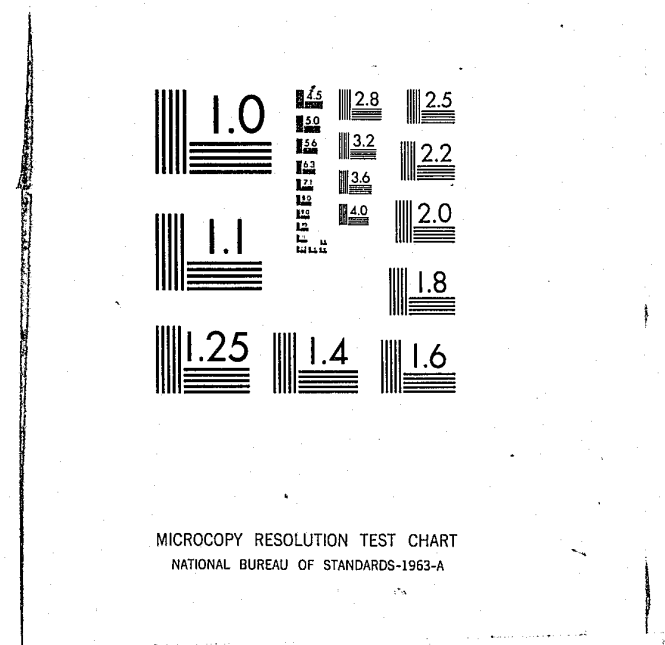


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# alaska corrections master plan

## executive summary

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august 1979

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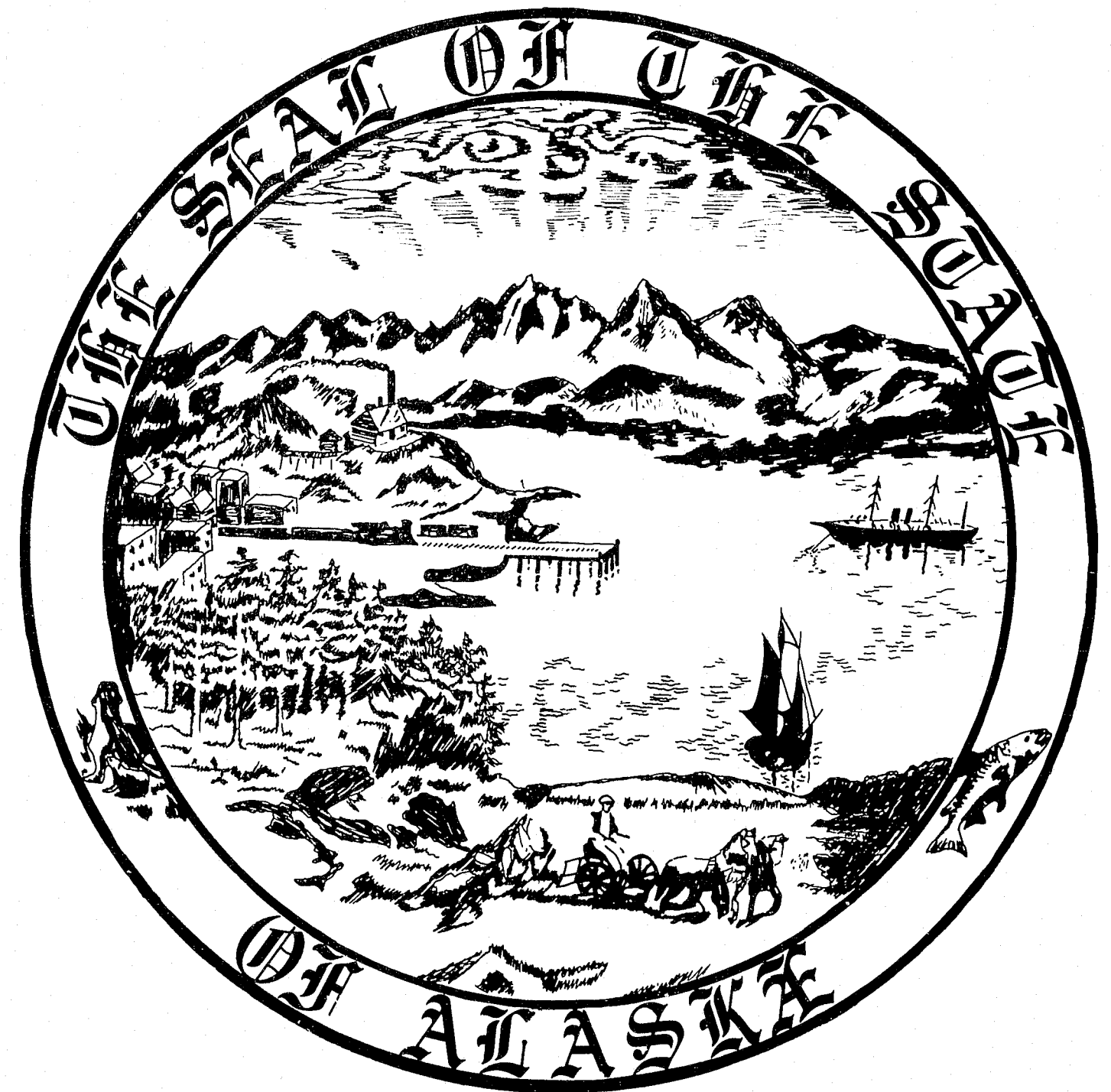
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## alaska corrections master plan

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## alaska corrections master plan



## INTRODUCTION

In 1978, the State of Alaska committed itself to the development of a comprehensive master plan for its corrections system. The planning process was initiated when Moyer Associates, Incorporated, along with the American Foundation and the National Center for Juvenile Justice, were invited by the State to participate in the development of a master plan. Alaska faces, as do many other states, the prospect of a growing offender population and increasingly limited resources with which to confine, reform, or reintegrate them into the law-abiding society. Development of a formal statement of policies and goals based on a comprehensive analysis of available information, i.e., a "master plan" for the future of corrections, was seen as crucial to the resolution of this dilemma. Although this plan cannot, and does not purport to, provide ultimate solutions to corrections problems, it does constitute a framework for action in its statement of goals and policy alternatives.

The consultants and the State have developed this document through a collaborative planning process, in which the consultants have gathered and analyzed information and representatives of the State have developed policies and goals based on the consultants' analyses. It remains the responsibility of those who work in the corrections and criminal justice system of Alaska, along with the legislature and the citizens of the State, to enact these policies. The translation

of policy to action can only occur in an atmosphere of commitment to the plan's broad goals and with a sufficient investment of resources to ensure that these goals can be at least partially achieved.

