

# Office of the Chief Operating Officer and Department of County Management

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January 3, 2024

In 2006, Multnomah County passed Resolution 06-198, which established a policy requiring the Board of County Commissioners to conduct an annual inspection of correctional facilities in the County. In 2022, voters passed Measure 26-233, an amendment to the County Charter that requires Board members to conduct an additional inspection per calendar year accompanied by at least one volunteer member of the public.

This additional visit expands the Board's annual inspection process. It joins a number of other evaluation and audit tools — including an annual Corrections Grand Jury process and the Oregon State Sheriff's Association inspection — as an additional way of ensuring correctional facilities in Multnomah County are operated in a transparent and accountable manner.

The volunteers who joined the additional inspection were expected to produce a report on their findings either individually or with others. Three reports were submitted and received in mid December. We thank these volunteer members of the public, the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office and Multnomah County staff for the time, thought, and planning that went into completing the first year of an additional inspection of County jails.

We appreciate the volunteers' attention to issues we have identified and continue to diligently address that are specific to the work of our Corrections Health team. We support the recommendation for Corrections Health to track Narcan (brand name for naloxone) administrations. The Corrections Health team has maintained a record of instances when adults in custody receive narcan since July 2022.

In addition, we are actively working to improve staffing levels for Corrections Health. The fiscal year 2024 budget included \$2.7 million to stabilize staffing, address retention issues within Corrections Health, as well as add 19 new nursing positions. Recruiting and retaining County Corrections Health staff continues to be a challenge following the national trends.

We can report that our Health Department Human Resources team initiated new recruitment efforts. We participated in job fairs and visited nursing schools at Mt. Hood Community College, George Fox University, University of Portland, Linfield University and Clackamas Community College. We approved hiring incentives for Mental Health Consultants. Our efforts have paid off: Since July 2023, the County has welcomed 10 new healthcare professionals to our team.

Thank you again to everyone who made this possible. I look forward to seeing what this process brings next year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Serena Cruz".

Serena Cruz  
Multnomah County Chief Operating Officer