

NDCS Report on the Use of Retention Funds

Quarter 3: October-December 2016

This report is the third quarterly retention fund report required by N.R.S 90-559, covering the period from October 1 through December 30, 2016. The statute includes a requirement for quarterly reports to the Governor and Legislature addressing (1) how the funds are being utilized, (2) the impact of the use of the funds on retention of quality staff, (3) staff vacancy and turnover data and (4) plans for future use of the funds.

1. How the funds are being used: Retention Initiatives

The Department has identified four primary areas of focus for the retention initiatives: Training and Professional Development, Stress Reduction and Coping Strategies, Work-Life Balance and Behavioral Health Training. Each of these four subject areas contains one or more retention initiatives. A short description of each of the initiatives is provided below along with an update on implementation to date. Through the end of December, the department has expended \$794,633 on retention initiatives. Appendix 1 at the end of this report provides a list of the existing projects, their purpose and intended targets, potential outcome measures, the amount of funds which have been allocated, current progress and expenditures to date.

- a. Training and Professional Development - Retaining quality staff includes providing opportunities to acquire new skills, education and training which will allow them to maximize their potential. Below are several strategies being implemented to improve training and professional development opportunities for staff at all levels.
 - i. Professional Development Bonus –The existing tuition reimbursement program has been expanded to cover the cost of the employees attending approved professional development courses as well as provide a bonus to staff for successfully completing the courses. Employees are eligible to receive reimbursement of the cost of the course and a bonus of up to \$500 for successfully completing a professional development course, depending on the number of hours required to complete the course.

Update: Due to lower than expected participation in the program and feedback from staff that the bonus was too small in comparison to working overtime, the department doubled the amounts of the professional development bonus effective 11/20/16. The bonus amounts are listed below and the first pay period in which the increased bonus was awarded was 12/16/2016. The change has resulted in a significant improvement in participation. Since the increase was announced, participation has increased from 66 to 292 and the total reimbursement has grown from \$11,250 to \$98,950 in less than 2

months. At the current participation rate we expect to utilize the funds allocated for this initiative.

Length of Course	Bonus
6-11 Hours	\$300
12-20 Hours	\$400
20+ Hours	\$500

- ii. Behavioral Health Symposium –A behavioral health symposium is being organized in collaboration with other criminal justice stakeholders to provide professional growth opportunities for NDCS employees, probation and parole staff, and interested community providers.

Update: The behavioral health symposium is scheduled for May 9-10 at the Embassy Suites in La Vista and a contract for the event is being finalized. The department is partnering with probation, parole, behavioral health and criminal justice stakeholders to maximize participation in this event. A planning committee led by behavioral health team members is meeting regularly to define the curriculum, identify speakers and other logistics.

- iii. Health Care Staff Continuing Education– Similar to the professional development bonus, this initiative reimburses licensed health care employees for completing required continuing education.

Update: Health care continuing education reimbursement is being processed through the department’s tuition reimbursement process which also includes all other tuition reimbursement in the Department. The amount provided for health care continuing education is being separated out from the tuition reimbursement and will be reported in the next quarterly report.

- iv. Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselor Certification – In order to attract and retain Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselors, reimbursement is being provided to behavioral health staff who acquire LADC certification.

Update: Participation in this initiative has been lower than expected due to lack of interest and the time required to obtain LADC certification. The Department is reviewing this initiative and is considering reallocating the \$10,000 in funds identified for this incentive.

- v. Staff Training Academy Technology Upgrades – Providing staff the training and tools to perform their job is an important part of employee retention. The department is upgrading technology at the staff training academy to move to computer-based instruction, which

will improve the ability to provide enhanced curriculum and materials as well as familiarize staff with the department's computer systems during pre-service.