Planning is a continuous process of goal-setting, information-gathering, evaluation and monitoring and revision of action plans in light of new constraints, resources or goals. This corrections master plan thus is a statement of policies which are considered to be the most desirable and feasible in the year 1979. Although it projects needs and outlines action options through the year 2000, constant refinement and reanalysis of its recommendations will be necessary as the consequences of proposed actions become more apparent. It should thus be viewed not as an end, but rather as a means to effect positive changes in Alaska's corrections system. It is in this spirit that Alaska's Division of Corrections has already begun to develop action strategies based on policies and goals developed in this master plan.

This summary of recommendations is offered as an overview of correctional policy alternatives for the State of Alaska. Some recommendations require only administrative policy changes to enact, while others require additional funding and/or statutory changes as well. Proposals for construction of new facilities and renovation of existing ones will of course require a substantial amount of funding to implement. Wherever possible,

the type of action necessary to implement a given policy or recommendation is indicated; the underlying rationale for each policy statement is to be found in the body of the master plan, to which the reader is referred for detailed information presentations in each topic area. At the conclusion of this summary, a prioritized time line for enacting key recommendations is presented, along with cost implications where they can be estimated.

## PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS OF ALASKA CORRECTIONS

The foundation of constructive action to improve corrections practice must be a clear definition of the goals such action is intended to achieve. Policies and recommendations in this master plan have been formulated based on the philosophy summarized below:

1. Incarceration of both pre-sentence and post-sentence offenders should be used as a last resort, and then for as short a period as possible, only for offenders who present a demonstrable risk to public safety and/or who are convicted of crimes for which society demands punishment through imprisonment.
2. In the interest of promoting offender reform and reintegration while holding costs to a minimum, community corrections programs (including probation, parole, work release and restitution) should be utilized for the maximum possible number of offenders.

3. Resources and support should be focused on community corrections programs so that all possible means of maximizing diversion from incarceration can be explored.
4. Renovation or replacement of existing Alaska corrections facilities as necessary to provide normalized, humane and secure environments for all Alaska inmates.
5. Provision of a broader spectrum of work, training and social service opportunities for the benefit of both inmates and community corrections clients.

This philosophy is consistent with the mandate of the Alaska Constitution (Article 1, Section 12): "Penal administration shall be based upon the principle of reformation and upon the need for protecting the public." Protection of the public can be accomplished through focusing on rehabilitation and reintegration of convicted offenders as well as through an emphasis on institutional security.

## ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Both the style and the structure of management of a corrections system determine to a large extent the type and quality of its services. For the most part, changes in the organization of corrections can be accomplished administratively, within the DHSS and the DOC; specific management structures should not be statutorily prescribed. However, where new positions are required in the revised organizational structure, legislative authorization and funding will be

necessary; recommendations for restructuring made in this plan should require only a limited number of additional staff positions.

Two elements of management style which are vital to successful corrections practice are the ability to clearly define the agency's objectives, and an emphasis on participatory management. Management-by-objectives (MBO) is a system which can aid in setting practical objectives and in developing criteria to measure the level of attainment of those objectives. With staff at all levels of the organization participating in this process, internal coordination and staff commitment to achieving the agency's goals and objectives is likely to be enhanced.

To ensure that the organizational structure of Alaska's Corrections Division is consistent with stated philosophies and goals, the master plan makes several structural recommendations. It is recommended that for the foreseeable future, the Division be retained within the Department of Health and Social Services "umbrella." In addition, it is recommended that responsibility for all local jail contracts be consolidated in the Division of Corrections, and removed from the Department of Public Safety. Within the Division, several changes in structure and scope of services are proposed:

1. A Youth Services unit should be created which is separate from adult probation and parole, but retained within the DOC.

2. All staff services, management services, and policy development

functions should be administratively consolidated into a Technical Services unit, managed by one administrator. Central management of health services would also fall within this unit, as would state-wide facility standard-setting and inspection functions (which are not now the responsibility of any one agency).

3. The Adult Community Services unit should have responsibility not only for probation and parole, but also for pretrial assessments and supervision and for work release and halfway house functions (new responsibilities for this unit).

4. Within Adult Institutional Services, central policy-making and coordination of three essential functions can be enhanced through designation of three central office positions with policy-making authority: a Classification Coordinator, a Programs Coordinator, and a Prison Industries Coordinator. The Classification Coordinator position is already in existence, but this current Chief of Classification has not had the central policy-making authority which is essential to an objective and uniform classification process.

5. The Director's office should be provided with sufficient staff to develop a public information function and to ensure that the Division has adequate legal services (through the Attorney General's office).

The Division has already acted on a few of these proposals, but their full implementation must await funding of the few new staff positions required. One recommendation which should be

enacted immediately is the appointment of a five-member citizen advisory board for the Division of Corrections. Other advisory groups, for prison industries and for each corrections service area, may also be desirable.

A long-range goal for Alaska's corrections system is the regionalization of service delivery for all corrections services, including incarceration. This must be a long-range goal, since it will necessitate replacement of several rural facilities as well as requiring larger offender populations than some areas of the state now generate to justify provision of a full spectrum of services for each area. In addition, both Youth Services and prison industries, as newly constituted functions within the Division, will profit from centralized administration for some time to come. Eventually, fully regionalized service delivery, managed by regional coordinators responsible for all corrections services who report to the Director of the Division, will become more feasible and desirable. For the interim, the current three-region structure of Adult Community Services and Youth Services should be retained. As the quality of adult institutions available throughout the state is gradually improved through renovation and/or replacement, it will become more feasible to retain sentenced inmates closer to their home communities, and thus regionalize Adult Institutional Services. This will of necessity be a gradual process, and even with a fully adequate system of facilities, totally regionalized housing of sentenced inmates may

not be practical due to the very small number of offenders originating from many rural areas.

#### ADULT COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS

In many ways, community corrections services offer the brightest hope for the future of corrections. Probation and parole are indisputably less costly than incarceration, and are no less effective in reforming offenders. Work release, although perhaps nearly as expensive as institutionalization in terms of operating costs, may reduce the need for institutional bed space, which in turn can reduce the amount of renovation or new construction required. The capital cost savings obtained through avoidance of construction can be quite substantial (see capital costs forecasts section of plan). Therefore, improvement or expansion of community corrections services is likely to increase the overall cost-effectiveness of the system.

Many of the community corrections recommendations of the master plan can be implemented through administrative policy changes. There are also several proposals for expansion of services which would require additional staff and/or funds for contractual services, but, as previously noted, the total cost of expanding adult community corrections to serve a larger proportion of Alaska's offender population would be substantially less than the cost of imprisoning offenders who could be safely and successfully supervised in less restrictive settings.

The master plan advocates the development of more detailed policy and procedure statements by central office staff, to ensure that community corrections services are of uniform quality throughout the state. Some revision of the current policy manual will be necessary to encompass expanded services and changing practices; this presents the opportunity to develop more detailed descriptions of service objectives, preferred methods and general policies for community corrections services.

