

**REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE**  
**Pursuant to P.A. 166 of 2022**  
**Section 313(2)**  
**Employee Wellness**

Sec. 313. (1) Funds appropriated in part 1 for employee wellness programming shall be used for post-traumatic stress outreach, treating mental health issues, peer support programs, and providing mental health programming for all department staff, including former employees.

(2) By December 15, the department shall submit a report on programs the department has established, the level of employee involvement, and expenditures made by the department for employee wellness programming.

During FY22, the MDOC Wellness Unit and Program continued to provide and facilitate professional, confidential, and diversified wellness services to employees, retirees, and eligible family members. Wellness Program initiatives included Peer Support, Employee Chaplain Programs, and Wellness Response Dog pilot project. The Wellness Unit is comprised of six FTE employees: 4 licensed mental health clinicians (Program Manager and 3 Wellness Coordinators). Wellness Coordinators provide oversight and clinical consultation for Peer Support Persons and employee support. A Chaplain Coordinator oversees the Employee Chaplain Program (ECP) to provide faith-based volunteer services. The Department Tech develops evaluation, tracking and assessment methods.

The following are wellness initiatives and status for FY22.

**Wellness Unit Services Employee, Events, and Group Participation** - Total direct clinical, training, and consultation services September 1, 2021 - August 31, 2022, include:

Total direct Wellness Service contacts	5153	+23% since FY21
Number of Wellness Service Group Events	431	+66% since FY21
Total Wellness Service Group Participants	10,216	+97% since FY21

**Wellness Program Survey and Follow-up Research**

An anonymous and protected MDOC Wellness Program Survey was available April 14 - 28, 2022. The survey received a total of 759 responses. The Survey will be offered annually as a tool for development and improvements to wellness-based programming. Seventy-nine percent of 2022 respondents agree the MDOC Wellness Program has created more awareness for the importance of health and wellness in the correctional field. The department has considered applications of correctional wellness research complementary to the 2019 Desert Waters study. The focus is to secure proposals from Michigan universities for a multi-dimensional study to assess areas related to significant mental health issues, compounded psychological and physiological impacts related to the pandemic, and outcomes of wellness-based interventions, including MDOC Wellness Program initiatives. The Request for Proposals will be released by February 2023 with projected time of research initiation to begin June 2023. Monthly research study updates will be required with the final results being published.

**Peer Support Program (PSP)**

Active Peer Supports (PSP) are a resource network of volunteers at respective worksites who continue to provide confidential support and assistance to employees, family members and retirees such as emotional support, encouragement, help with communication and coping skills, and referrals for professional services. The PSPs were mindfully considered to represent and respect the many diversities within MDOC. Active Peer Supports (PSP) are a resource network of volunteers at respective worksites who continue to provide confidential support and assistance to employees, family members and retirees such as emotional support, encouragement, help with communication and coping skills, and referrals for professional services. The PSPs were mindfully considered to represent and respect the many diversities within MDOC. Currently there are 69 trained PSPs statewide, with 10 of those being veterans. Knowing the unique stressors faced by MDOC staff, efforts continue to add additional PSPs to the network to ensure each facility and field office has adequate support resources. Contact and regional information for each PSP volunteer is located on the MDOC Wellness App, and accessible to MDOC staff, retirees and families' members.

### **MDOC Employee Chaplain Program**

The MDOC Employee Chaplain Program (ECP) was introduced to the field in March 2022. The Employee Chaplain Program consists of both qualified employees (serving in this role on a voluntary basis) and various religious leaders and clergy volunteers specially trained to address unique stressors within corrections in a natural and confidential manner. As spiritual support for MDOC employees, family members and retirees, Chaplains will represent the diverse religious/spiritual traditions within the MDOC. Since the introduction the Wellness Unit has been promoting the ECP within the MDOC and to the various religious communities around the State. Currently, two MDOC employees and three volunteer chaplain prospects from outside the MDOC are moving to the final approval process. Following vetting and contingent to the final approval process, these volunteers will officially be introduced to their respective field offices or facilities by February 2023. Five additional candidates are the process of completing their applications. The ECP will continue to promote this volunteer opportunity to various religious communities.

### **MDOC Wellness Advisory Board**

Members of the Wellness Program Advisory Board are MDOC stakeholders who bring unique knowledge, and perspective to guide recommendations for the Wellness Program. Representatives include the Wellness Program Manager, Human Resources, MDOC-affiliated unions, MDOC employees (4) selected annually, Employee Service Program (ESP), and MDOC DEI Officer. This group meets monthly and in sub-groups to focus on: 1) policy development incorporating employee wellness, 2) Strategic communications for building morale, promoting engagement and delivering recognition, 3) worksite wellness and environmental enhancements, and 4) post-traumatic recovery and wellness promotion.