Update: Representatives from OCIO, NDCS and DAS met at the Staff Training Academy recently to review the plan to modernize the technology. Bids on the electrical work are being prepared and quotes have been obtained for the cost of laptop computers. Student instructional materials are being upgraded to take advantage of utilizing computers with internet access to improve the educational experience and reduce printing costs. The target completion date for obtaining and installing equipment upgrades is March 2017.

b. Stress Reduction and Coping Strategies. Correctional employees need techniques and strategies to cope with the unique challenges and stress they experience in the correctional environment. It is a reality that working under a heightened state of alertness in a stressful environment such as corrections can be exhausting and lead to physical and mental health issues. Employees need techniques and strategies to cope with the unique challenges and stress they experience in the correctional environment.

i. Resiliency Training - "Corrections Fatigue to Fulfillment" (CF2F) is a program developed to address the long-term impact on overall health and functioning of corrections staff due to corrections-related workplace stress and issues specific to the prison environment.

Update: More than 500 protective services staff at the Tecumseh State Correctional Institution (TSCI), Nebraska State Penitentiary (NSP) and Lincoln Correctional Center (LCC) received the CF2F training in September and October 2016. Training for members of the Department's executive steering council occurred on October 29, 2016.

On December 12-15, 2016, 12 NDCS staff attended a 32 hour instructor training to launch the first step in becoming certified as CF2F instructors. Selection of instructors was completed from an agency wide recruitment and application process. Individuals selected ranged in all positions including that of mental health practitioner, unit case manager, case worker, corrections corporal, reentry specialist, and chemical dependency counselor.

The goal is to have instructors complete the certification process by the end of February; after which the agency will begin offering the CF2F to the remaining staff who have not completed the training to date. Courses will be offered at or near the facilities to make access as easy as possible for staff to attend. The department is looking at off-site "neutral" locations to hold the CF2F training in response to feedback from team members.

ii. Staff Support Training - Contracted training provided to victim advocates at each facility to provide an additional support for staff who are struggling with the difficulties of the job.

Update: Five victim services staff attended critical incident stress management training provided by the Mental Health Association in September at a cost of \$75 per participant. An additional 13 staff are scheduled to attend this two day training in January.

c. Work-Life Balance

- i. Staff Wellness Centers: Develop wellness centers at NSP and TSCI to provide staff access to exercise equipment, relieve stress and promote engagement.

Update: NSP has identified a location for the wellness center and contracted for the HVAC and electrical work at cost of \$23,700. Staff have volunteered to provide much of the labor needed to complete these projects and a schedule is being established by the work group to ensure completion of the project as soon as is practicable. TSCI is still working to identify suitable space for the wellness center.

- ii. Commuting Bonus for TSCI – A monthly commuting bonus is being provided to TSCI employees based on how far they live from the facility. Employees earning more than \$55,000 are not eligible for the commuting bonus.

Update: Through the pay period ending 1/08/2017, a total of \$109,990 has been paid in commuting bonuses.

- iii. Retention Bonus. On August 30, 2016, the department initiated a \$500 retention bonus for staff in the following high turnover and high vacancy job classifications hired prior to January 1, 2016: corrections officer, chemical dependency counselor, registered nurse, corrections corporal, chemical dependency treatment specialist, licensed practical nurse, unit caseworker, licensed mental health practitioner I & II, and food service specialist.

Update: 951 staff received the bonus in September 2016 for a total of \$475,500. Feedback on the retention bonus has been mixed. Although the department has communicated to team members the bonuses are for high turnover and high vacancy positions, team members who did not receive the bonus have expressed they feel their commitment has not been recognized.

d. Behavioral Health Training

- i. Schema-Focused Training – This is an evidence-based integrated therapy approach that focuses on changing long-standing patterns of thinking, which prevent individuals from benefiting from traditional forms of treatment.

Update: 40 behavioral health staff attended a schema-focused therapy training on September 8-9, 2016, at Southeast Community College at no cost to the Department.

- ii. Trauma-informed care training. Training for clinicians, which informs treatment approaches to recognize the trauma their clients have experienced.

Update: NDCS is working with the Nebraska Psychological Association and the Veterans Administration to coordinate training on trauma-informed care in 2017.

