

# Employee Morale and Turnover at the Department of Correction

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October 1999

Report 99-03

Office of Performance Evaluations  
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# Office of Performance Evaluations Idaho State Legislature

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October 15, 1999

Members  
Joint Legislative Oversight Committee  
Idaho State Legislature

At your direction, we have conducted an evaluation of employee morale and turnover at the Department of Correction. Concerns had been brought to the committee alleging that turnover was high, the number of employee lawsuits against the department recently had exceeded those of inmates, and employee morale was low.

I respectfully submit our completed evaluation for your review and consideration. We conclude that overall, employee morale is low and job satisfaction is only moderately higher. Morale and job satisfaction vary somewhat by work location, job function, and seniority, with those working in Central Office providing the highest ratings on average and those working in the prisons the lowest. Turnover (the count of those leaving the department) has increased over the past three years, with much of the increase coming from turnover in the prisons. Our report presents morale information and turnover rates by work location, job function, and seniority.

Inmates named the department in lawsuits at least 28 times more often than did employees in recent years. When employees did take formal action to address employment-related concerns, they seldom pursued more than one administrative or legal route to resolve their concerns, so the amount of overlap in employment-related actions against the department was relatively small.

In Chapter 4, we tie together the results of our employee survey and information coming from personal interviews and letters we received to point to causes of the low morale and make recommendations to improve it. The greatest improvements to morale are likely to come from improvements in management and supervision and communication within the department. Attention to employee concerns about compensation should also help to improve employee morale.

Throughout this evaluation we received the cooperation of department officials and staff, members of the Board of Correction, and staff of numerous state agencies responsible for maintaining the data upon which we relied. This report was written and researched by Ned Parrish, management consultants E. M. Akre and Rusty Broughton, Jim Henderson, Rosemary Curtin (contractor), and myself, with assistance from Strategic Intelligence and additional Office of Performance Evaluations staff.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nancy Van Maren".  
Nancy Van Maren

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# Table of Contents

		Page
<b>Report Summary</b>	<b>Employee Morale and Turnover at the Idaho Department of Correction</b>	1
	Introduction	1
	Methods	2
	Summary of Findings and Recommendations	4
<b>Chapter 1</b>	<b>Employee Morale and Job Satisfaction</b>	9
	Morale and Job Satisfaction in the Department of Correction	9
<b>Chapter 2</b>	<b>Employee Turnover</b>	19
	Turnover Trends Within the Department of Correction	20
	Department Efforts to Monitor Turnover	29
<b>Chapter 3</b>	<b>Use of Administrative and Legal Actions to Resolve Employment-Related Concerns</b>	31
	Administrative and Legal Actions Used by Department of Correction Employees	31
	Department of Correction Employees Using More Than One Administrative or Legal Action	48
<b>Chapter 4</b>	<b>Explaining and Improving Employee Morale and Job Satisfaction</b>	51
	Background	51
	Factor 1: Management and Supervision	52
	Factor 2: Co-Worker Interaction	59
	Factor 3: Compensation	61
	Factor 4: Training	64
	Factor 5: Department Policy Issues	66
	Recommendations	68
	<b>Table of Contents</b>	75
<b>Appendices</b>		
	<b>Department of Correction</b>	91
<b>Response to the</b>		



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# List of Figures and Tables

	Page
Figure 3.1 Administrative and Legal Actions Available to Classified Employees	32
Figure 3.2 Department of Correction Problem Solving Process and Due Process Procedure, 1999	34
Figure 3.3 Appeals of Problem Solving Process and Due Process Procedure Decisions	38
Figure 3.4 Outcomes of Appeals to the Idaho Personnel Commission and District Court, Decided During Fiscal Years 1998–1999	41
Figure 3.5 Idaho Human Rights Commission Complaint Filing Through Resolution	43
Figure 3.6 Tort Claim Filing Through Resolution	45
Figure 4.1 Relative Impact of Five Factors on Employee Morale, Job Satisfaction, and Work Motivation	53
Figure 4.2 Strength of Relationship Between Management and Supervision Factor and Employee Morale, Job Satisfaction, and Work Motivation	54
Figure 4.3 Employee Ratings of Aspects Related to Management and Supervision, With Average Scores and Order of Importance Shown	55
Figure 4.4 Strength of Relationship Between Co-Worker Interaction Factor and Employee Morale, Job Satisfaction, and Work Motivation	61
Figure 4.5 Management Practices and Characteristics Noticed and Respected by Correctional Staff	71

