



# PRISON TRANSPARENCY PROJECT REPORT:

## *The Problem with Correctional Officer Roles and System Inefficiencies*

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# THE PROBLEM WITH CORRECTIONAL OFFICER ROLES AND SYSTEM INEFFICIENCIES

## The Challenge of Seniority and Job Security

- **Seniority and Retention:** Many correctional officers (COs) have been in their roles for a long time, where seniority is highly valued. These positions, which typically require only a high school diploma, can pay upwards of \$80,000 per year. This makes these jobs highly desirable and difficult for employees to relinquish.

- **Reluctance to Leave:** Given the high pay and job security, many COs are reluctant to leave these positions. Naturally, they want to expand their salaries and the industry they work in, similar to professionals in other fields. However, the key difference here is that they are in the business of human entrapment and modern-day slavery; this is not a business that the government should be in.

## Inefficiencies and Outdated Operations

- **Operational Inefficiencies:** Prisons, as they currently operate, are highly inefficient and not aligned with modern practices. The technology used in these facilities often demands outdated approaches to knowledge management and daily operations, leading to widespread inefficiencies.

- **Staffing vs. Efficiency:** Despite frequent claims of staff shortages, the root problem often lies in the lack of modern efficiencies rather than a genuine need for more staff. The system is designed in such a way that many COs spend significant time sitting or standing around, doing minimal work. This is less a staffing issue and more a result of outdated and poorly designed processes.

## ] The Need for Modernization and Efficiency

- **Redesign for Modernity:** Prisons must be redesigned to incorporate modern technologies and streamlined processes that reduce manual work and increase operational efficiency. This could involve leveraging automation, improved knowledge management systems, and better resource allocation.

- **Reforming CO Roles:** By modernizing prison operations, the roles of COs can be redefined to focus on more meaningful work rather than maintaining a system that primarily benefits their job security and ease of work. This would also help address the underlying issues that contribute to the inefficiencies within the prison system.

## **Misconceptions in Administration**

- **Administrative Approval:** Administrators who approve budgets and staffing from the outside may not fully realize that the issue is not purely one of staff shortages. Instead, the problem lies in the lack of modern efficiencies, which leads to an inflated perception of the need for more staff when, in reality, a more efficient system could operate with fewer human resources. This would allow us to invest less in prisons and more into schools and other programs which actually help prevent crime and keep society safe.

This report is part of a series produced by the Prison Transparency Project, aimed at uncovering and addressing issues within the prison system. For additional reports and recommendations, please visit our website at <https://prisontransparency.com>.