- iii. Violence Reduction Program and Violence Risk Scale Training. Training for clinicians focusing on delivery of violence reduction programming and risk assessment.

Update: NDCS contracted with the consulting firm Psynergy to deliver a three and a half day violence reduction training for NDCS behavioral health staff at the beginning of November 2016. Twenty-eight staff from NDCS and five staff from the Lincoln Regional Center attended the training. The cost of the training was \$35,000 which includes two years of additional technical support.

2. Impact of the use of the funds on retention of quality staff

The initial plan for the use of the retention funds was announced on June 15, 2016. The department has monitored participation and listened to feedback from staff. Adjustments have been made to programs and allocation of funds in order to utilize the provided resources in a way that will have the most meaningful impact on staff retention.

Initial feedback from staff has varied by program and has been generally favorable. The CF2F training and enhanced professional development bonus programs have received many positive responses. Staff members have indicated they appreciate the recognition of retention issues and that the department is listening.

Section three of this report documents agency turnover for the period during which the retention initiatives have been in place. There are other contributing factors such as the collective bargaining negotiations that impact the analysis employees make when choosing to remain employed in a job. These factors make it difficult to isolate the unique impact the retention initiatives are having on overall retention rates. The department will continue to evaluate the impact on employee retention as additional data becomes available.

3. Staff Vacancy and Turnover Data

The first quarterly report provided a baseline for evaluating the impact of the retention funds on turnover and vacancies. Table 1 contains the monthly turnover rate for protective services employees for the past 18 months, through the end of December 2016.

Table 1: Protective Services Turnover – FY 2016 + Q2 FY2017

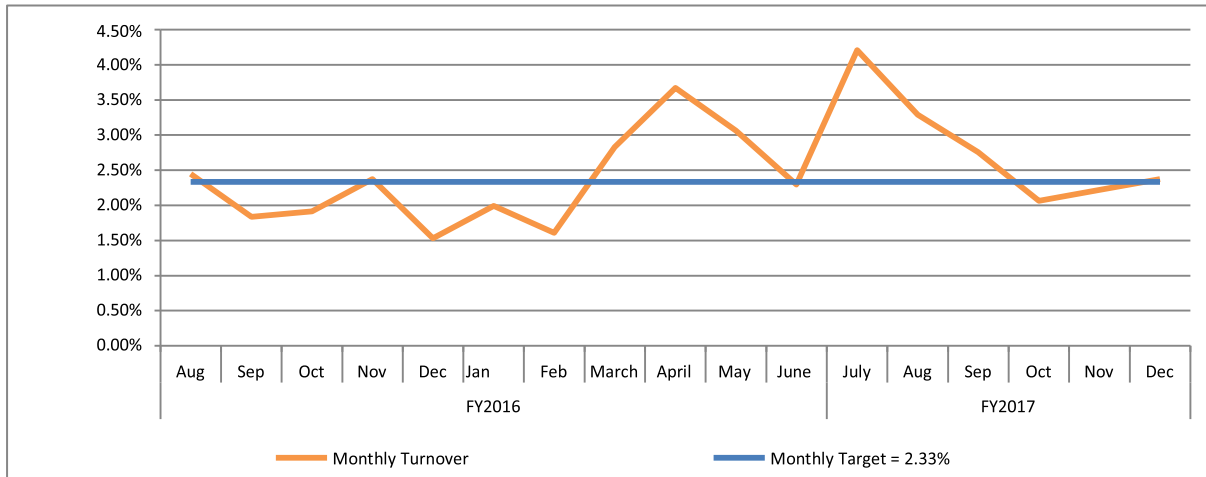


Table 2 provides monthly turnover for the agency for 2015 and 2016 and Table3 documents monthly protective services turnover for the past 7 years. Protective services is the highest need area in the agency from a staffing perspective and is the primary focus of these retention efforts.