Table 1.1	Employee Ratings of Morale, Job Satisfaction, and Work Motivation, and Overall Average Scores	11
Table 1.2	Employee Morale and Job Satisfaction by Work Location, in Descending Order	13
Table 1.3	Employee Morale and Job Satisfaction by Prison, in Descending Order	14
Table 1.4	Employee Morale and Job Satisfaction by Job Type, in Descending Order	16
Table 1.5	Employee Morale and Job Satisfaction, by Length of Service in Department, in Descending Order	17
Table 2.1	Turnover Rate Summary, Fiscal Years 1997–1999	21
Table 2.2	Reasons for Separation From Department of Correction Employment, by the Number and Percent of Survey Respondents	22
Table 2.3	Turnover Rates by Work Location, Fiscal Years 1997–1999	24
Table 2.4	Turnover Rates for Selected Positions, Fiscal Years 1997–1999	26
Table 2.5	Employee Turnover by Length of Service in Department, Fiscal Years 1997–1999	28
Table 2.6	Correctional Officer Turnover by Length of Service in Department, Fiscal Years 1997–1999	28
Table 3.1	Summary of Department of Correction Employee Problem Solving Requests and Outcomes, Fiscal Years 1998–1999	35
Table 3.2	Number and Rate of Disciplinary Actions for Department of Correction and Comparative Agencies, Fiscal Years 1998–1999	36
Table 3.3	Resolution of Complaints Filed With the Idaho Human Rights Commission by Department of Correction Employees, Fiscal Years 1994–1999	44
Table 3.4	Employment-Related Lawsuits, Fiscal Years 1994–1999	46

Table 3.5	Number of Employee and Inmate Lawsuits Naming the Department of Correction, Fiscal Years 1994–1999	47
Table 3.6	Office of Insurance Management Payments on Employment-Related Claims With Loss, Fiscal Years 1994–1999	48
Table 3.7	Department of Correction Employees Involved in More Than One Administrative or Legal Action, by Employee, Fiscal Years 1998–1999	50



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# Employee Morale and Turnover at the Idaho Department of Correction Report Summary

## INTRODUCTION

In June 1999, the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee directed the Office of Performance Evaluations to begin an evaluation of employee morale and turnover at the Department of Correction. Concerns had been brought to the committee alleging that turnover was high, the number of employee lawsuits had recently exceeded those of inmates, and employee morale was low.

This report, prepared in response to the committee's request, addresses the following questions:

- What is the status of employee morale at Department of Correction? How does it vary by job classification, institutional assignment or other work location, and length of service? How might it be improved?
- What has been the rate of turnover within the Department of Correction over the past three years? To what extent has turnover within the department varied by employee job classification, institutional assignment or other work location, and length of service during this period?
- How many and what kind of employee problem solving requests, grievances, and related actions have department employees filed over the past two years? What has been their resolution? How does this compare to selected state agencies over the same period? What processes has the department followed to resolve employee problem solving requests, grievances, and related actions in the last two years? Can the current process be improved?
- How many and what type of lawsuits have employees filed against the department over the past five years? What has been the cost of resolving these lawsuits? How does the

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**We were asked to assess employee morale and turnover as well as employee lawsuits against the department.**

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number of employee lawsuits filed compare to other selected state agencies, and to lawsuits filed by inmates in the department's custody?

## METHODS

We contracted with two consultants with expertise in evaluating management practices and human resource management, and obtained additional assistance from consultants with expertise in conducting and analyzing organizational climate surveys, to assist in this evaluation. Together with our consultants, we:

- Interviewed Board of Correction members and Department of Correction management and staff to understand the structure and operations of the department.
- Visited each of the seven correctional facilities, five of the department's Division of Field and Community Services sites, and the department's central office. We conducted structured interviews of 91 employees randomly selected by job classification in numbers proportional to the total number of employees in the same job classification at each site, and interviewed an additional 33 employees in a group setting at these facilities.
- Conducted unstructured interviews of present and former Department of Correction employees who specifically asked to provide input, and reviewed written correspondence received from current and former Department of Correction employees.
- Surveyed a proportional, stratified random sample of 603 current employees (or 43.5 percent of all department employees) drawn from all job classifications and work locations of the department between the dates of July 19 and August 13, 1999. Of those surveyed, 452 (or 75 percent) submitted completed surveys by the cutoff date at rates roughly proportional to the strata from which the sample was drawn.<sup>1</sup> (See Appendix A for a summary of responses and Appendix B for a summary of the response rates.)

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**We visited each of the seven prisons and a number of other department work**

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**We surveyed current department employees to assess morale and job satisfaction.**

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<sup>1</sup> An additional 28 surveys (5 percent) were received after our cut off date. Due to the high response rate, the inclusion of these surveys would be unlikely to impact the results presented.

