022.	Completed	NDCS	Accepted	NDCS requested a modification as it was currently in the process of reviewing this policy. This modification was accepted by the OIG.

Year	*Report Title/Source*	*Recommendation*	*Status*	*Agency*	*Response*	*Notes*
2022	"Walkaways" in Community Corrections and Other Related Issues	NDCS should pursue work release housing opportunities outside of Lincoln and Omaha, reduce the population at CCC-L so all units are operating at or below design capacity, and reexamine this facility's role in the system. New opportunities could include housing work release inmates in county jails or supervised community-based placements. The Department should also work with the Legislature as necessary to make this possible. This change would relieve pressure at CCC-L, and would allow portions of the facility to be repurposed for mission-specific housing, such as substance abuse treatment units.	Not Completed	NDCS	Rejected	While NDCS rejected this recommendation, the Department has since engaged with the Legislature on this issue. LB631 (2024) includes the Community Work Release and Treatment Centers Act, which provides for community-based work release placements for some individuals.

Year	*Report Title/Source*	*Recommendation*	*Status*	*Agency*	*Response*	*Notes*
2022	"Walkaways" in Community Corrections and Other Related Issues	The Department should provide all community corrections inmates with appropriate and beneficial mental health treatment. In order to achieve this, the Department should develop a plan that includes an analysis of community corrections inmates' mental health needs, a mental health staffing analysis, ways inmates may access mental health services in the community, and timelines for implementation.	In Progress/ Partially Complete	NDCS	Accepted	NDCS requested a modification to this recommendation and ultimately completed a cursory review of this matter which did not fully address the OIG recommendation. Recent observations by the OIG indicate mental health services in these settings need improvement.

Year	*Report Title/Source*	*Recommendation*	*Status*	*Agency*	*Response*	*Notes*
2022	"Walkaways" in Community Corrections and Other Related Issues	Devote sufficient staff resources to electronic ankle monitors in order to justify their cost, particularly at CCC-L. This could include one or more full-time positions to facilitate the electronic monitoring programs at CCC-L and possibly CCC-O, and to provide feedback to those facilities as well as to Central Administration. EM staff would work in conjunction with unit staff to input/update personalized inclusion and exclusion zones, identify and diagnose technical issues, and conduct routine checks of individual EM records. Establishing this as a separate position would reduce the impact on existing staff, while not eliminating their EM-related responsibilities.	In Progress/ Partially Complete	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	NDCS requested a modification to this recommendation, apparently based on a misunderstanding that the OIG was recommending 24/7 coverage of these devices. This was not the OIG's intent with the recommendation.
2022	"Walkaways" in Community Corrections and Other Related Issues	The Department should review the policies and procedures related to these issues (interacting with incarcerated people in public) and provide more specific guidance for situations involving community custody inmates and staff. This process should include direct input from staff at these facilities, as well as local law enforcement.	Completed	NDCS	Accepted	
2022	"Walkaways" in Community Corrections and Other Related Issues	The NDCS Appeals Board should conduct a review of the Department's disciplinary records, including but not limited to escapes, and use this information to help improve equity in administrative sanctions.	Not Completed	NDCS	Rejected	
2021	2021 Annual Report	Additional, the Legislature should examine the medical parole system more broadly to determine if it is functioning as intended and whether additional statutory changes would be beneficial.	Completed	Legislature	Did Not Accept or Reject	

Year	*Report Title/Source*	*Recommendation*	*Status*	*Agency*	*Response*	*Notes*
2021	2021 Annual Report	The Legislature should review Neb. Rev. Stat. § 83-918 and determine whether it needs to be stricken or if it should be amended to apply to years beyond 2021.	Completed	Legislature	Did Not Accept or Reject	
2021	Arrest of Staff Member at the Nebraska State Penitentiary	Create one intelligence system with a clear chain of command and mission, but also one that maintains constant and transparent communication with the leaders of each correctional facility. As part of this process all Intelligence staff plus facility leaders should be involved in a review of the current system.	Completed	NDCS	Rejected	NDCS administration has since undergone significant restructuring, including in the area of intelligence and investigations, making this recommendation no longer relevant.
2021	Arrest of Staff Member at the Nebraska State Penitentiary	Establish a written policy for the use of recording devices as well as establish a tracking system for their location and utilization.	Completed	NDCS	Accepted	