Table 2: NDCS Agency Turnover 2015-2016

Year	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2015	50	44	54	47	61	56	52	46	38	35	42	40	565
2016	37	30	54	59	55	53	72	61	52	54	39	47	613

Table 3: NDCS Monthly Protective Services Turnover 2010-2016

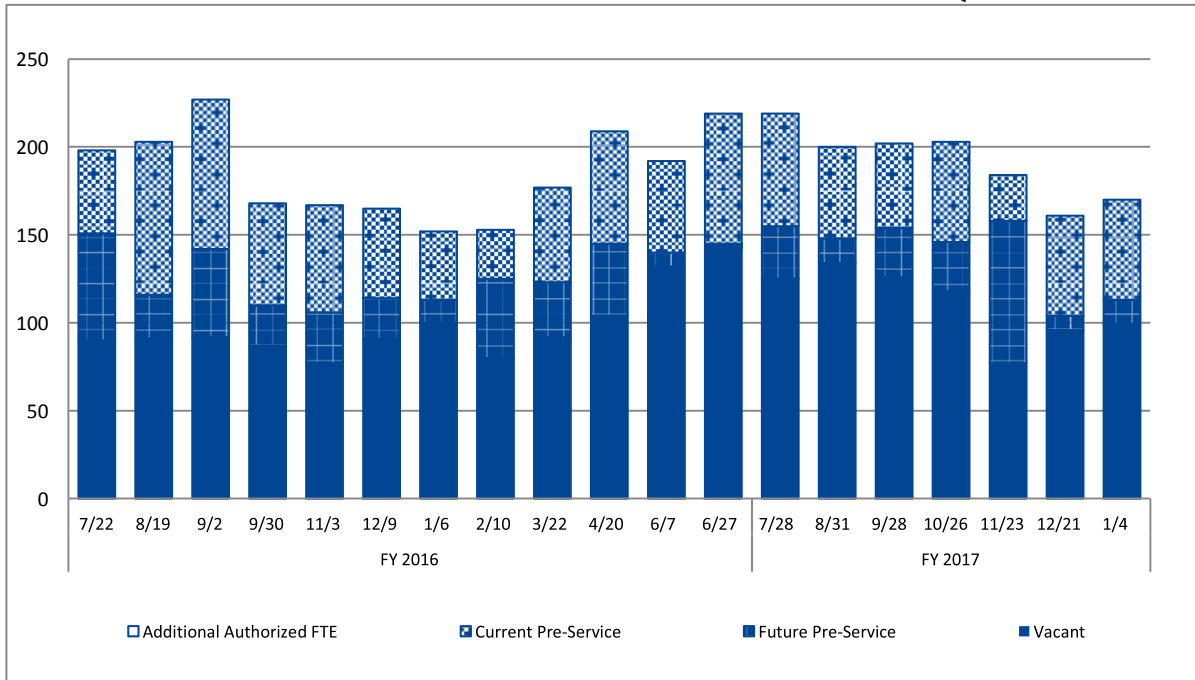
Year	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2010	17	13	21	22	17	25	24	20	30	15	13	16	233
2011	23	15	26	18	23	23	30	15	24	23	23	16	259
2012	20	20	20	26	19	31	19	33	20	18	24	16	266
2103	18	21	21	21	25	24	16	27	27	22	25	28	275
2014	25	19	30	25	33	29	46	41	25	29	28	29	359
2015	41	25	45	32	36	40	36	32	24	25	31	20	387
2016	26	21	37	47	40	30	57	42	36	28	29	31	424

Table 4 contains year-to-date agency wide turnover information for calendar year 2016 and Table 5 provides protective services vacancy information over the same time period.