- Surveyed a random sample of 113 former employees who had separated from department employment for any reason between January 1, 1998 and July 8, 1999. Of those surveyed, 49 (43 percent) responded.
- Reviewed employee turnover information obtained from the Division of Human Resources, the Office of the State Controller, and the Department of Correction.
- Reviewed information regarding employee claims and lawsuits from the Office of the Secretary of State, the Office of the Attorney General, the Office of Insurance Management within the Department of Administration, and the Department of Correction.
- Reviewed information about Department of Correction employee disciplinary actions and appeals, problem solving requests, and human rights complaints from the Division of Human Resources, the Idaho Human Rights Commission, and the Department of Correction; and
- Reviewed data regarding employee discipline, human rights complaints, and employee lawsuits gathered from the Division of Human Resources, the Office of Insurance Management, the Department of Health and Welfare, the Department of Law Enforcement, and the Idaho Transportation Department.

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**We analyzed turnover trends in the department using information from several sources.**

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**We compared the number of administrative and legal actions used by department employees with those of selected state agencies.**

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## **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Summary of Findings**

#### *Chapter 1*

1. Overall, employee morale in the Department of Correction is low, and job satisfaction is only moderately higher. *Page 10.*
2. Employees who work in Correctional Industries and Central Office have the highest morale and job satisfaction, while employees who work in the prisons have the lowest. *Page 12.*
3. Morale and job satisfaction differ somewhat among prison facilities, although differences are minimal. *Page 13.*
4. Employees who hold positions in division and departmental management have the highest morale and job satisfaction, while correctional officers have the lowest. *Page 15.*
5. Employees with the least seniority (under one year) have the highest morale and job satisfaction, while employees with the greatest seniority (ten years or more) have the lowest morale and the second lowest overall job satisfaction. *Page 17.*

#### *Chapter 2*

6. Over the past three years, the Department of Correction's overall turnover rate increased from under 16 percent to about 20 percent, with much of the increase from turnover in the prisons. *Page 20.*
7. Turnover rates varied greatly among work locations, ranging from 0 to 37 percent in fiscal year 1999. *Page 23.*
8. Turnover rates for security staff have exceeded the department's overall turnover rate, while turnover among probation and parole staff has been lower than the department average in fiscal years 1997 through 1999. *Page 25.*
9. Employees who had been with the department for under a year accounted for more of the overall turnover in fiscal year 1999 than in fiscal year 1997. *Page 27.*
10. The Department of Correction has been inconsistent in its analysis of turnover data in recent years and could have more fully used available information to monitor turnover trends. *Page 29.*

### *Chapter 3*

11. On average, three percent of Department of Correction employees filed problem solving requests in each of the past two fiscal years. *Page 33.*
12. During fiscal years 1998 and 1999, the Department of Correction imposed discipline at a higher rate than two of the three other state agencies we analyzed. *Page 36.*
13. Department of Correction employees appealed disciplinary actions at a higher rate than two of the three agencies we studied and at a lower rate than the third agency during fiscal years 1998 and 1999. *Page 39.*
14. During fiscal years 1998 and 1999, the Department of Correction's disciplinary action was overturned in 3 of 11 cases decided by hearing officers appointed by the Idaho Personnel Commission. *Page 40.*
15. During fiscal years 1998 and 1999, the Department of Correction appealed each case in which the Idaho Personnel Commission overturned its disciplinary action, and the department's appeals were unsuccessful in every case. *Page 40.*
16. Over the last five years, the Idaho Human Rights Commission has found probable cause that discrimination occurred in 1 of 13 employees cases against the department that have been decided. *Page 42.*
17. Department of Correction employees filed human rights complaints at a higher annual rate than one agency we used for comparison purposes, and a lower rate than one other during fiscal years 1995 through 1999. *Page 42.*
18. During fiscal years 1994 through 1999, Department of Correction employees filed more employment-related tort claims than did employees in the three other agencies we reviewed. *Page 45.*
19. During fiscal years 1994 through 1999, Department of Correction employees filed employment-related lawsuits at an annual rate higher than two agencies and equal to one agency we reviewed. *Page 46.*
20. During fiscal years 1994 through 1999, inmates named the Department of Correction in lawsuits at least 28 times more often than did employees. *Page 47.*
21. During fiscal years 1994 through 1999, the Office of Insurance Management paid an average of \$16,737 on four Department of Correction employment-related claims that incurred loss. *Page 48.*
22. Of 123 employees using department or employee-initiated administrative and legal actions, 11 used more than one to address one or more employment-related concerns in fiscal years 1998 and 1999. *Page 49.*

