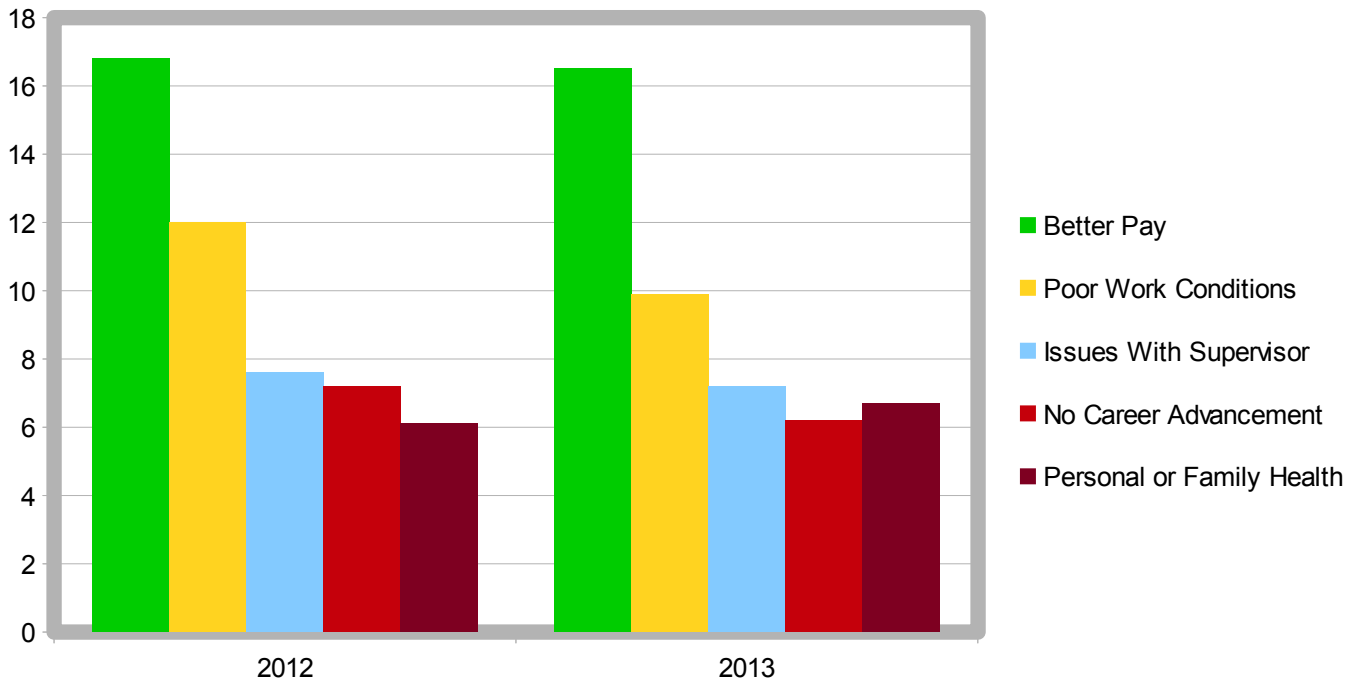




**American Federation of State County Municipal Employees  
Texas Correctional Employees**

Report to the Legislative Budget Board  
84<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session, September 23, 2014

## Exit Survey Reasons for Leaving State Employment 2012 /2013 Fiscal Year



\* This chart excludes retirement and indicates the other top five reasons for leaving state employment. <sup>i</sup>

- According to the Texas State Auditor, TDCJ correctional officers had a 24.6 percent turnover rate in fiscal year 2013. Correctional officers accounted for 63.0 percent of the workforce at the Department of Criminal Justice and 75.1 percent of that agency's separations. <sup>ii</sup>
- 8,327 Employees left the Texas Department of Criminal Justice in fiscal year 2013.