Revisions in service delivery procedures which are intended to better utilize staff time are recommended and illustrated in the plan. A modified client classification system, which categorizes offenders according to their relative levels of need for supervision and services (intensive, regular or minimum) is suggested. In addition, revisions of the workload weighting system to accommodate this new tri-level supervision system are proposed; this would permit a more precise monitoring of actual staff workloads, and thus more effective use of staff time for clients with greater need for supervision or services.

Other means of increasing the level of services offered to needy clients without necessarily greatly increasing the total community services budget are proposed as well. Increased use of paraprofessionals and trained volunteers should be encouraged. Community services staff should be strongly encouraged to function as service "brokers" for their clients, directing them to

resources, programs and services available from non-correctional sources. An increase in funds available to the Division of Corrections for contractual services would allow community corrections staff to purchase services for their clients as needed.

The Division should provide more appropriate training for community services staff than is now available, focusing less on a lengthy orientation course and more on periodic refresher seminars in specialized topic areas. Training needs for these staff members are quite different from those of institutional security staff due to differences both in educational background and in the demands of the job. It is recommended that the Division not allow the carrying of firearms by community services staff, since their role should not be as law enforcers so much as service brokers for their clients. Staff also require adequate office space, with sufficient privacy, space for records storage, and accessibility to their clients' communities.

A major expansion of community corrections services is advocated in two areas: pretrial assessment and supervision, and prerelease and halfway house programs. There are no formal pretrial assessment and release programs now in operation in Alaska, but given their potential for decreasing unnecessary pretrial detention, they are critical to reducing the institutional bed space needs. Community services staff, who already perform other offender assessments for the courts, the Parole Board and corrections, are best-equipped to assume this

new function. Legislation prescribing a uniform policy and general procedures, as well as funding for additional staff, will be necessary to implement pretrial release services statewide.

Expanded use of prerelease and half-way house settings for selected offenders is another promising means of reducing unnecessary incarceration. In this spirit, it is recommended that such settings be used only as alternatives to incarceration, not for offenders who would otherwise be placed on probation. There must be transitional programs available to about-to-be-released and released offenders through community residential centers. Approximately 18 percent (100 persons) of the present inmate population were found to be eligible for prerelease program status, which would have an obvious impact on critical institutional space, particularly in Anchorage (45) and Fairbanks (24). This function is most logically subsumed within community corrections' responsibilities.

Implementation of both pretrial and prerelease programs will of course require additional staff, and probably additional monies for contractual services (prerelease and halfway houses). Therefore, this expansion should be undertaken on a gradual basis, through pilot programs in one or two urban areas which can be transferred to other regions as more funds become available. This is the process which the Division's existing New Start program has followed; due to its demonstrated success in Anchorage, it is recommended that it be replicated

in other urban areas of the state.

Clearly, community corrections services as here envisioned will have contact with offenders at many crucial decision points, from their initial intake at arrest to their final release from community supervision (either probation or parole). Therefore, close coordination of community corrections with the other criminal justice system components (law enforcement and the courts) is essential. In addition, community corrections services must work closely with institutional services to ensure that offenders receive consistent treatment as they progress through the system. Finally, community corrections will of necessity be closely affiliated with many other non-correctional community agencies which provide services to correctional clients. With an increased emphasis on diverting as many offenders as possible from incarceration, community corrections will assume an ever more central role in the Division of Corrections.

#### ADULT INSTITUTIONAL SERVICES

The Division of Corrections is responsible for the maintenance of control and good order within its confinement facilities. Although the State's first priority should be minimize the number of offenders confined in corrections facilities, there will continue to be some for whom incarceration is felt to be the only appropriate disposition. For these offenders, the provision of a secure and humane setting which affords them opportunities for self-improvement should be the primary goal of the

Division and the State of Alaska.

Because many of the facilities currently in use are seriously deficient with regard to available space, its arrangement and allocation, and even in some instances significant physical deterioration of the buildings, any major system-wide improvements in institutional programming must await renovation or new construction. Thus, although recommendations presented here are applicable to the entire institutional system, many will probably be implemented on a facility-by-facility basis, as replacement facilities or renovations are completed.

#### Facility Recommendations

Based on a detailed evaluation of the adequacy of existing institutions, the following course of action is suggested:

1. Facilities which should be abandoned and replaced by new construction and/or alternative facilities are:
  - a. Ketchikan CC\*
  - b. Ridgeview CC
  - c. Anchorage Third Avenue CC
  - d. Nome CC
  - e. Bethel CC\*
  - f. Rural jails in Kotzebue, Kodiak, Kenai and Barrow
2. Facilities which should be renovated and/or expanded are:
  - a. Anchorage Annex\* (for eventual use only as a prerelease center).
  - b. Juneau CC\*
  - c. Fairbanks CC
  - d. Palmer CC
  - e. Eagle River CC (expansion)

The recent bond issue has provided funds for the partial renovation of the Juneau CC and the Anchorage Annex, as well as for replacements for the Annex's present pretrial detention function, for the Ketchikan CC, and for the Bethel CC. A new corrections facility is planned to be constructed in Barrow using local funds.

Of the remaining facilities, obtaining a replacement for Ridgeview is crucially important due to the impending termination of the state's lease on that building.\*\* Because of the very small number of female inmates in Alaska, it is strongly recommended that they be housed in a larger institution which also houses men, so that they will have a range of program opportunities not usually feasible to offer in very small facilities. Several alternatives for the housing of female inmates are suggested, including the addition of residency at Eagle River, and provision for a female unit within the new sentenced inmate facility at Anchorage (discussed later). The latter solution will only be viable in the long run, of course, and given that a short-range alternative must be utilized, the Eagle River option is the most appropriate of those considered. The potential for expansion of Eagle River was provided for in the original design. Although housing of men and women in the same institutional complex may present

\* Indicates total or partial funding through the 1978 G.O. bond issue.

\*\* A \$2 million legislative appropriation has been made for this purpose.

management difficulties initially, the benefits are felt to outweigh the disadvantages, particularly if that institution's staff has been adequately trained to cope with the potential problems and to make the most of the positive aspects of co-corrections.

The plan strongly recommends that in the long run, the State should discontinue the practice of housing Alaskan inmates in Federal Bureau of Prisons facilities. Even with maximal use of alternatives to incarceration, this suggested policy of retaining Alaskan inmates in the state, along with the deteriorated condition of the Third Avenue CC, will require the construction of a new facility for sentenced inmates in the Anchorage area. This facility should not be a traditional maximum security prison, but rather should incorporate the progressive design features and building materials utilized in model facilities elsewhere in the nation which confine a wide range of inmates. The capacity of this facility should be determined based on maximal use of alternatives to incarceration, and on the level of regionalization of confinement which is felt to be feasible and appropriate.