## Chapter 4

23. Overall, employees are concerned that work-related grievances will not be resolved fairly and that discipline is not uniformly applied. *Page 54.*
24. Employees feel they can make suggestions for improvement in the workplace, but are less certain the suggestions will be implemented. *Page 56.*
25. About two-thirds of employees do not believe they can discuss work-related problems without fear of retaliation, and about one-quarter feel they cannot discuss concerns with their immediate supervisor. *Page 57.*
26. Employees appear to have fewer frustrations with direct supervisors than with senior management. *Page 58.*
27. Over half of all survey respondents rated communication with co-workers as “fair” or “poor,” while not quite one-third rated it as “good” or “excellent.” *Page 60.*
28. Employees want issues about compensation and benefits addressed, and some have been demoralized by their perception of a lack of support from upper administration on these issues. *Page 61.*
29. Most employees rated opportunities for advancement within the department as “fair” or “poor.” *Page 63.*
30. Many employees said that pre-service and in-service training are inadequate, and see lowered levels of training as a lack of department concern for their professionalism and safety. *Page 64.*
31. Overall, employees appeared to be less opposed to specific departmental policies than to what they perceive is the inconsistent application of these policies. *Page 66.*
32. The department’s personnel office is generally perceived as unresponsive to the needs of those in both management and non-management positions. *Page 67.*

## Summary of Recommendations

1. We recommend the Department of Correction establish and document a standard methodology for calculating turnover and begin monitoring turnover for all work locations and classes of employees. *Page 30.*
2. We recommend that the Department of Correction train first-line supervisors in the use of problem solving skills to address employee concerns. *Page 68.*

3. We recommend the Department of Correction take steps to strengthen communication between all levels of management and staff. *Page 69.*
4. We recommend the Department of Correction take the following steps to address compensation and benefit issues:
  - A. Work with the Division of Human Resources to conduct regional salary and benefit comparisons and make the results available to decision makers and employees. *Page 70.*
  - B. Conduct an internal review of promotional policies and practices to ensure they are consistently and fairly applied. *Page 72.*
5. We recommend the Department of Correction take steps to repair the credibility of personnel with management and employees, and improve personnel's ability to assist department management and employees with employment-related concerns. *Page 72.*



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# Employee Morale and Job Satisfaction

## Chapter 1

In requesting this evaluation, the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee asked us to assess morale among Department of Correction employees. We found that overall, employee morale is low, and job satisfaction is only moderately higher. Morale and job satisfaction varied by work location and job function—with those working at the prisons at the low end and Central Office at the high end. Also, less tenured staff tended to have higher morale than those who had worked for the department longer periods of time.

Broadly defined, morale is “group spirit,” a measurement of the socio-emotional aspects of a job. It is often considered to be vital in meeting an organization’s goals, and can have economic benefits, such as increased productivity and effectiveness and low staff turnover.<sup>1</sup> Morale measures feelings of acceptance, shared goals, and a belief in the desirability of those shared goals.

At least two other measures provide useful indicators of an overall work environment. Employee job satisfaction provides an indication of an individual’s satisfaction, primarily oriented toward the tasks of a job, rather than the feeling he or she gets as part of a group. Work motivation provides a measure of an individual’s desire to do his or her best work.

### MORALE AND JOB SATISFACTION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

To assess the current work environment at the Department of Correction, we surveyed a large sample of all current employees on factors that contribute to morale, job satisfaction, and work motivation. (Refer to Appendix A for a summary of survey results.) The sample was drawn randomly from across work

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**We examined several aspects of the department’s work climate including employee morale, job satisfaction, and work motivation.**

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<sup>1</sup> Muchinsky, Paul M., *Psychology Applied to Work: An Introduction to Industrial and Organizational Psychology* (1987), 379–381.

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**Appendices A and B provide summary survey information.**

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locations, such as prison facilities, Central Office, and districts within Field and Community Services, based on proportional allocation in each location strata. We visited each prison facility and a number of district offices and Community Work Centers to encourage employees to return the surveys. We received a response rate of 75 percent overall.<sup>2</sup> Responses were distributed fairly proportionately across each of the groups from which we drew the sample.<sup>3</sup> (See Appendix B for a summary of response rates.) Given a random sample with a high response rate that was fairly proportionately distributed, the results may be understood to indicate the responses of all employees, had we been able to survey each of them.

