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KEEPING YOU INFORMED

SPECIAL EDITION CRISIS UPDATE

Marquette Branch Prison

July 30, 2024

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The Corrections Officers working at the Marquette Branch Prison, a maximum-security state prison, are suffering badly from the impacts of a severe staffing crisis. The vacancy rate for officers is now up to a dangerous 33%. This results in constant mandatory 16-hour shifts and violations of the Department's overtime rules. Officers are forced to work double shifts multiple times per week and frequently on back-to-back days with no relief in sight. Every day, the prison runs with far less officers than is required, resulting in prisoner activities being limited or canceled. This in turn leads to disturbances and assaults on the officers when prisoners get frustrated.

It is time for the public and our elected officials to be made aware of what is really happening in Michigan's state prison system. This series of reports will pull back the curtain for everyone to have a glimpse of what it's like to work in short-staffed prisons.

From July 1st through July 28th, 2024, there were 785 corrections officer overtime shifts. 326 of those overtime shifts were mandatory overtime, and most of the rest worked voluntarily overtime to avoid mandatory overtime. There were 88 violations of the MDOC's 32-hour rule, which is a policy designed to protect officers from excessive overtime. During this time there were also 519 "closed" officer positions across all three shifts. A closed officer position means that there wasn't an officer stationed at a required position inside the prison.

The following is a summary of events just from July 1 through July 28, 2024, that occurred at the maximum-security Marquette Branch Prison:

- 7/1/24 - Officers broke up 2 prisoners fighting on the level 5 yard.
- 7/4/24 - A prisoner assaulted an officer by throwing an unknown liquid through cell bars.
- 7/5/24 - Officers broke up 2 prisoners fighting on the level 5 yard.
- 7/8/24 - Officers broke up 3 prisoners fighting with weapons on the level 5 yard.
- 7/8/24 - A prisoner broke a sprinkler head off in a housing unit. Prisoner was moved by a cell extraction team.
- 7/9/24 - A prisoner created a disturbance in a housing unit. The prisoner was moved by a cell extraction team.
- 7/10/24 - General Population Level 5 yard cancelled due to disruptive prisoners and short staffing.
- 7/11/24 - Officers broke up 4 prisoners fighting with weapons in a housing unit.
- 7/11/24 - Officers broke up 2 prisoners fighting in a housing unit. Tasers were used to stop the fight.
- 7/13/24 - A prisoner assaulted an officer by throwing an unknown liquid through the cell bars.
- 7/13/24 - A prisoner broke a sprinkler head off in a housing unit. Prisoner was moved by a cell extraction team.
- 7/14/24 - A prisoner assaulted an officer by throwing an unknown liquid through the cell bars.
- 7/14/24 - 2 prisoners broke sprinkler heads off in a housing unit.
- 7/15/24 - Officers broke up 2 prisoners fighting on level 5 yard.
- 7/15/24 - Prisoners started a fire a housing unit. Officers extinguished the fire.
- 7/15/24 - Officers broke up 2 prisoners fighting outside of a housing unit.



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- 7/16/24 - A prisoner assaulted an officer by throwing an unknown liquid through the cell bars.
- 7/16/24 - A second prisoner assaulted an officer by throwing unknown liquid through the cell bars.
- 7/16/24 - A third prisoner assaulted an officer by throwing unknown liquid through the cell bars
- 7/16/24 - Prisoners started a fire in a housing unit. Officers extinguished the fire.
- 7/17/24 - The Facility warden was assaulted through the cell bars by a prisoner who threw an unknown liquid through the cell bars. Security rounds were suspended due to prisoners throwing bodily fluids and other items through the cell bars in an attempt to assault officers. Protective clothing and a pepper ball gun were used to keep officers from being assaulted.
- 7/17/24 - Prisoners assaulted 2 officers by throwing unknown liquid through the cell bars.
- 7/20/24 - Officers broke up 2 prisoners fighting on the level 5 yard.
- 7/20/24 - A prisoner broke a sprinkler head off in a housing unit, causing a disturbance.
- 7/21/24 - A prisoner assaulted an officer by throwing unknown liquid through the cell bars.
- 7/22/24 - Officers broke up 2 prisoners fighting on the level 5 yard.
- 7/22/24 - Officer broke up 2 more prisoners fighting on the level 5 yard.
- 7/23/24 - Officers broke up 2 prisoners fighting in a housing unit.
- 7/24/24 - A pepper ball launcher and taser were used to stop a prisoner who was assaulting another prisoner on the level 5 yard.
- 7/24/24 - A prisoner assaulted an officer by throwing unknown liquid through the cell bars. Prisoner was placed in restraints to prevent further disruptive behavior.
- 7/25/24 - Officers broke up 2 prisoners fighting on the level 5 yard.
- 7/25/24 - A prisoner broke a sprinkler head in his cell. A cell extraction team removed the prisoner from his cell placed him in restraints.
- 7/25/24 - A prisoner assaulted 2 officers with an unknown liquid. The prisoner was placed in restraints.
- 7/26/24 - Officers used the pepper ball launcher and chemical agent to break up a fight on the level 5 yard.
- 7/26/24 - Officers broke up 2 prisoners fighting outside of a housing unit.
- 7/26/24 - Prisoner yard cancelled due to multiple prisoner fights.
- 7/26/24 - A prisoner was being moved to segregation for threatening staff and creating a disturbance. The prisoner assaulted staff by resisting being placed in restraints.
- 7/27/24 - Officers used chemical agent to break up 2 prisoners fighting in a housing unit.
- 7/28/24 - Officer fired a warning shot with a rifle to break up 2 prisoners fighting on the level 5 yard. The warning shot had no effect on the prisoners and the fight turned into an assault. Officers responded to stop the incident and restrain the prisoners.

Please follow the link below to support corrections officers through this crisis.

Email Governor Whitmer Today! <https://act.seiu.org/a/mco-crisis>

From the Desk of MCO Communications Coordinator Adam Earley