Table 4: Agency Turnover Rates 2016

	T/O YTD	Auth FTE	T/O Rate
Total Turnover Rate for Protective Services:	424.00	1,307.00	32.44%
Total Turnover Rate for Nurses:	13.00	47.50	27.37%
Total Turnover Rate for Education:	3.00	27.00	11.11%
Total Turnover Rate for Other:	173.00	1,039.50	16.64%
Total Projected Annual Turnover Rate for Protective Services:			32.44%
Total Projected Annual Turnover Rate for RN's & LPN's:			27.37%
Total Projected Annual Turnover Rate for Education:			11.11%
Total Projected Annual Turnover Rate Other:			16.64%
Total Agency Turnover Rate:	613.00	2,421.00	25.32%
Total Projected Agency Turnover Rate:			25.32%

Table 5: Protective Services Vacancies FY 2016 – FY2017Q2



Protective services turnover and agency turnover as whole remain a priority for the department. July 2016 had the highest protective services turnover of any month in the past five years. Since that peak in July, protective services turnover has decreased and has been at or below the monthly turnover target of 2.33 percent for October, November and December.

The department has also focused on recruitment and retention in behavioral health. Progress has been made in hiring psychologists. In the last quarter, the department has filled two psychologist

positions, including the assistant administrator for mental health. Offers are pending for the supervising psychologist positions at NSP and TSCI and negotiations are in process for three other psychologist positions. While the department is still having issues filling some mid-level provider and substance use counselor positions, the progress made in filling the vacant leadership and psychologist positions are reason for cautious optimism.

While the department cannot definitively attribute this turnaround to the retention initiatives implemented by the department, they have played a part in retaining existing employees and sending the correct message to potential new hires. The department is hopeful the trend over the recent months continues and these new initiatives will continue to make progress in addressing our protective services and behavioral health vacancies.

4. Plans for the future use of the funds

The second quarterly report outlined the process the department is using to monitor and evaluate the success of the existing retention initiatives, ensure that the funds are utilized and identify the most effective investments of resources for any future appropriation. Appendix 1 outlines the existing initiatives, current expenditures and outcome measures being used to evaluate their effectiveness.

In conclusion, the department has appreciated the recognition of the staffing issues facing the agency. Identifying uses for the \$1.5 million that would have immediate impacts on retention was challenging, the department has benefitted from the process and is achieving the short term goals for reducing protective services turnover. The Department will continue to implement strategies to address recruitment and retention efforts within the current and requested appropriations. Future quarterly reports will provide additional information on the impact the funds are having.