Each of the three outcomes mentioned—morale, job satisfaction, and work motivation—were measured on a 5-point scale, with 5 the most favorable rating. Results were summarized into arithmetic averages, and then compared by work location, type of position, and length of service. On this scale, a rating of “3” is “adequate” or “neutral.”

We found:

- **Overall, employee morale in the Department of Correction is low, and job satisfaction is only moderately higher.**

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**Nearly 69 percent of department employees surveyed rated morale as “fair” or “poor.”**

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As Table 1.1 shows, morale averaged 2.18 on a 5-point scale, equivalent to a “fair” rating. Almost 69 percent of respondents rated morale as “fair” or “poor.” Another 9 percent rated it as “adequate” and only 22 percent rated it as either “good” or “excellent.”

As shown, job satisfaction is somewhat higher overall, although still only moderate. Although the averages for morale (2.18) versus job satisfaction (3.60) suggest that satisfaction is

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<sup>2</sup> We received an additional 28 surveys after the cut off date, representing another 5 percent of all those to whom the survey was distributed. Due to the high response rate, the inclusion of these additional surveys would be unlikely to impact the results presented.

<sup>3</sup> While the average response rate was 75 percent, we received 84.5 percent of all surveys sent to employees within Field and Community Services and only 50 percent of surveys sent to employees of Correctional Industries. (See Appendix B for a summary of the response rates.) Given the lower response rate for Correctional Industries employees, the reader should be careful in generalizing responses to all employees of Correctional Industries.

**Table 1.1: Employee Ratings of Morale, Job Satisfaction, and Work Motivation, and Overall Average Scores**

	Percent of Respondents			Overall Average (5-point scale)
	Rating 1 or 2	Rating 3	Rating 4 or 5	
Morale	69%	9%	22%	2.18
Job satisfaction	24%	16%	60%	3.60
Work motivation <sup>a</sup>	15%	7%	79%	4.13

<sup>a</sup> Percents do not sum due to rounding.

Source: Strategic Intelligence analysis of Office of Performance Evaluations' survey of Department of Correction employees, 1999.

substantially higher than morale, this is not the case because the two scales used to make the ratings differ. In rating morale, respondents' numerical answers corresponded to adjectives describing the morale level, where 1 = poor, 2 = fair, 3 = adequate, 4 = good, and 5 = excellent. The overall average of 2.18 corresponds to "fair" morale. In rating satisfaction, respondents indicated how much they agreed or disagreed with the statement, "In general, I am satisfied with my job," where 3 corresponded to "neutral" and 4 corresponded to "somewhat agree." On average, respondents did not "somewhat agree" that they were satisfied with their jobs. This rating corresponds to somewhat better than "fair" job satisfaction, but does not indicate even moderately high job satisfaction.

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**On average, department employees rated job satisfaction only moderately higher than morale.**

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In contrast to these results, employees rated their personal motivation to do the job relatively higher. Only 15 percent disagreed at all that they were motivated to do their best work, and about 75 percent agreed completely. Note, however, that survey respondents tend to rate their own work motivation higher than co-worker morale, in part due to the tendency for survey respondents to bias self reports upward, toward socially desirable answers.<sup>4</sup> In other words, a respondent may report that morale is bad ("we're unhappy here"), but that his or her personal

<sup>4</sup> Eagly, A.H. and Chaiken, S., *The Psychology of Attitudes* (Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanavitch, Inc., 1993).

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**In contrast, most employees rated their personal work motivation as high.**

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motivation to do the job well is high (“I’m committed to working hard”), because saying otherwise would reflect poorly on the respondent. As a result of this effect (“social desirability”), we focus primarily on morale and job satisfaction in the remainder of the report.

### **Morale and Job Satisfaction by Work Location**

We looked at how morale and job satisfaction differed by work location. Survey respondents were asked to indicate which of five locations they worked in: Central Office, Field and Community Services, Community Work Centers, prisons, or Correctional Industries.

We found:

- **Employees who work in Correctional Industries and Central Office have the highest morale and job satisfaction, while employees who work in the prisons have the lowest.**

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**Morale and job satisfaction are highest in Central Office and Correctional Industries.**

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As Table 1.2 shows, employees who work for Correctional Industries reported the highest morale overall, a “good” rating, at an average of 4.00 on a 5-point scale. Employees in Central Office also have higher than typical morale, averaging between “adequate” and “good,” at 3.5 on a 5-point scale.

Table 1.2 also shows these two groups of employees have the highest job satisfaction. Employees who work for Correctional Industries averaged 4.44 on a 5-point scale, indicating that overall they agree with the statement, “In general, I am satisfied with my job.” Employees in Central Office were similarly satisfied, averaging 4.34 on a 5-point scale.

