

## **Frequently Asked Questions – External**

As outlined in Governor Gavin Newsom's 2020-21 Budget, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) and California Correctional Health Care Services (CCHCS) are developing a plan to close two state prisons within the next three years. The first prison is projected to close by September 30, 2021. The second will close in Fiscal Year 2022-23 and will be announced at a later date. The closure of the two state prisons was included in the Governor's budget plan prior to the pandemic as a result of various reforms and other changes that significantly reduced the prison population.

### **Why is the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) closing a state prison?**

The closure of two prisons within the next three years is outlined in Governor Gavin Newsom's 2020-21 State Budget. Deuel Vocational Institution (DVI) is projected to close by September 30, 2021. The closure of two state prisons was included in the Governor's budget prior to the pandemic as a result of various reforms and other changes that have significantly reduced the prison population.

The projected continuing decrease in population will allow CDCR to close two prisons without compromising safety and security, while continuing to provide robust rehabilitative programs and quality health care and while remaining within the population requirements mandated by the Three-Judge Court.

The second prison will close in Fiscal Year 2022-23 and will be announced at a later date.

### **How much has the population declined?**

CDCR's prison population has declined by more than 52,000 since 2010 due to a range of measures, including state legislation, voter initiatives, federal court orders, and administrative actions by the department. The most recent decrease was a result of actions taken to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission inside the prisons.

### **Why was DVI selected for closure?**

California Penal Code Section 2067 provides guidance for determining which CDCR facilities to prioritize for closure. Factors include cost to operate at the new reduced capacity; impact of closure on the workforce; housing needs for all populations; long-term investments in state-owned and operated correctional facilities; public safety and rehabilitation; and durability of the state's solution to prison overcrowding.

The closure of a prison is not a reflection of its quality of care, management, or staff. CDCR and California Correctional Health Care Services (CCHCS) manage one of the largest, most diverse correctional systems in the world.

### **How will the closure impact staff?**

The closure of a prison will have a significant impact on the people who work there, their families, and the surrounding community. While staff can be assured that both the Secretary and Federal Receiver will work together to support staff during this transition and ease the impact as much as possible, relocations and possible layoffs are part of this process.

CDCR and CCHCS use the Department of Human Resources (CalHR) rules and bargaining unit contract language for calculating seniority. Seniority scores form the basis for the layoff process and staffing reductions, taking into consideration qualifying state service, military service, and exempt service. Preliminary and final scores will be posted on the CDCR and CCHCS Intranets and posted throughout the institution. Until the reductions and their effects are known, there is no specific number of years or seniority score that can be identified to determine if an individual ultimately will be impacted. Seniority will be specific to the individual's hiring authority.

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- [Frequently Asked Questions - Peace Officers](#)

### **Will staff members be able to transfer to other institutions?**

Yes. CDCR and CCHCS will use the mitigation process to minimize or eliminate staffing reductions for impacted classifications within the area of layoff. Vacancies within a 100-mile radius of the area are identified. If there are sufficient vacancies to absorb the number of impacted staff for the specific classification, impacted staff in that classification are redirected to these vacancies. The redirections may reduce the number of impacted staff within the classification or may remove that specific classification from the impacted listing.

As always, employees may apply competitively for any positions statewide for which they meet the minimum qualifications.

### **Will staff be able to transfer to other agencies?**

CDCR and CCHCS participate in the State Restriction of Appointments (SROA) program. The SROA was developed to assist employees in finding jobs with other State agencies and making experienced employees available to other agencies with vacant positions. SROA notices will be issued to all potentially impacted employees.

### **What will happen to people currently incarcerated at DVI?**

There will be no early releases of incarcerated people due to the closure of DVI. Transfers will be made to other institutions that meet the housing needs of the DVI population. CDCR will work on a case-by-case basis to place each person in an appropriate prison to meet their rehabilitative and custody needs. All credits earned for self-help, educational, and vocational programs will transfer with the individual. Individuals will have the opportunity to finish courses in progress.

### **Has CDCR closed a prison before?**

Yes. In addition to the 2003 deactivation of Northern California Women's Facility in Stockton, CDCR has closed several juvenile facilities due to population reductions. In 2019, CDCR took major steps toward bringing all people housed out of state back into CDCR prisons and ending its contract for the 700-bed Central Valley Modified Community Correctional Facility. CDCR ended its contracts with private, for-profit prisons Desert View and Golden State Modified Community Correctional Facilities (MCCF) in 2020, along with the public-private contract Delano MCCF. Shafter MCCF will close by October 31, and Taft MCCF should be closed no later than May 31, 2021.

**What will happen to the building?**

CDCR will analyze any in-progress facility improvement projects to determine whether they should be completed, halted, or modified. Once all incarcerated people have transferred out, DVI will enter a "warm shutdown" phase, meaning minimal staff will remain on-site to maintain basic facility operations so they do not deteriorate while the building is unused, such as electrical systems, heating/ventilation equipment, and the exterior grounds. Generally a warm shutdown lasts for a couple of years, at which time the property is transferred to the Department of General Services as surplus property.