Ten potential institutional service areas, each of which now has at least one correctional facility within it, are discussed in the plan. These are viewed as the smallest practical subdivisions of the state for corrections purposes; they could be combined into fewer, larger service areas. None of the existing rural facilities (Bethel, Nome, Kotzebue, Barrow, Kodiak, and Kenai),

which are the primary corrections facilities in six of the ten service areas, are suitable to house sentenced inmates, so if any level of regionalization is to be achieved, all or some of these facilities must be replaced. However, due to the tremendous cost of such an endeavor and to the potential for overuse of such new rural corrections facilities, replacement of the existing rural jails should assume a lower priority than recommended renovation or expansion of the more urban state facilities and construction of a sentenced inmate facility in Anchorage. Therefore, although regionalized incarceration is desirable in that it maintains offenders closer to their home communities, it may not be practical in Alaska's areas to any large extent for some time to come.

In general, expansion of the total institutional system's bedspace capacity should not outpace the Division's and the State's efforts to maximize diversion from incarceration (both pre- and post-sentence). The State of Alaska should not make the costly mistake of overbuilding to accommodate a temporary "bulge" in the growth rate of the inmate population. Inmate populations can be reduced (from projected current practice levels) in the future through more aggressive use of alternatives to incarceration in combination with effects of the changing age composition of the general population (there will be a decrease in the proportion of persons in the high-risk, crime-prone age range).



### Inmate Population Projections

The average number of inmates in a prison (or on probation or parole) is directly related to the number of offenders admitted and their average length of stay in the facility or program. In Alaska, the average monthly inmate population has grown from 440 in 1972 to approximately 720 at the end of 1978; this represents a nearly 65 percent increase in the size of the inmate population. The increase in inmate population is apparently attributable to an interaction between increased admissions and increased length of stay for at least a proportion of these admissions. The probation/parole average monthly caseload has grown approximately 36 percent in the same time period. Since the Alaska inmate population ratio (inmates per 100,000 population) is currently very high in comparison to other states, it is most likely to fall moderately rapidly towards the national average (77:100,000). Any long term projections for Alaska's prison population should thus reflect a gradually declining inmate population ratio rather than a rising ratio due to "normalizing" of the age and sex distribution of Alaskan population. In addition, other factors influencing prison population size can be actively manipulated to achieve an even larger decrease in expected inmate populations. A decrease in prison admissions can be accomplished through decriminalization of selected victimless or minor offenses, increased use of diversion options prior to sentencing, more efficient presentence release programs and

increased use of non-incarcerating sentences. A decrease in the average length of stay of prison inmates can be achieved through a reduction in the maximum sentences imposed for crimes and an increase in the release rate (parole rate, good-time rate, and prerelease programs). Because continued increases in Alaska's prison population are placing increasing pressure on many of the state's older and more deteriorated facilities, a decrease in the inmate population, both current and projected, is necessary so as to minimize the need for new construction.

### Institutional Programs

The Division, despite present facility limitations, is obligated to provide secure housing and at least minimal program opportunities for its inmates. Therefore, the plan proposes several initiatives in the area of institutional programming. One of the most vital concerns is classification of inmates. Utilizing an approach to custody classification of sentenced inmates developed by Moyer Associates as applied to the 547 current inmates surveyed, it was found that 33 percent should be housed in maximum security, 32 percent in medium security, 17 percent in minimum security and 18 percent in work release statewide, a finding which has obvious implication for needed types of programs.

The system used to arrive at these conclusions and is only a preliminary step toward developing a comprehensive assessment and

classification procedure for Alaskan inmates. The Division must develop an inmate classification system which can be uniformly applied across the system. The designation of a Classification Coordinator with central policy-making authority to develop classification criteria and procedures is an essential step in improving the Division's classification system. Specific definitions of inmate types must be developed, based not only on the type of housing and supervision they require (security considerations), but also on their programming needs. Classification committees within each institution would have responsibility for classifying each inmate at intake and developing a program plan with the individual; this plan, and the inmates' custody level, should be periodically reviewed and revised as necessary. Pre-release programming should be included in the committee's considerations. The Classification Coordinator can thus function as advisor to the committees in the application of criteria and procedures developed by him or her in consultation with institutional administrators and staff; the Coordinator would not have line authority over any institutional staff, but should have policy-making and monitoring responsibilities under the direction of the Adult Institutional Services Administrator. The Coordinator should also hear appeals of inmates regarding decisions of the classification committees.

Despite the generally low level of educational achievement, the lack of vocational training and the high levels of intake unemployment and alcohol abuse among sentenced Alaskan

inmates, reported in the master plan survey, few were reported to be participating in any self-improvement programs during their current incarceration. Fully 28 percent of the total state sentenced inmate population did not have a current work assignment and were not participating in any program. This represents nearly one-third of the total Alaskan sentenced inmate population who apparently had no productive way to use their time while incarcerated. A full range of services and program opportunities should be available to all inmates and particularly to sentenced inmates. Facility limitations have not been accepted by the courts as sufficient rationale for inmate idleness, a pervasive problem in Alaska and elsewhere. Designation of a Program Coordinator at the central office level, who, under the authority of the Adult Institutional Service Administrator, would be delegated responsibility to develop program concepts and monitor their implementation, is recommended. At each institution, one staff member should be given the responsibility of being Program Director, coordinating staff and program availability and working closely with classification committees to ensure that inmates needs are being met. The central Program Coordinator would not have line authority over institutional staff, but would have policy-making and monitoring responsibilities.

The range of programs available to inmates should include education (which should be statutorily specified as the responsibility of the public school system through the 12th grade level), vocational training (to be developed in conjunction with prison industries,



discussed later), library services and drug and alcoholism treatment (through the State Office of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse). The latter is especially crucial in light of a 1975 study of the impact of alcoholism in Alaska which points out that the cost of alcohol-related crime to Alaska's criminal justice system during that year was \$15.2 million. The study points that "funds spent on effective treatment and rehabilitation for alcohol offenders would ultimately save the criminal justice system money" by "contributing to the prevention of future offenses that would not occur without the excessive consumption of alcohol."

In addition, leisure-time activities, and indoor and outdoor recreation, are essential components of any institution, both for security and for programmatic reasons. Counseling, both with regard to specific institutional program opportunities and in relation to more general emotional problems, should be available to all inmates, either through in-house staff or contractual arrangements with other public or private agencies. Community-based programming, particularly furloughs and work and education release, should be fully developed and utilized for appropriate inmates as a valuable reintegrative tool. Prerelease preparation is essential for inmates making the difficult transition from the institution to their communities.