### Turnover rates among TDCJ Employees:

- Correctional Officer (24.6 percent).
  - Food Service Manager (18.5 percent).
  - Maintenance Supervisor (18.4 percent).
  - Clerk (17.9 percent). <sup>iii</sup>
- TDCJ currently is unable to compete against large Texas counties. A comparison study of TDCJ's salary was completed by AFSCME International's research group and which found TDCJ's salaries were \$4,497 less than the annual salaries of correctional officers working in the five largest county jails in Texas. <sup>iv</sup>

## Texas Correctional Officer Pay

Bexar County		min	mid	max
deputy sheriff - detention		\$ 29,508	\$ 34,764	\$ 38,628
detention corporal		\$ 40,224	\$ 41,430	\$ 43,440
detention sergeant		\$ 47,664	\$ 49,092	\$ 51,468
detention lieutenant		\$ 56,856	\$ 58,566	\$ 61,392

Dallas County		min	mid	max
detention service officer		\$ 34,362	\$ 40,144	\$ 48,090
detention service supervisor		\$ 41,184	\$ 47,528	\$ 57,574
detention service manager		\$ 47,944	\$ 56,571	\$ 70,183

Harris County		min	mid	max
detention officer		\$ 33,717	\$ 41,070	\$ 47,237

Travis County		min	mid	max
corrections cadet		\$ 38,920		\$ 39,698
corrections officer		\$ 44,368	\$ 52,107	\$ 61,455
corrections officer senior		\$ 48,226	\$ 56,639	\$ 66,799
corrections sergeant		\$ 72,920	\$ 83,757	\$ 94,421
corrections lieutenant		\$ 87,679	\$ 99,494	\$ 111,392

Tarrant County		min	mid	max
detention officer		\$ 33,322		
corporal		\$ 45,906		
sergeant		\$ 54,621		
lieutenant		\$ 63,690		

TDCJ		min	mid	max
Correctional Officer		\$29,220	\$34,054	\$38,888
Sergeant		\$40,832		
Lieutenant		\$42,874		

## 2013 Fiscal Year Turnover for Correctional Officers

### Turnover Rate by Job Classification Title

Fiscal Year	Job Classification Title	Headcount	Terminations including Interagency Transfers	Turnover Rate including Interagency Transfers
2013	4501 - Correctional Officer I	819.50	496	60.5 %
2013	4502 - Correctional Officer II	2,120.25	1,151	54.3 %
2013	4503 - Correctional Officer III	6,126.25	2,182	35.6 %
2013	4504 - Correctional Officer IV	7,400.75	1,245	16.8 %
2013	4505 - Correctional Officer V	8,994.25	1,177	13.1 %