### **MDOC Wellness Mobile App**

During FY22, the MDOC worked with Lexipol/ Cordico to develop a customized mobile Wellness App for MDOC members. The initial roll out for the Wellness App was in November 2021. Since the initial roll out for the Wellness App 2793 individuals have downloaded and utilized the App. The most visited app modules included Peer Support Program, Wellness Toolkit and Wellness Unit. This confidential, corrections-specific app with various resources is available for download for MDOC employees, family members and retirees. App content is continuously updated with new and relevant resources.

### **Pilot Project – MDOC Wellness Response Dogs**

Trained response/therapy dogs offer significant value across three areas: effecting a sense of change, promoting employee engagement, and offering more effective crisis response. After two years of research and collaboration with Paw with a Cause (PAWS), the MDOC Wellness Unit proposed development of an MDOC Wellness Response Dog program 12/2021 to serve as an animal-assisted intervention and resource of the Unit. An initial Pilot Project was proposed to explore employee interest and feedback and evaluate efficacy of the program (benefits vs. costs). One dog (Handel) was acquired and deployed for this purpose. The Wellness Unit worked with procurement on costs related to this type of program. Costs for the first year of this program were \$2,070.63 which included expenses for food/maintenance, professional grooming, veterinarian care/medication, registrations and /licenses, miscellaneous supplies, and Purposeful Placement training on “Key Performance Indicators” through PAWS for Handel and primary handler. The Wellness Unit and PAWS developed an evaluation tool to gather, review, and compile qualitative and quantitative project data. The evaluation tool recently closed, and this information is in process of being analyzed. Throughout the time of this Project, this Wellness Response Dog team has responded to 112 onsite events to include critical incident response, funeral support and wellness rounds to provide support for staff

### **Governor’s Challenge to Prevent Suicide among Service Members, Veterans and Families (SMVF)**

To continue efforts to reduce suicide among MDOC staff with military background, the MDOC remains connected with the Michigan Veteran Affairs Agency (MVAA) and the Governor’s Challenge to Prevent Suicide among Service Members, Veterans, and Families (SMVF). Focused efforts include increasing access to support, enhancing peer-to-peer practices, and best practices. In its 3<sup>rd</sup> year, the MDOC shows commitment to this effort through the Wellness Unit and recommendations of the EPIC team: created a Veterans program for women who served; re-established the annual Veteran’s Award; established a Veteran Spotlight in the Corrections Connection; and established a Military Advisory Committee (MAC) to carry on the work.

### **MDOC Veteran Liaison**

The MDOC is pleased to welcome Emily Rissman as the Veteran Liaison Specialist for the Michigan Department of Corrections. Emily comes to the MDOC from the Michigan Veteran Affairs Agency. Emily is currently in the Army Reserves, where she has been serving since 2011. She has extensive knowledge and experience working with veterans, and understands the importance of ensuring that they are supported

**New Women in Corrections Workshops**

Since 2021, a New Women in Corrections workshop designed specifically for female recruits has been held for each Academy class. The objective of this 2-hour voluntary workshop is to provide a time for female recruits to discuss their personal challenges, and to provide them with healthy coping skills, while also encouraging mutual support. This workshop also includes female employees from the MDOC non-custody Academy classes. Wellness Unit Coordinators and Academy staff are present to offer professional insights and experiences, providing new employees insight to recognize and address challenges at the Academy level and upon entering their assigned facilities.

**Employee Wellness Program expenditures including development of, and improvements to, staff-designated worksite areas.**

1. Staff-designated area development or improvements, environmental supports to include breakrooms, bathrooms, fitness areas, employee wellness and decompression rooms or other structural revision for healthier work environments, new office furniture, chairs, ergonomic enhancements (stand/sit desks, anti-fatigue mats), and wellness-related events for staff.	\$1,138,592.00
2. Wellness Unit funding for six staff, operational expenses, and travel	\$817,468.00
3. Lexipol/ Cordico MDOC Wellness App, wellness-related resources, and promotional items	\$167,697.73
4. MDOC employee support Programs volunteer trainings, resources, and service support to include Peer Support, Employee Chaplains and TISM (Traumatic Incident Stress Management) Programs	\$7,945.00
5. Wellness Response Dog Pilot Project to include certification training, daily Care and veterinarian and vaccination expenses	\$2,070.63
<b>Total expenditures:</b>	<b>\$2,133,773.30</b>