#### Prison Industries

Development of a system of prison industries is a central recommenda-

tion of the master plan. Industries, when efficiently operated, can result in savings to the State in terms of reduced state agency purchasing expenditures, reduced criminal justice costs, and prison industry wages and profits; benefits for the institutions in terms of reduced numbers of disciplinary infractions and a more normalized social atmosphere; and benefits to the inmate worker in terms of greater abilities to provide family support, participate in vocational training, and obtain jobs upon release. The prison industries approach advocated for adoption in Alaska is the Free Venture model, which emphasizes a realistic work environment (a full work day, inmate wages based on work output, and transferable training and job skills) and self-supporting or profit-making business operations.

Long-term, centralized facilities seem to be most appropriate as settings for medium or large scale industrial shops while short-term rural facilities are appropriate as settings from which to operate community service and/or public works projects. Major institutions recommended as sites for industries are those at Eagle River, Palmer, Juneau and Fairbanks. The proposed new facility for sentenced inmates should also provide space for a full range of industrial operations. Alaska offers a unique setting for prison industries, in that there are several product areas in which there is now no in-state, private sector involvement. Thus, it is recommended that prison industries manufacture not only state-use

goods, but goods to sell on the open market as well. Development of a prison industries system in Alaska will require a substantial initial funding commitment, as well as statutory authorization. To ensure that the system is developed in a coordinated and planful fashion, a Prison Industries Coordinator should be designated as part of the central office staff under the authority of the Adult Institutional Services Administrator. A Prison Industries Advisory Board, with representation from business and labor interests, should be established.

It is strongly recommended that the legislature is not the appropriate place to fix prisoner wages for prison industries. However, the specific purposes for which prisoners' wages can be disbursed should be spelled out in prison industry legislation, including:

1. support of the prisoners' dependents;
2. reimbursement to the state for an award made for violent crimes compensation;
3. payment of a court award;
4. reimbursement to the state for room and board (the amount should not exceed the average daily cost of incarceration);
5. purchase of clothing and commissary items;
6. enforced savings to assure that funds will be available upon release.

Before an industrial operation can be implemented in Alaska's prisons, enabling legislation should be passed by the state legislature to give the Division authority to market prison industry products and services. Enabling statutes should address the following issues:

1. Establishment of a Prison Industry Advisory Board whose members should be appointed by the Governor;
2. Establishment of a Prison Industry Revolving Fund;
3. Authority to sell prison industry goods on the open market;
4. Authority to lease prison facilities and grounds to private businesses which would employ prisoner workers;
5. Exemption of prison industry workers from the \$3.00 per day ceiling on wages established in law by AS 33.30.225.

#### Health Care

Health care services are essential to the operation of correctional institutions. With the hiring of a central office Health Care Coordinator, the Division of Corrections has taken a major step in the improvement of its health care systems. The master plan endorses the development of detailed, written policies, standards and guidelines for health care, a process in which the Coordinator is now engaged.

With the addition of more medical staff, both in-house and contractual, it is hoped that more consistent treatment can be provided to all inmates in areas such as intake medical screening, drug and alcoholism intervention, mental health, dental services, and routine medical care. Since the Commissioner of Health and Social Services has reporting to that office the Director of Corrections, the Director of Mental Health, the Director of Public Health and the Director of Social Services, all of which are under the Commissioner's management, a significant sharing of professional talent could be realized. Funds for alcohol and drug treatment should be provided so that the medical manager can contract with available drug and alcohol intervention services to provide treatment for offenders. This treatment should not be limited to only incarcerated offenders, but should involve community corrections clients (probationers, parolees, work releases) as well. In general, adequate space and necessary equipment must be provided so as to ensure that medical staff can offer high quality care to inmates.

#### Institutional Staffing

Even within ideally designed and equipped facilities, programs and security will not be adequate without sufficient numbers of qualified staff to operate the facilities. Four major factors determine the number of staff necessary for a given institution: the number of inmates confined there, their custody or security requirements, the types of programs

and work opportunities available, and the physical design of the building. All of these factors must be considered in determining both the minimum number of staff necessary to operate the facility and the optimum number of staff desired to develop a full range of program and work options in a secure environment. Sufficient funds must be made available to hire and train the requisite number of staff; as documented needs change, funding levels should be adjusted. Use of contractual agreements with outside agencies and individuals specializing in particular program areas, as well as encouragement of volunteer involvement, are recommended methods of stretching scarce correctional resources to serve the maximum number of inmates. Corrections must be provided with sufficient numbers of trained staff for its institutions in order to carry out its statutory responsibilities to ensure public safety and promote positive changes in offenders.

#### Youth Services

The Division of Corrections has responsibility for both community and institutional corrections for juveniles. The master plan makes several organizational and policy recommendations for youth corrections services, the most far-reaching of which is the recommendation that a separate Youth Services unit be created within the Division's organizational structure. This will focus attention on services to juveniles,

which is not now as feasible with one administrator having responsibility for both adult probation and parole and youth services.

Alaska, unlike the majority of states, has taken a strong leadership role in developing statutes and Rules of Procedure which emphasize the objectives of reforming the child and protecting society and require that these objectives be equally weighed. The Rules further require that the medium used to achieve these objectives be that of "providing care equivalent to that which should have been provided by the child's parents." However, at the moment, institutions are the major medium of service for children who are removed from their family's custody. Foster care is used sparingly, group foster care is not used at all, and basic care group home services are used infrequently. As with adult corrections, this plan emphasizes the need to focus resources on the development of a range of alternatives to incarceration for youths. It is strongly recommended that Alaska discontinue the practice of housing youths in out-of-state facilities. Expansion of foster and group homes through contractual arrangements is proposed as a primary means of diverting youths from secure detention and as an alternative to be used for adjudicated juveniles as well.

The plan strongly recommends that all youth intake functions be operated by the Division of Corrections rather than being

shared with the court system. It is also suggested that all juvenile petitions should be written and filed by the Department of Law rather than by youth services caseworkers. These steps are essential if maximum use is to be made of alternatives to secure detention. If the State does not actively pursue such alternatives, approximately 120 secure detention beds will be needed by 1980; there are now 35 (at MYC). Therefore, a very costly building program will be required if alternatives to secure detention for youths are not developed.

Because it is anticipated that very few youths actually require secure detention while awaiting court processing if a range of alternatives are available, it is not recommended that Alaska construct any new secure detention facilities for youths. In areas where no specialized juvenile facilities are available, the occasional child who requires secure detention can be held in an adult correctional facility, provided they are separated by sight and sound from confined adults. Juneau and Fairbanks have both had bond issues passed approving the construction of juvenile detention facilities; Juneau clearly does not need a secure detention facility for children, nor should Fairbanks construct a secure juvenile detention facility. Fairbanks might develop as an alternative a generic multi-purpose facility with intensive community-based programming, not to exceed 20 beds in capacity (this should not be a maximum security facility).

The McLaughlin Youth Center's operations and programs for both adjudicated and non-adjudicated youths are exemplary, and should continue to be supported. Current efforts are implementing and evaluating new intervention strategies for institutionalized Alaska youths should also be encouraged and supported.

