



# FRANKLIN COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

SCOTT R. NICHOLS, SHERIFF

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**EMERGENCY 911**

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## Franklin County flat funding Impact statement

The Franklin County Sheriff's Office finds itself in a "grey area" regarding the recent request from the State Board of Corrections for an impact statement regarding flat funding. At a recent meeting of the Maine Sheriff's Association, Maine Sheriff's decided to present real costs regarding their operational jail budgets and not provide flat funded budgets. At the present time Franklin County is a 72 hour holding facility, flat funding and submitting the same budget would not affect the operations of a 72 hour facility, however we are in the final stages (we hope) of having our mission changed back to a fully operational jail. So a budget reflecting the operating costs of a fully operational jail was submitted. That budget reflected through the Corrections Reporting of Actuals reflected \$1,576,470. Flat funding us at \$1,130,142 to our 72 hour mission would not allow us to open our jail.

### Flat funding impact

List of inmate Services & Programs lost as a result of being flat funded = increased recidivism.

-Non-evidence based programs; Alcoholics Anonymous, Bible studies, Church studies.

-Evidence based programs; public works (programs avg. 11,536 hours per year), work release programs which helped to pay for room & board (I recently received a letter from one of our sentenced six month prisoners doing time at CMMC asking for the opportunity to be traded in order to participate in a work release program). Community Concepts

-Educational programs; GED, New Books, New Readers, Adult Basic Education, Life Skills, Family Literacy & ESL.

-Professional Counseling Services (Evergreen Behavioral); Anger management, Substance Abuse.

-Rehab/Transition Programs; St. Francis Recovery Center, Crossroads for Women, Wellspring for Men, Salvation Army, Serenity House.



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## Hardships endured by families and Legal Counsel

- Without a full time facility prisoners are now separated from families, this creates lost contact with loved ones due to the distance that they have to travel. Even travel to the closest facility (Kennebec County) means traveling 150 to 200 miles round trip for northern Franklin County residents and even a 60 mile round trip for those living in the south.
- Franklin County Inmates are denied immediate access to legal counsel unlike other inmates whose counsel is located nearby.

## Transportation

- This is the only area as a 72 hour holding facility we will be impacted. We cannot stop transporting inmates and we cannot cut anymore out of our budget (personnel) without jeopardizing the safety of Corrections Officers (only two CO's work per shift).
- Because we are no longer allowed to transport prisoners to Somerset County (regardless of their status) we now have actually increased the amount of miles and man hours used to transport. Public Safety is jeopardized with every additional transport and increased mileage of the transports. Last year transport exceeded 30,000 miles it will easily exceed that number for the current fiscal year.
- We are rapidly increasing the wear and tear on our two transport vehicles, premature maintenance costs, and additional fuel use will eventually force us to replace one of the vehicles sooner than was planned.
- We are increasing the risk of car crashes to our transport Deputies and the prisoners they transport.

## Conclusion

To continue to flat fund Franklin County as a 72 hour holding facility and not allow the mission change that has been unanimously recommended by the Board of Corrections Working Group and also the N.I.C. report, would do more damage to the unified system of the Board of Corrections than it is currently experiencing. This facility is capable of housing 44 inmates which would relieve pressure to other jails in the system.