Year	*Report Title/Source*	*Recommendation*	*Status*	*Agency*	*Response*	*Notes*
2021	Arrest of Staff Member at the Nebraska State Penitentiary	Review how cases involving employees who have been identified as needing administrative or criminal intervention are handled throughout the system and determine whether or not this needs to be amended to create a better system for handling employee concerns and provide a written report regarding the results of this review to the OIG. As shared in this report, there were two tracks that were followed and this caused confusion and a lack of definitive action. As part of this effort, NDCS should clarify to facility administration and Central Office staff what the process is for suspending and terminating staff.	Unknown	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	NDCS indicated it would be reviewing its practices to determine needed improvements, and would make any necessary changes in policy.
2021	Arrest of Staff Member at the Nebraska State Penitentiary	Implement a pilot program involving the use of a body scanner at NSP. Should NDCS move forward with this pilot program, there are challenges associated with their use. These challenges include proper training and use of the scanners, privacy concerns, any potential health concerns and several others. As part of this investigation, the OIG discussed the use of body scanners with the Fraternal Order of Police (FPO) and they discussed these challenges and concerns. If body scanners are utilized by NDCS they should incorporate the FOP and other staff into this process so that it can be accomplished in a manner that works for all of those impacted by this decision.	In Progress/ Partially Complete	NDCS	Rejected	NDCS has since installed a body scanner at the RTC.

Year	*Report Title/Source*	*Recommendation*	*Status*	*Agency*	*Response*	*Notes*
2021	Arrest of Staff Member at the Nebraska State Penitentiary	Establish a system for tracking criminal cases referred to the Nebraska State Patrol and the local County Attorney, including the outcome of those cases. While it does not relate to this specific case it should also provide NDCS staff who are impacted by criminal cases (for example, a staff assault) with information on the outcomes of those referrals and cases.	Unknown	NDCS	Rejected	NDCS indicated that it was already tracking at least some of this information at the time.
2021	Arrest of Staff Member at the Nebraska State Penitentiary	Require Human Resources to maintain all documentation provided to them regarding requests to suspend or terminate an employee.	Unknown	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	NDCS indicated it would be reviewing its practices to determine needed improvements, and would make any necessary changes in policy.
2021	Arrest of Staff Member at the Nebraska State Penitentiary	Provide data on an annual basis to the Governor, Legislature and the Inspector General of Corrections on the number of NDCS staff who are arrested and/or prosecuted for their activities within NDCS. In addition, data should also be provided to these entities regarding the number of NDCS staff who are asked to leave due to alleged inappropriate or illegal actions.	Not Completed	NDCS	Rejected	
2021	Staffing Update Report	Department leaders should engage in significant, ongoing discussions with individuals impacted by wage compression to gain a better understanding of their concerns and demonstrated their commitment to addressing this issue.	Not Completed	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	

Year	*Report Title/Source*	*Recommendation*	*Status*	*Agency*	*Response*	*Notes*
2021	Staffing Update Report	NDCS should engage in significant, ongoing discussions with individuals who work in the behavioral health field to gain a better understanding of their concerns and demonstrate their commitment to addressing the vacancies in this area of NDCS. In addition, NDCS should develop an action plan for addressing these significant vacancies.	Unknown	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	
2021	Staffing Update Report	NDCS should determine what action can be taken to decrease the reliance on contracted medical positions such as nurses.	In Progress/ Partially Complete	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	
2020	2020 Annual Report	NDCS should establish a goal that the majority of incarcerated individuals receive and complete their clinical programming 12 to 18 months prior to their parole eligibility date or release date.	Unknown	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	
2020	2020 Annual Report	The name of the Work Ethic Camp should be changed to reflect its current role in the correctional system.	Not Completed	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	This would require a statutory change by the Legislature.
2020	2020 Annual Report	NDCS should revamp their exit interview process and then set up a system to report the outcomes and action items that result from an enhanced exit interview program.	Unknown	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	
2019	2019 Annual Report	NDCS should expand the use of body cameras, especially at LCC.	Not Completed	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	
2019	2019 Annual Report	NDCS should reinstate domestic violence programming.	Completed	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	
2019	2019 Annual Report	NDCS should review the effectiveness of the delivery of the substance abuse treatment programs and consider working jointly with community treatment providers to improve and enhance the program. The review should also examine any issues with attracting and retaining staff for the program.	In Progress/ Partially Complete	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	