Staff needs, particularly for community services functions (intake, predisposition studies, community resource development and monitoring, and probation supervision) are likely to grow over the next two decades. Even in 1978, to offer all of the suggested services would have required 60 community services staff, or 50 percent more than were available for such functions. Therefore, additional funding for staff is a prerequisite to expansion of services to Alaskan youths.

It is recommended that reorganization of youth services within the Division of Corrections and the staffing of community services functions be the first priority. Once that step is accomplished, development of alternatives to detention and incarceration should receive top priority, followed by expanded services for institutionalized children. Expenditures of funds for youth services are well-justified, particularly if it can enhance the effectiveness of rehabilitative and preventive efforts, since this will keep more youths from becoming adult criminals (thus avoiding the costs of their criminal activity to the state and the general public.)

#### Rural Corrections

Although a relatively small percentage of the offenders for whom the Division is responsible originate in the rural areas of Alaska, the equitable provision of corrections services to rural and urban sectors of the state is a central concern. Because of the cultural diversity, sparse population, and unique nature of Alaska's bush country, development of corrections services for this part of Alaska presents a substantial challenge. However, solutions must be attempted, so that residents of rural Alaska will receive the services to which they are entitled as citizens of the state.

Perhaps because of the remoteness of rural Alaska coupled with a greater community tolerance of deviant behavior, diversion from incarceration (or "community corrections") is practiced with greater frequency in rural Alaska. This is consistent with the philosophy advocated in this plan, and should be supported through the provision of more adequate probation and parole services. The "social justice team" concept which is being evolved through the collaborative efforts of several state agencies providing services to rural areas, could be the primary means of assuring that rural communities' social service/criminal justice needs are met.

Another crucial need in Alaska's rural areas is for adequate alcoholism treatment. Alcohol abuse is a primary cause of criminal behavior, particularly in rural

Alaska, so provision of adequate alcoholism treatment, both through the corrections system and in the communities, should be a high priority. Sleep-off centers, which exist now in some communities, should be more widely available.

Jails in rural Alaska are at present generally inadequate, even for short-term detention. However, total replacement of these facilities is neither economically feasible nor philosophically desirable. One less costly means of improving the quality of institutional corrections in rural Alaska is the statutory consolidation of responsibility of all local jail contracts under the Division of Corrections. Responsibility for standard-setting and periodic inspection of these facilities should also be vested in the Division. A much more long-range goal is the regional incarceration of sentenced inmates in rural facilities. This practice could preserve family and cultural ties, and is quite consistent both with modern correctional practice and with rural Alaskan heritage and tradition. However, full implementation would be prohibitively expensive, and in some instances perhaps not feasible at any price, because inmates confined for lengthy sentences require services and programs which cannot be readily provided in very small facilities. Ten service areas are proposed in the plan, six of which are rural; these areas are the smallest pragmatic divisions of the state in terms of corrections' workload, and could be consolidated into fewer, larger service regions as economics and cultural boundaries

dictate. However, until corrections facilities in the hub communities of each rural service area are replaced with new buildings adequate for the housing of sentenced inmates, regional incarceration of Alaskan offenders cannot take place. An interim measure which may alleviate some of the problems faced by offenders returning to rural communities is the development of a network of prerelease housing across the rural areas of Alaska. Returning offenders could be housed closer to their home communities for the last few months of their sentences, in order to ease their transition back to community living. Existing corrections facilities could be utilized for this purpose on a limited basis.

In general, local involvement in the corrections process should be encouraged by the state. Enforcement of local ordinances, and even selected state laws, with non-criminal sanctions such as community service work, should be allowed and reinforced through legislative and judicial sanction. The appointment of local advisory bodies (called "regional guidance committees" by the University of Alaska Criminal Justice Center's March 1970 report on criminal justice in rural Alaska) is also a vital means of ensuring that the corrections system will be responsive to local and cultural priorities.

#### Technical Services

Along with the three major direct service components proposed for the Division of Corrections (Adult

Community Services, Adult Institutional Services, and Youth Services), a fourth component is recommended to provide support for the management of the Division. Although several of the functions proposed to be subsumed within the rubric of Technical Services are already being performed, they are not as coordinated or extensive as they must be to ensure the attainment of the Division's correctional goals.

The Technical Services unit should be administered by one person, reporting to the Director of the Division. Within this administrative unit, Management Services is an essential element. This includes both fiscal management and personnel functions. In order to cope with the increasing complexity of budgeting and financial management, the addition of at least one accountant to the present central office staff will be vitally necessary. The development of a prison industries system may well require an additional full-time accountant devoted only to that function.

A Policy Development unit, with responsibility for all the planning, evaluative research and data-gathering functions essential to modern management, should be developed within Technical Services. Facility standard-setting and inspection for both state and local facilities should also be the responsibility of this unit. Development of a full-scale Policy Development unit will require greater emphasis on the refinement of the current corrections information systems (especially with regard to offender profiles), as well as the addition of at

least one full-time researcher-planner to the current staff.

Staff services, including training and career ladder development, are another very important component of Technical Services. The Division, with its current staff trainers, has a solid foundation upon which to build a training strategy which will reinforce the overall service philosophy of the Division of Corrections. The master plan makes several suggestions for the future of Staff Services, many of which involve simply policy changes, but some of which will depend upon increased funding.

To ensure that corrections staff are adequately prepared for the changing demands of their positions, training should focus on human behavior and communications skills as well as the more traditional security and law enforcement considerations. Although all new staff should continue to receive some type of orientation, it may be appropriate to shorten the length of the training sessions now provided for correctional officer trainees (the Division provides 240 hours of orientation training, while ACA standards require only 160). In this way, resources now expended on lengthier orientation sessions could be redirected at providing periodic refresher and in-service training sessions to experienced staff members. It is also suggested that in-service or on-the-job training is more appropriate for orienting new community services staff than is the current three-week orientation course offered through the Training Academy.

Since both administrative and community service staff usually come to their jobs with more extensive educational backgrounds than do most correctional officer trainees, it is appropriate to utilize different training styles with these groups.

In order to enable full development of training opportunities for all levels of staff, it is essential that adequate state funding be provided. It is recommended that funds be allocated to enable the hiring of an additional ten percent of the existing number of authorized line staff to cover absences of staff due to on-going training. It is also recommended that the Corrections Training Academy be relocated to Anchorage (probably at Alaska Pacific University) where it would become primarily non-residential. Along with a permanent staff complement of three, the Academy should make extensive use of outside specialists and contract instructors, for which sufficient contractual funds must be available. The development of an Advisory Training Committee comprised of representatives of the Division, the academic community, selected state agencies and the private sector, is recommended as a means of continually monitoring and improving staff training to accommodate changing needs and priorities.