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**Employees working in the prisons rated morale and job satisfaction the lowest.**

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On the other hand, the table shows that employees who work in the prisons have the lowest morale overall, rating it about “fair,” at an average of 1.91 on a 5-point scale. Employees working in Community Work Centers rated morale only slightly higher, also “fair” at an average of 2.14. Similarly, employees who work in the prisons also have the lowest job satisfaction, rating it 3.43 on a 5-point scale, corresponding to only minimal agreement that they were satisfied with their job and signaling low overall satisfaction levels.

**Table 1.2: Employee Morale and Job Satisfaction by Work Location, in Descending Order**

	Average Score (5-point scale)
<b>Morale</b>	
<b>Correctional Industries</b>	<b>4.00</b>
Central Office	3.50
Field and Community Services	2.39
Community Work Centers	2.14
<b>Prisons</b>	<b>1.91</b>
Overall	2.18
<hr/>	
<b>Job Satisfaction</b>	
<b>Correctional Industries</b>	<b>4.44</b>
Central Office	4.34
Community Work Centers	3.91
Field and Community Services	3.76
<b>Prisons</b>	<b>3.43</b>
Overall	3.61

Note: Work locations in bold had significantly different averages from each other.

Source: Strategic Intelligence analysis of Office of Performance Evaluations' survey of Department of Correction employees, 1999.

Further, we found:

- **Morale and job satisfaction differ somewhat among prison facilities, although differences are minimal.**

As Table 1.3 shows, there is little variation in morale amongst the prison facilities. Morale at Idaho State Correctional Institution is slightly higher than typical for the other Idaho prisons, at an average of 2.0 (“fair”) and morale at Pocatello Women’s Correctional Center is slightly lower than typical, at 1.74 (between “poor” and “fair”) on average. However, none of these differences is statistically significant.

**Employee morale is “fair” or almost fair at each of the seven prisons.**

**Table 1.3: Employee Morale and Job Satisfaction by Prison, in Descending Order**

	Average Score (5-point scale)
<b>Morale</b>	
Idaho State Correctional Institution	2.00
Idaho Maximum Security Institution	1.89
Idaho Correctional Institution-Orofino	1.86
North Idaho Correctional Institution	1.86
St. Anthony Work Camp	1.86
South Idaho Correctional Institution	1.86
Pocatello Women’s Correctional Center	1.74
Overall	1.91
<b>Job Satisfaction</b>	
<b>Idaho Correctional Institution-Orofino</b>	<b>3.83</b>
North Idaho Correctional Institution	3.68
Idaho State Correctional Institution	3.50
Idaho Maximum Security Institution	3.49
St. Anthony Work Camp	3.07
Pocatello Women’s Correctional Center	3.04
<b>South Idaho Correctional Institution</b>	<b>3.03</b>
Overall	3.43

Note: Prisons in bold had significantly different averages from each other.

Source: Strategic Intelligence analysis of Office of Performance Evaluations’ survey of Department of Correction employees, 1999.

**Employee job satisfaction varies somewhat by prison, with Orofino the highest and SICI the lowest.**

Job satisfaction varies somewhat more by facility. As Table 1.3 shows, job satisfaction at Idaho Correctional Institution–Orofino is highest, at 3.83 on average. This average is significantly higher than the lowest job satisfaction at South Idaho Correctional Institution, which averaged 3.03 on a 5-point scale.

## **Morale and Job Satisfaction by Job Function**

We also looked at how morale and job satisfaction varies between employees with different types of jobs within the department. Survey respondents were asked to indicate which of seven categories best suited their area of responsibility, ranging from department management to administrative support to correctional officers.<sup>5</sup>

We found:

- **Employees who hold positions in division and departmental management have the highest morale and job satisfaction, while correctional officers have the lowest.**

As Table 1.4 shows, employees who indicated they worked in division and department management have stronger morale than typical within the department, rating morale between “adequate” and “good” with an average of 3.61 on a 5-point scale. On the other hand, morale for correctional officers (all levels) averaged between “poor” and “fair,” at a significantly lower average of 1.81 on a 5-point scale. Similarly, those who work in division and departmental management have the highest job satisfaction, averaging 4.65. Correctional officers have the lowest overall job satisfaction, with an average of 3.24 on a 5-point scale, equivalent to moderate satisfaction overall.

## **Morale and Job Satisfaction by Length of Department Service**

Finally, we looked at whether the length of time an employee had worked for the department was related to his or her morale and job satisfaction. Respondents were asked to report when they began work at the department; we then calculated their lengths of employment to August 1999. We grouped length of service into six non-overlapping categories, ranging from “under 6 months” to “10 years or more.”