Year	*Report Title/Source*	*Recommendation*	*Status*	*Agency*	*Response*	*Notes*
2019	2019 Annual Report	Nebraska should take steps to enact state policies that encourage the hiring of previously incarcerated individuals.	In Progress/ Partially Complete	Legislature	Did Not Accept or Reject	
2018	2018 Annual Report	Review the success of the "Blue Room" at NCCW and determine whether or not this could be replicated at other facilities.	Completed	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	
2018	2018 Annual Report	Provide secure opportunities for inmates at the community corrections centers to apply for jobs using the internet.	Completed	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	
2017	SMU Fire at the Tecumseh State Correctional Institution on May 25, 2017	Review an inmate in a restraint chair every 15 minutes in order to determine whether or not he could be safely removed from it rather than placing him or her there automatically for two hours.	Completed	NDCS	Accepted	
2017	2017 Annual Report	Request that the Department of Administrative Services review the wage scale for Mental Health Practitioners, Substance Abuse treatment staff, and any other positions identified by NDCS as needing an updated and more accurate wage scale.	Not Completed	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	
2017	Death of Terry Berry	Continue the efforts by NDCS to reduce the number of individuals in restrictive housing and protective management settings.	In Progress/ Partially Complete	NDCS	Accepted	
2017	Death of Terry Berry	Examine the possibility of using peer mentors to work with inmates who choose not to follow orders to move to another cell.	Completed	NDCS	Accepted	Although peer mentors have been used for this purpose on occasion, it unclear how commonly this happens.

Year	*Report Title/Source*	*Recommendation*	*Status*	*Agency*	*Response*	*Notes*
2017	Death of Terry Berry	Conduct a comprehensive review that examines why Mr. Berry was located at TSCI, whether or not he received the services and programming he needed in order to successfully begin to transition into the community, and whether or not a different placement would have been more appropriate for him as a result of his crime, age, behavioral challenges and sentence length.	Not Completed	NDCS	Rejected	
2017	SMU Fire at the Tecumseh State Correctional Institution on May 25, 2017	Review the incident and determine whether or not Mr. YYYYYYY's cell door should have been closed sooner than it was and whether or not the showers should have been turned off earlier than they were.	Completed	NDCS	Accepted	
2017	SMU Fire at the Tecumseh State Correctional Institution on May 25, 2017	Always contact the fire department and the Nebraska State Fire Marshal in the case of a fire. In this case, review why those two entities were not contacted and address this lack of appropriate action as soon as possible.	Completed	NDCS	Accepted	
2017	SMU Fire at the Tecumseh State Correctional Institution on May 25, 2017	Continue to improve the Immediate Segregation and Longer-Term Restrictive Housing placement policies, including the use of active STG in placing inmates in those placements.	Not Completed	NDCS	Rejected	
2017	SMU Fire at the Tecumseh State Correctional Institution on May 25, 2017	Work with NDCS Health Services to determine whether medical staff could be moved closer to the location of a serious health incident so that triaging and more timely medical care could be provided.	Unknown	NDCS	Rejected	
2017	SMU Fire at the Tecumseh State Correctional Institution on May 25, 2017	Review the Immediate Segregation and Longer-Term Restrictive Housing policies that allow for bedding and other supplies to be left in a gallery while inmates are allowed to walk through the gallery unattended.	Completed	NDCS	Accepted	
2017	Death of Daelan Lamere	Review the ability to "turn down the volume" as it relates to response buttons.	Unknown	NDCS	Accepted	
2017	Death of Daelan Lamere	Increase the frequency and thoroughness of searches of staff as they enter the prisons.	Completed	NDCS	Accepted	

Year	*Report Title/Source*	*Recommendation*	*Status*	*Agency*	*Response*	*Notes*
2017	Death of Daelan Lamere	Consider working with law enforcement agencies to assist with staff searches so that an outside entity is conducting the searches on a random basis.	Completed	NDCS	Accepted	NDCS has worked with outside law enforcement for mass searches and targeted searches, although this is not common practice.
2017	Death of Daelan Lamere	Review the search policy for visitors in order to determine whether or not it needs to be adjusted to conduct enhanced and appropriate searches of visitors.	Completed	NDCS	Accepted	
2017	Death of Daelan Lamere	Conduct a review of visitor and staff searches at each prison, including whether or not the searches are being done in the manner prescribed by DCS, whether they are fairly and uniformly administered, and whether the ability to conduct such searches is impacted by staffing levels.	Completed	NDCS	Accepted	
2016	2016 Annual Report	Place limits on the amount of overtime that an employee can work in one week.	Unknown	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	
2016	2016 Annual Report	Consider the banning of back to back 16 hour shifts by employees.	Not Completed	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	
2016	2016 Annual Report	Continue to develop more program options for inmates that would assist them in being paroled, including the development of programs provided in foreign languages.	Unknown	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	
2016	2016 Annual Report	Complete a staffing analysis for the entire Department of Correctional Services.	Completed	NDCS	Did Not Accept or Reject	