In developing a career ladder for adult institutional personnel, militaristic job titles for non-security staff should be avoided. Both security and treatment personnel should have equal access to promotion to administrative

positions in institutions. Lateral promotion across job types should be available to interested and qualified staff. Upward mobility on the lower rungs of the career ladder can occur within a single institution, but it is suggested that promotion beyond the level of "sergeant" (as defined in the Division's newest career ladder) require the individual's transfer to another institution. Career ladders for community services and youth services staff must be developed which allow flexibility for lateral entry into upper-level positions, and which permit a reasonable substitution of experience for education, and vice versa. The goal of the Division's career ladder structure should be fair and equitable promotion for motivated and qualified staff. The retention of such staff through promotion incentives is crucial to the successful achievement of the Division's correctional goals.

#### CRIMINAL JUSTICE DECISIONMAKING

Decisions made about offenders by agencies other than the Division of Corrections have a profound effect on the Division's ability to accomplish its mission. The master plan discusses three primary decisions in the context of efforts to minimize the use of incarceration: the decision to release or detain those awaiting trial, the sentencing decision, and the parole release decision. Although the Division may influence these decisions through its provision of offender assessments to the decisionmakers, ultimate authority rests with the



courts, the Parole Board and the legislature.

The plan strongly recommends the development of a uniform pretrial assessment and release procedure, with responsibility for assessment of arrestees for release eligibility being given to the Division's Adult Community Services unit. The potential benefit of use of objective criteria to speed the release all non-dangerous persons awaiting trial who can be expected to appear at trial (including those who could not afford to pay a cash bail bond) is substantial in terms of reduced bedspace needs. Another means of streamlining the pretrial release process in urban areas, which has already been implemented in Anchorage, is the provision of 24-hour "on call" magistrates who have authority to act on the Division's release recommendations as soon as possible after booking. In Anchorage, this has substantially reduced release delays and thus decreased the average daily pretrial detainee population.

Equity in sentencing is a goal which most would agree is essential. This was a primary motivation for enactment of Alaska's new Criminal Code, which will take effect January 1, 1980, and which provides for determinate sentences (prescribed minimum incarceration sentences) for selected classes of felons. There is some reason to believe that this new Code will result in an increased prisoner population in the long run (perhaps as much as 40 percent by the year 2000), due to increases in average lengths of stay for the affected categories of offenders. The actual impact of the Code should

therefore be carefully and continuously monitored to ascertain whether average daily population increases result from its implementation. If so, and if this is considered an undesirable side effect of equity in sentencing, the State could consider several approaches: 1) shortening the length of prescribed minimum sentences for repeat felons, 2) specifying in greater detail the weight (in months and/or years) which each aggravating or mitigating factor should be given in modifying the prescribed term, and/or, 3) appointment of a Sentencing Commission to develop a "matrix" approach to sentencing which would include consideration not only of current offense and prior record, but also of the risk-level presented by each offender. Sentencing seminars for Alaska judges, particularly after the new code takes effect, are another means of encouraging equitable and appropriate sentencing; it may well be that the courts, through administrative policy decisions, can limit the potential negative impact of the Code by careful exercise of the discretion with the Code still permits the judiciary. In any case, it is essential to balance concerns for equitable punishment with the realistic limits of Alaska's correctional resources (particularly its institutions).

The Parole Board will continue to make release decisions even after the new Criminal Code takes effect, since parole is eliminated only for certain classes of offenders. Therefore, improvement of the Board's functioning is important to sound correctional practice. The master plan

recommends several organizational and procedural changes to enhance the Board's decision-making capabilities:

1. The Parole Board should be composed of three full-time members.
2. The staff of the Board should be reorganized and augmented.
3. The Board should prepare and keep up-to-date a detailed manual of policies and procedures.
4. Hearing procedures should be modified, and as soon as the on-going study of options is complete, a matrix criteria system should be adopted.
5. A formal appeals process should be established.
6. Prisoners with maximum sentences of five years or less should be considered for parole eligibility and a tentative release date set within four months of their commitment. Prisoners with maximum terms of more than five years should be heard at least one month prior to the completion of their minimum terms.
7. The Board should be statutorily authorized to give sentence time credit for time served on parole to selected inmates whose paroles have been revoked.
8. The Board should be statutorily authorized to discharge parolees from parole status after two years of successful performance under supervision.

9. The goals and philosophy of the Board should be closely coordinated with those of the Division of Corrections, to ensure that offenders are treated consistently and equitably.

All of the proposals made regarding pretrial release, sentencing and parole decisions will require actions by agencies outside of the Division of Corrections. Timely and equitable decision-making about offenders, both by the Division and by other agencies (the courts, the Department of Law, the Parole Board, and the Department of Public Safety, as well as other non-criminal justice agencies), can have a profoundly beneficial impact on Alaska's corrections system.

## CONCLUSION

### Cost Considerations

A fundamental goal of recommendations of this master plan has is the provision of the most adequate corrections system for Alaska at the least possible cost. The single most effective means of accomplishing this is to avoid unnecessary incarceration of offenders, thereby avoiding the capital cost of constructing new facilities to accommodate growing inmate populations. Avoidance of unnecessary incarceration in turn requires development of a full range of community-based corrections programs, including pretrial release, probation, prerelease and parole supervision. This is the basic strategy advocated throughout the plan.

Alaska will not be able to avoid a certain level of capital expenditures to improve its corrections facility system, due to several factors:

1. The badly deteriorated condition of several existing facilities.
2. Overcrowding of a few key facilities even at current inmate population levels.
3. Inadequate space for programs and prison industries at nearly all existing facilities.
4. Court actions, both actual and potential, which will mandate that Alaska provide constitutional housing for all inmates.

5. The long-range goal to return all Alaskan inmates from federal institutions to state facilities (some of these inmates have very lengthy sentences and could not be adequately accommodated in any existing Alaskan facility).
6. Expressed interest in regionalized incarceration of sentenced inmates, which would require replacement of existing rural corrections facilities, which are now totally inadequate to house long-term inmates.

However, capital expenditures can be minimized through development of a full complement of community corrections alternatives to incarceration, and the delaying of all but the most essential construction or renovation until the full impact of diversion efforts can be achieved.