## 2012 Fiscal Year Turnover for Correctional Officers

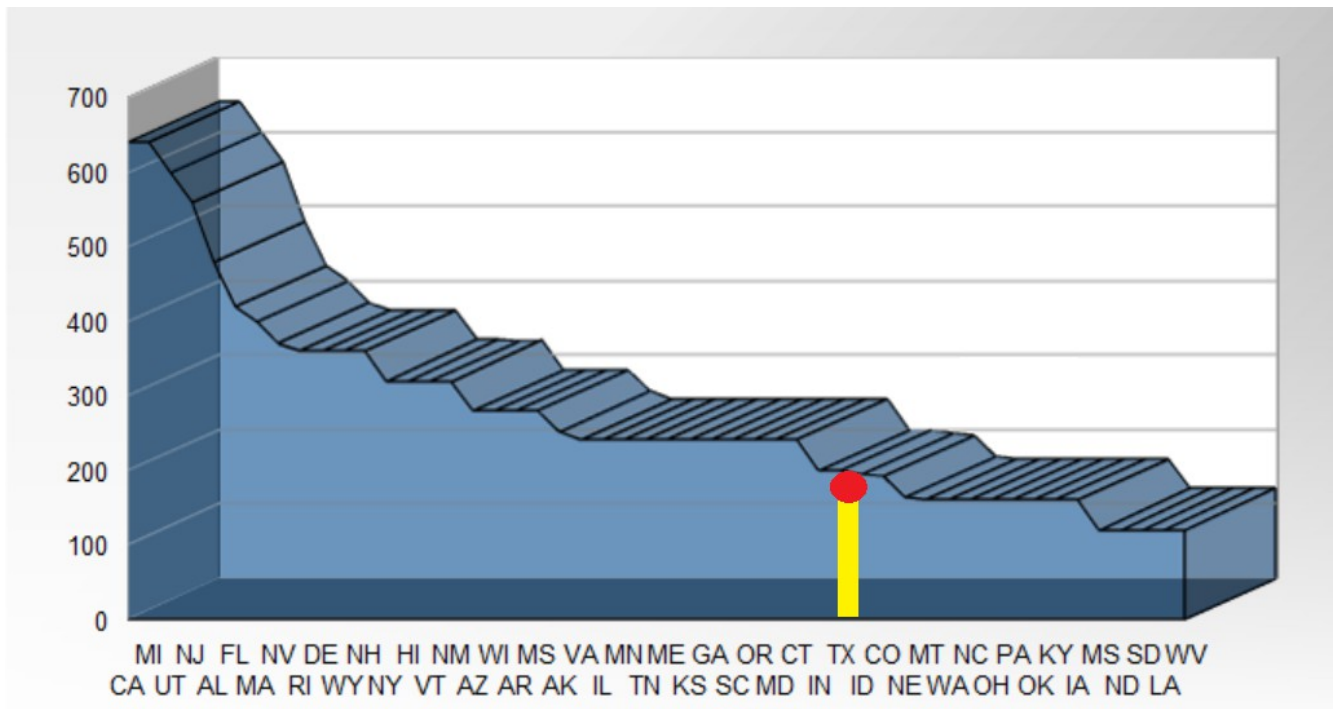
### Turnover Rate by Job Classification Title

Fiscal Year	Job Classification Title	Headcount	Terminations including Interagency Transfers	Turnover Rate including Interagency Transfers
2012	4501 - Correctional Officer I	772.50	407	52.7 %
2012	4502 - Correctional Officer II	1,925.25	1,122	58.3 %
2012	4503 - Correctional Officer III	6,023.50	2,310	38.3 %
2012	4504 - Correctional Officer IV	8,184.75	1,467	17.9 %
2012	4505 - Correctional Officer V	9,139.75	1,138	12.5 %

\* Data Analysis of Correctional Officer Turnover by Career Ladder<sup>vi</sup>

- Less experienced correctional officers account for the majority of the high turnover in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. Officers with over 91 months of service have a high remaining turnover of 13.1 percent. Creating a more experienced workforce can reduce this high employee attrition.

# Correctional Officers Lack Preparation



- Texas correctional officers receive a total of 200 preservice training hours, compared to the national average of 273 hours among state correctional agencies. Poorly prepared correctional officers may account for the extremely high turnover rates among new employees.<sup>vii</sup>
- With few exceptions, training is perceived to be more effective than salary and benefits according to human resource managers surveyed at the American Management Association Conference.<sup>viii</sup>
- Screening applicants plays a critical role in keeping them on the job. Even when a large number of people apply for correctional officer positions, it may still be difficult to attract applicants who are qualified.

Many jurisdictions, surveyed for a study commissioned by the National Correctional Institute, screened out all but a small number of their applicants. Salt Lake County, Utah, hires only 8 percent of those who apply.<sup>ix</sup> In fiscal year 2014, TDCJ only screened out 34 percent of their applicants, offering 66 percent of applicants a position.<sup>x</sup> TDCJ appears to hire candidates that may not be suitable for the correctional environment.

