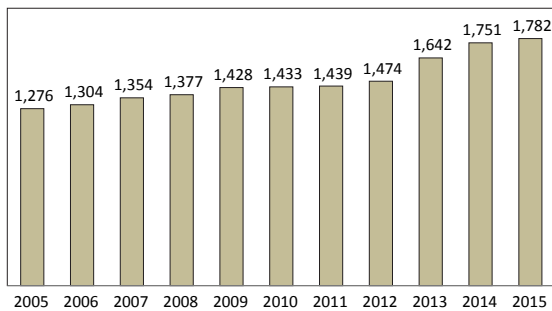


The Corrections Industry

In Alaska, this fast-growing industry is mostly state-run

1 Corrections Gains Jobs

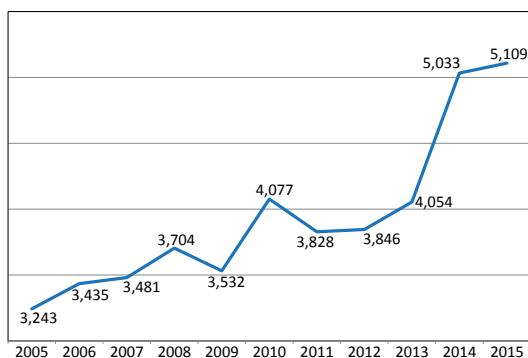
ALASKA, 2005 TO 2015



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

2 Rise in Inmate Population

ALASKA, 2005 TO 2015



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

By NEAL FRIED

States often have a considerable number of county jails and federal prisons, but in Alaska, nearly all adult prisons are run by the State. In 2015, the state employed nearly 1,800 workers in the Department of Corrections, which represented 10 percent of all state government employment.

Alaska also has 15 community or regional jails run by local governments in towns such as Kotzebue, Sitka, and Kodiak, but even these are largely state-funded. These facilities typically hold people for a short time for processing or while they await trial, but eventually transfer prisoners to Department of Corrections facilities.

It has grown fast

The corrections industry has grown rapidly in recent years, largely due to the increase in the prison population, which rose by 58 percent over the past decade. (See exhibits 1 and 2.) Much of that increase came in 2013 and 2014 when the Goose Creek Correctional Center in the Mat-Su Borough was built and began housing prisoners that had previously been incarcerated out of state.

During that time, corrections employment grew by nearly 40 percent, or 500 jobs. That's nearly five times faster than state government employment overall, which rose 8 percent. As a result, 36 percent of all state government job growth was in the Department of Corrections.

A broad and often vital presence

Corrections has a significant presence in 8 Alaska communities (see Exhibit 3), and its total payroll in 2015 was more than \$100 million. In many places, it's one of the largest employers.

The average corrections job paid \$57,964 in 2015. In communities where other work is scarce, these stable and often well-paid jobs are vital to the local economy.

Anchorage has the largest corrections workforce at 570 and is home to the Anchorage Correctional Complex and Hiland Mountain Correctional Center in Eagle River.

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough comes in a close second with more than 500 employees, which makes corrections one of the borough's largest employers. Mat-Su has two prisons: the Mat-Su Pretrial in Palmer and the state's largest and newest prison, Goose Creek Correctional Center on Goose Bay. The latter has more than 1,500 beds. Mat-Su is also home to Wasilla's Point Mackenzie Correctional Farm, near Goose Bay, where some low-security inmates grow food and raise animals to provide for institutions around the state.

Ranking third at 300 jobs is the Kenai Peninsula Borough, which has the state's only maximum security facility — Spring Creek in Seward, with capacity for 500 inmates — and the Wildwood Correction Complex in Kenai. Juneau (Lemon Creek Correctional Center) and Fairbanks (Fairbanks Correctional Center) are the other two communities with more than 100 corrections workers.

Some rural parts of the state have a sizeable presence as well, such as Nome with its Anvil Mountain Correctional Center and Bethel with the Yukon Kuskokwim Correction Center.

Most positions are officers

Well over half of corrections workers are correctional officers and jailers, representing 1,000 jobs. (See Exhibit 4.) That number includes entry-level correctional officers up to correctional superintendents. The next-largest occupational group was probation officers, at 11 percent.

Numerous other occupations keep the industry operational, including nurses, food service workers, office assistants, and maintenance workers. In some ways prisons represent separate, fully functional communities.

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3 Corrections Jobs by Area

ALASKA, 2015

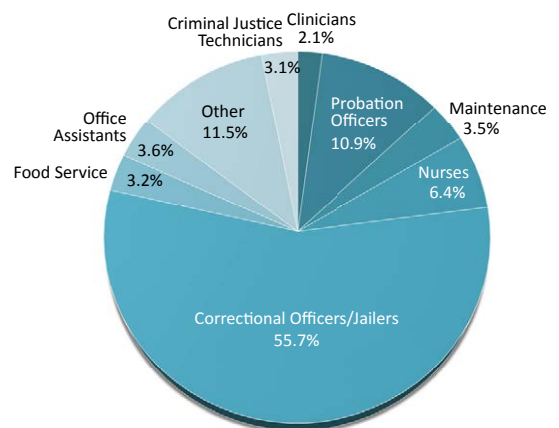
Anchorage, Municipality (Includes Eagle River)	570
Matanuska-Susitna Borough (Palmer, Goose Bay)	532
Kenai Peninsula Borough (Seward and Kenai)	300
Juneau, City and Borough	126
Fairbanks North Star Borough	115
Bethel Census Area	54
Ketchikan Island Borough	40
Nome Census Area	38
Dillingham Census Area	2
Kodiak Island Borough	2
Aleutian West Census Area	1
North Slope Borough	1
Sitka, City and Borough	1

Total 1,782

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section

4 Most Are Officers or Jailers

ALASKA CORRECTIONS INDUSTRY, 2015



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section