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<sup>5</sup> Three respondents reported job functions that did not fit within one of the seven categories.

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**Staff who work in division and department management have the highest morale and job satisfaction.**

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**In contrast, correctional officers have the lowest morale and job satisfaction.**

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**Table 1.4: Employee Morale and Job Satisfaction by Job Type, in Descending Order**

	Average Score (5-point scale)
<b>Morale</b>	
<b>Division and department management<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>3.61</b>
Office/clerical	3.11
Support services <sup>b</sup>	2.90
Trades and facility support <sup>c</sup>	2.50
Probation and parole officers (all levels) <sup>d</sup>	1.90
Program staff <sup>e</sup>	1.89
<b>Correctional officer (all levels)</b>	<b>1.81</b>
None applies (n = 7)	3.86
Overall	2.18
<b>Job Satisfaction</b>	
<b>Division and department management<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>4.65</b>
Office/clerical	4.46
Trades and facility support <sup>c</sup>	4.25
Support services <sup>b</sup>	4.07
Program staff <sup>e</sup>	3.66
Probation and parole officer (all levels) <sup>d</sup>	3.40
<b>Correctional officer (all levels)</b>	<b>3.24</b>
None applies (n = 7)	4.00
Overall	3.60

Note: Job types in bold had significantly different averages from each other.

<sup>a</sup> Includes those who reported that they held positions in division and department management.

<sup>b</sup> Includes non-clerical administrative support such as financial support, information technology, human resources, inmate services, etc.

<sup>c</sup> Includes trades, such as electrical and construction, as well as transportation, food services, etc.

<sup>d</sup> Includes all pre-sentence investigators who identified themselves as such.

<sup>e</sup> Includes education, counseling, social services, etc.

Source: Strategic Intelligence analysis of Office of Performance Evaluations' survey of Department of Correction employees, 1999.

**Table 1.5: Employee Morale and Job Satisfaction, by Length of Service in Department, in Descending Order**

	Average Score (5-point scale)
<b>Morale</b>	
Less than 6 months	2.42
6 months to 0.99 year	2.50
1 year to 2.99 years	2.10
3 years to 4.99 years	2.37
5 years to 9.99 years	2.20
10 years or more	2.00
Overall	2.18
<b>Job Satisfaction</b>	
<b>Less than 6 months</b>	<b>4.16</b>
6 months to 0.99 year	3.85
1 year to 2.99 years	3.52
3 years to 4.99 years	3.67
<b>5 years to 9.99 years</b>	<b>3.50</b>
10 years or more	3.51
Overall	3.60

Note: Tenure lengths in bold had significantly different averages from each other.

Source: Strategic Intelligence analysis of Office of Performance Evaluations' survey of Department of Correction employees, 1999.

We found:

- **Employees with the least seniority (under one year) have the highest morale and job satisfaction, while employees with the greatest seniority (ten years or more) have the lowest morale and the second lowest overall job satisfaction.**

As Table 1.5 shows, employees who have been with the department under 1 year have the highest morale, averaging about 2.5

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**In general, employees with the longest tenure have lower morale and job satisfaction.**

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(between “fair” and “adequate”). On the other hand, employees who have worked for the department for 10 years or more have the lowest morale, averaging 2.0 (“fair”). However, none of these averages were significantly different from each other. A similar pattern was true for job satisfaction: new employees (under 6 months) have significantly higher job satisfaction than those who have worked for the department between 5 and 10 years or longer.

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# Employee Turnover

## Chapter 2

In requesting this evaluation, the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee asked us to examine turnover within the Department of Correction. We reviewed information from the Employee Information System within the Office of the State Controller, the Division of Human Resources, and the Department of Correction to calculate turnover within the department over the past three fiscal years. We found that the department’s overall turnover rate has increased during this period. Turnover within the department varied greatly by organizational unit, employee job classification, and employee length of service. While the department monitors staff turnover rates, it could take steps to standardize its review of this information and strengthen its assessment of turnover trends.

While turnover within organizations is inevitable and can even be healthy, high turnover levels can have a number of negative consequences. A 1996 report commissioned by the National Institute of Corrections identified several negative impacts that can result from high turnover including:

- The costs required to recruit, hire, and train replacements;
- The loss of money invested in employees who leave; and
- The loss of experienced employees inside the institutions.<sup>1</sup>

Turnover also can have a negative impact on the staff who remain with an organization, as a department employee said: “Turnover is terrible. You can’t be sure you’re safe because you don’t know if the people working with you know what to do in a crisis.”