On the cost-effectiveness balance sheet, there are two types of expenditures which must be weighed: operating costs (primarily staff salaries) and capital costs (for construction). The improvement and expansion of adult community corrections services will require additional personnel as well as increased funds for the Division of Corrections' use in contracting for services for offenders. To offer statewide pretrial assessment and supervision services, prerelease programs and improved probation and parole supervision (using a tri-level caseload classification) would require an estimated 15 to 24 additional line staff positions in adult community corrections with today's workload levels. If workloads continue to grow at rates observed over the past eight years, staff

needs could increase by as much as 40 percent by 1990, requiring creating of an additional 17 to 20 line staff positions. Staff requirements can be minimized through more concerted use of volunteers, but it is likely that over the next ten years, a full-fledged adult community corrections effort will require the addition of at least 30 full-time line staff. If the salaries and associated cost of each new position is estimated to average \$38,000 annually over this same time period, this would represent an increase in the annual operating budget of about \$1.15 million by 1990. Or, from another perspective, assuming that five new staff are added in each of the next three years and two every year for the next seven years, the estimated total additional staff cost over the next ten years would be \$7.3 million. If additional funds are made available for contractual services averaging \$200,000 annually, the total operating cost increase could be nearly \$10 million over the next ten years.

Similar estimates of the cost of improving youth services are made in that section of the plan, which concludes that the current budget of approximately \$2.3 million now spent on probation and contractual services for youths would grow to a total estimated annual budget of \$9.5 million in 1990. This would represent a cost of about \$7.2 million over the ten-year period to improve and expand community corrections alternatives for delinquent youths.

These increases in operating costs must be compared to the cost of constructing additional bedspace capacity to accommodate inmates who could be diverted to community services if they are available and adequate. If the cost of an Alaskan prison construction project is estimated to average \$107,000 per bedspace (see facility recommendations section of plan), then Alaska must avoid building only 94 adult bedspaces over the next ten years to offset the total cost of improved community corrections services in that same period (\$10 million - \$107,000 = 94). In fact, construction cost savings over the next 20 years which could be attributed to improved ROR and prerelease programs total over \$36 million (the bedspace savings would total about 345), more than four times the additional ten-year cost of improved adult community corrections services (and approximately twice the 20-year cost). On the youth services side, if just the current out-of-state placement cost of about \$600,000 could be avoided through improved community-based programs for youths, the entire cost of such improvements would be offset. It is logical to assume that other operating cost savings would also accrue over the ten years due to decreased rates of preadjudication detention and post-adjudication commitment of youths (this is true of adult corrections as well).

Therefore, although it might seem like a large increase in funding, increased expenditures on improved community corrections services can actually result in an overall budgetary savings over time through

avoidance of massive capital (construction) expenditures and decreases in institutional operating costs. If cost-effectiveness is of paramount importance, the course of action which Alaska must follow is clear. Community programs must be fully funded and staffed to safely divert the maximum possible number of offenders from unnecessary pretrial and post-trial incarceration.

#### Time Line for Recommendations

The time line here presented outlines the order in which the recommendations of this plan can most logically be implemented. Recommendations are presented within each major topic area, in conformity with the organization of the plan. A planning horizon of 20 years has been utilized in developing projections of inmate populations, but most of the actions suggested in this plan could be accomplished within the next ten years, given sufficient funds and aggressive policy initiatives. Therefore, the time line here presented extends only through 1990.

The achievement of several of these goals is interdependent, i.e., one or several actions must be taken to enable the further accomplishment of other objectives. To the extent possible, this is represented by the time hierarchy and/or by special notes. Some recommendations can be immediately accomplished, others will require effort over a period of time, and still others will continue to be system goals throughout the ensuing years.

The time line differentiates between recommendations requiring only policy change to implement, those requiring statutory change, and those requiring additional operating or capital funding.

The corrections master plan here summarized charts a course for the future of the Division of Corrections which will influence its practices for many years to come. Although many important tasks remain to be accomplished, the Division has already demonstrated its capability to respond to the challenges which confront it. Translation of the policies developed in this planning process into programs, procedures, buildings and staffing patterns will be a time-consuming and massive undertaking. The Division of Corrections alone cannot accomplish Alaska's correctional goals; the firm support of other criminal justice agencies, of the Department of Health and Social Services, of the legislature and of private citizens will be critical to the success of Alaska's corrections system in reforming offenders and protecting the public.

	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
<u>I. Philosophy and Goals</u>												
- Adopt clearly defined goals for corrections	●											
<u>II. Organization of Corrections</u>												
- Adopt participatory management style	●											
- Consolidate jail contracts responsibility within DOC		● ■										
- Create Youth Services unit within DOC	●											
- Consolidate Technical Services unit within DOC	●											
- Create Adult Community Services unit with expanded responsibilities (pretrial and work release programs)	●■■●											
- Within Adult Institutional Services, designate Classification Coordinator, Programs Coordinator and Prison Industries Coordinator with central policy-making powers			● ★ ■									
- Appoint Prison Industries and DOC Advisory Boards	●■■●											

● Corrections policy change

★ Funding required

■ Statutory change required



	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
<u>III. Adult Community Corrections</u>												
- Revise and detail policy manual	●	■	●									
- Develop modified client classification and workload system	★	●	■	●								
- Utilize "service broker" workload management style	●	■	■	●								
- Increase use of paraprofessionals and trained volunteers	●	■	■	●								
- Provide appropriate staff training	★	●	■	■	●							
- Provide adequate office space	●	■	●									
- Develop formal pretrial assessment and supervision capabilities	■	●	■	■	●							
- Develop expanded prerelease programming and housing	★	●	■	■	●							
- Expand New Start program	★	●	■	■	●							
- Coordinate closely with rest of DOC and criminal justice/social service agencies	●	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
<u>IV. Adult Institutional Services</u>												
- Discontinue housing Alaskan inmates in federal institutions	★	●	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	●	
- Develop refined and uniform inmate classification system	●	■	●									
- Develop full range of program opportunities for inmates	★	●	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	●	
- Develop a system of prison industries based on the Free Venture model	■	●	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	●	
- Develop an improved health care system for inmates	★	●	■	●								

	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
IV. (continued)												
- Provide appropriate staff training	★ ●	██████████	●									
- Provide adequate numbers of trained staff for all institutions	★ ●	██████████	●									
- Increase use of trained volunteers	●	██████████	●									
- Develop a system of well-designed and adequate correctional facilities												
. Replace Ketchikan CC	★ ●	██████████	●									
. Replace Ridgeview CC	★ ●	██████████	●									
. Replace Bethel CC	★ ●	██████████	●									
. Renovate Anchorage Annex	★ ●	██████████	●									
. Construct pretrial detention facility in Anchorage	★ ●	██████████	●									
. Renovate/expand Palmer CC (to accommodate industries)		★ ●	██████████	●								
. Replace Nome CC			★ ●	██████████	●							
. Replace Third Avenue CC with sentenced inmate facility in Anchorage				★ ●	██████████	●						
. Replace rural jails	★ ●	██████████	●									
Barrow	★ ●	██████████	●									
Kodiak			★ ●	██████████	●							
Kotzebue			★ ●	██████████	●							
Kenai			★ ●	██████████	●							
- Develop fully regional housing of sentenced inmates							★ ●	██████████				

[illegible]





[illegible]

[illegible]

**END**