- Many jurisdictions, compared with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, required higher standards. When comparing different agencies with TDCJ, we found that TDCJ fails to conduct the degree of background screening other agencies require: TDCJ requires no personal references when conducting a background check, no check is completed on applicants with regulatory agencies such as Child Protective Service, TDCJ completes no mental health screening of applicants, no driver's license is required to obtain employment, no physician physical is required, applicants are not required to be US citizens to obtain employment and out of country criminal records checks are not done on visaed employees.

# 15 Year Career Ladder is an Affordable Option

## Turnover Rate by Length of Agency Service

Fiscal Year	Length of Agency Service	Headcount	Terminations including Interagency Transfers	Turnover Rate including Interagency Transfers
2013	Less than 2 Years	8,111.75	3,508	43.2 %
2013	02 to 4.99 Years	5,802.50	1,179	20.3 %
2013	05 to 9.99 Years	5,086.25	661	13.0 %
2013	10 to 14.99 Years	2,866.50	356	12.4 %
2013	15 to 19.99 Years	2,795.75	329	11.8 %
2013	20 to 24.99 Years	590.00	152	25.8 %
2013	25 to 29.99 Years	195.25	57	29.2 %
2013	30 to 34.99 Years	12.50	9	72.0 %
2013	Greater than 35 Years	.50		0.0 %

- According to figures from the Texas State Auditor's Office, in fiscal year 2013, TDCJ had less than 3,600 officers with more than 15 years of service. Analysis of the data indicates few officers are staying until they can retire. A sizable 15 year step on the correctional officer career ladder is advised in assisting to retain officers who's career ladder stops advancing after their 91 month of service.<sup>xi</sup>

### Recommendations

- Increase correctional officer salaries to levels that are competitive with the five largest counties in Texas. (Raise the salaries above the \$4,497 average competitive wage deficit)
- Add a 15 year career ladder step (Correctional Officer VI) to help retain veteran officers by offering them a better career path towards retirement. (Add a 15 percent step increase)
- Ensure a defined benefits package remains in place to assist in the retention of public employees.
- Offer independent oversight of hiring, employee disciplinary and grievances. The agency has a clear history of biased labor practices that are exemplified by the high turnover rate and reflect the data as indicated on employee exit surveys.<sup>xii</sup>
- Increase pay compensation that would allow the agency to reduce officer turnover rates and focus training needs on producing quality correctional officers that exemplify training levels nationally, instead of quantity.

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- iv Miller, Steve. "For Guards, Some County Lockups Are More Lucrative than Prisons." Mineral Wells Index. Community Newspaper Holdings Incorporated, 19 Sept. 2014. Web. 20 Sept. 2014. <[http://www.mineralwellsindex.com/news/for-guards-some-county-lockups-are-more-lucrative-than-prisons/article\\_fabb5ea6-4023-11e4-ab55-ff7700c4c93e.html](http://www.mineralwellsindex.com/news/for-guards-some-county-lockups-are-more-lucrative-than-prisons/article_fabb5ea6-4023-11e4-ab55-ff7700c4c93e.html)>.
- v Kohn, Scott. "Study of Payscale" AFSCME International Research, n.d. Web Sept 2014  
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- vii Kohn, Scott. "Corrections in Your Area." Discover Corrections. AFSCME International Research, n.d. Web. 2 Sept. 2014.
- viii Arthur, D. (2001). *The Employee Recruitment and Retention Handbook*. New York: AMACOM
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- x Miller, Steve. "For Guards, Some County Lockups Are More Lucrative than Prisons." Mineral Wells Index. Community Newspaper Holdings Incorporated, 19 Sept. 2014. Web. 20 Sept. 2014. <[http://www.mineralwellsindex.com/news/for-guards-some-county-lockups-are-more-lucrative-than-prisons/article\\_fabb5ea6-4023-11e4-ab55-ff7700c4c93e.html](http://www.mineralwellsindex.com/news/for-guards-some-county-lockups-are-more-lucrative-than-prisons/article_fabb5ea6-4023-11e4-ab55-ff7700c4c93e.html)>.
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