APPENDIX: NDCS RETENTION INITIATIVES

Strategy	Intended Target	How it Works	How it Impacts Retention	Potential Measure	Estimated Cost	Progress/Expenditures to Date
Professional Development Stipend	Protective Services	Design process to provide stipend when staff complete online training courses	Encourage professional development; Shows commitment to staff and recognition that new skills are valuable;	Measure retention for team members taking advantage of professional development.	\$300,000.00	\$98,950
Resiliency Training	Protective Services	"Corrections Fatigue to Fulfillment" is a program developed to address the long term impact on overall health and functioning of corrections staff due to corrections- related workplace stress, the issues specific to the prison environment	The skill-building exercises teach employees to cope with the stressors and/or trauma experienced on the job, which means they will be better equipped to handle the stress of the job, they react to situations better, they and provides	Feedback from staff on training; Measures retention of participating staff.	\$50,000.00	Training was provided to staff at NSP and LCC in September, TSCI in October and Executive Staff in November 2016. NDCS staff was trained to deliver the program in December 2016. \$49,993
Peer Support Training	Victim Advocates	Contracted training would be provided to the victim advocates at each facility to provide an additional support for staff who are struggling with the difficulties of the job	Provide a level of support for staff outside of their normal supervisory structure where they may be more comfortable sharing issues w/ peers;	Staff surveys re: support services Retention rates for participating team members	\$25,000.00	5 staff attended CISM training in Sept and 13 more are scheduled for January \$1500
Staff Wellness Center (onsite TSCI/NSP)	All facility staff	Develop wellness centers to provide staff access to exercise equipment, relieve stress and promote engagement.	This is a need identified by staff which will provide an onsite stress relief opportunity and save \$ by not having to pay for a gym membership.	Facility usage rates and feedback Retention rates at facilities where they are provided	\$200,000	NSP –Electrical and HVAC contract have been bid, work underway. \$23,700
Commuting Stipend for TSCI	TSCI Staff	Provide a monthly commuting stipend to TSCI employees based on how far they live (by Zip Code) from TSCI. \$50 > 30 miles, \$25 <30 miles	Travel time and cost have been identified as two factors affecting recruitment and retention at TSCI.	TSCI retention rates	\$250,000	\$109,990
Technology Upgrades at STA	All Staff	Upgrade Technology at the Staff Training Academy to move to electronic materials	Better prepare staff for use of our computer and data systems. Improve staff engagement by providing the tools and training they need to do their job effectively.	Staff retention - completing probation, and staying 1 yr after going thru updated academy) Feedback on staff training academy changes	\$75,000	Quotes obtained for laptops. Monitors and PA system ordered. Jan 2017 target date.
Retention Bonus	Select Job Classifications	Staff in the flowing job classifications hired prior to Jan 1, 2016 receive a \$500 retention bonus.	Recognize and reward the service of long term staff in high turnover positions	Staff retention – Turnover in identified job classifications. Feedback from staff	\$400,000	\$475,500
Temporary position (SOS) to manage projects, and track metrics	All Staff	Temp position to coordinate the entire process of retention strategies	A dedicated position to coordinate these initiatives will help insure are implemented on time, with fidelity, and that we measure the impact on retention			An administrative assistant position has been assigned to help coordinate the project.
Subtotal					\$1,300,000	\$759,633
Health Services						
Licenses	LMHP, Dually Licensed Staff	Reimbursing Medical Staff for the costs to maintain licensure beyond their primary license.	This is in addition to what we currently reimburse in licenses	Participation Rate Retention rate for participating staff Staff Engagement	\$10,000	Participation has been less than projected and the Department is making efforts to notify eligible staff that reimbursement is available.
Schema-focused training	LADC, LMHP, PhD	Evidence based integrated therapy approach that focuses on changing long-standing patterns of thinking that prevent individuals from benefiting from traditional forms of treatment.	Provides additional skills/tools to BH staff for dealing with the most difficult inmates and alternative approaches that may be more effective with all clients.	# of staff who participate and complete training Retention rate for participating staff Staff Engagement	\$10,000	Training occurred on September 8-9th, 2016 at no cost to the Dept.

NDCS RETENTION INITIATIVES

Strategy	Intended Target	How it Works	How it Impacts Retention	Potential Measure	Estimated Cost	Progress/Expenditures to Date
LADC training	LADC	Paying for classes to become a LADC	Expands scope of practice for staff, providing additional opportunities for advancement	# of staff who acquire LADC certification Retention rate for participating staff	\$10,000.00	Participation has been less than expected and the Department is reviewing options to reallocate the funds allocated to this program.
Violence Reduction Training	BH Staff	Training for BH staff on delivery of violence reduction programming from recognized experts in the field.	Helps staff address the needs of high risk patients and provides tools for working with violent inmates to create a safer work environment	# of staff completing the training # of patients successfully completing VRP	\$35,000.00	Two trainings conducted for 28 NDCS and 5 Regional Center staff in November and contract for two years of technical support. \$35,000
Behavioral Health Symposium	All BH staff, re-entry staff	Host symposium to provide professional development and CEUs, could be used as recruiting tool as well. Costs include venue, staff travel, materials	Educates staff, policymakers, stakeholder and potential employees of the work NDCS behavioral health does; Professional development, education on best practices	# of New applicants from contacts at Conference Engagement of existing BH Staff Positive press on work of NDCS behavioral health staff	\$35,000.00	BH Symposium scheduled for May 9- 10, 2017 at Embassy Suites, Papillion-La Vista. Contract in process
Pay for professional CEUs	All licensed BH staff	Reimbursement for CEUs	Encourage professional development; Shows commitment to staff and recognition that new skills are valuable;	HC Staff retention rates # of CEU credit earned	\$100,000.00	These expenditures are currently included within the professional development line item.
Subtotal for Health Services					\$200,000.00	\$35,000
TOTAL					\$1,500,000.00	\$794,633