Monitoring turnover can help gauge the climate within an organization, provide a better understanding of the reasons

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**We looked at employee turnover for the last three fiscal years.**

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**High turnover levels can have a number of negative consequences.**

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections, *Managing Staff: Corrections’ Most Valuable Resource* (1996), 2.

employees leave an organization, and potentially help to stem further turnover.

## **TURNOVER TRENDS WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION**

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**We did not include intra-agency transfers or “temporary” employees in our calculations of department turnover.**

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To assess turnover within the Department of Correction, we reviewed information about the number of employees who left their employment with the department during each of the past three fiscal years. We included only permanent employees in our analysis, and counted all separations, terminations, and inter-agency transfers.<sup>2</sup> We did not include intra-agency transfers, although these transfers may have the same impact on a work location, because sufficient information on employee movement between work locations within the department was not readily available. To calculate annual turnover rates for the department, we compared the number of turnovers occurring each year to the number of active employees at the end of each fiscal year. We found:

- **Over the past three years, the Department of Correction’s overall turnover rate increased from under 16 percent to about 20 percent, with much of the increase from turnover in the prisons.**

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**Much of the increase in the department’s turnover can be attributed to turnover in the prisons.**

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As shown in Table 2.1, the department’s annual turnover rate increased each year from fiscal year 1997 through fiscal year 1999. While the rate of turnover in Central Office appears higher, much of the increase can be attributed to an increase in turnover within the department’s seven prison facilities, where more than two-thirds of department employees are employed. From fiscal year 1997 through fiscal year 1999, the turnover rate within the prisons increased from 17 percent to 23 percent. In contrast, the turnover rate in the Division of Field and Community Services, which is responsible for the probation and parole function and operates five community work centers, was the lowest in each of the past three years. During this period, the division’s turnover rate decreased from 13 percent to 11 percent.

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<sup>2</sup> We did not include temporary employees in our analysis because these employees often are hired to meet short-term needs and are expected to leave after the work is completed. We also excluded members of the Board of Correction, the Parole Board, and Parole Board staff.

**Table 2.1: Turnover Rate Summary, Fiscal Years 1997–1999<sup>a</sup>**

	<u>1997<sup>b</sup></u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>
Central Office	16%	13%	22%
Prisons	17	20	23
Field and Community Services	13	13	11
Correctional Industries	22	21	21
Overall	16%	19%	20%

<sup>a</sup> Excludes members of the Board of Correction, Parole Board, Parole Board staff, and temporary employees.

<sup>b</sup> Excludes 46 turnovers in the department’s medical section. In October 1996 the department eliminated the medical section and began contracting for these services.

Source: Office of Performance Evaluations’ analysis of turnover and staffing information provided by the Office of the State Controller, Division of Human Resources, and Department of Correction.

A variety of factors may explain turnover. We surveyed a random sample of former employees who had left employment for any reason between January 1, 1998 and July 8, 1999. We asked respondents to indicate each of the reasons for which they left department employment. As shown in Table 2.2, of the 49 individuals responding to this survey, 20 (41 percent) said they left, at least in part, due to dissatisfaction with their job and 14 (29 percent) said that they left for a better job.<sup>3</sup> Additional results indicate that a higher percentage of former prison employees than central office employees cited dissatisfaction with their job as a reason for leaving the department.

In addition, department officials have offered the following explanations for the increase in turnover in the past three years.

- **Growth in the prison system.** Turnover levels may have increased because of the difficulties associated with the rapid growth in the system. The number of inmates housed in department prisons and community work centers increased from 3,232 to 3,821 (18 percent) from fiscal years 1997 to

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**Our survey of former department employees showed that most left due to job dissatisfaction or for a better job.**

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<sup>3</sup> A number of respondents in each of these categories cited pay as a factor in their decision to leave the department.

**Table 2.2: Reasons for Separation From Department of Correction Employment, by the Number and Percent of Survey Respondents**

<u>Reason</u>	<u>Number of Respondents</u>	<u>Percent of Respondents</u>
Dissatisfaction with job	20	41%
Better job	14	29
Conflict with supervisors, co-workers, or job practices	12	25
Personal reasons	10	20
Termination in entry probation	5	10
Transfer to another state agency	5	10
Disability or illness	5	10
Retirement	4	8
Resignation to avoid dismissal	3	6
Termination in promotional probation	3	6
Layoff	1	2
Moved out of area	1	2
School attendance	1	2
Termination for other reasons	1	2
Other <sup>a</sup>	10	20

N = 49

Note: Respondents were asked to indicate all reasons that applied. As a result, 49 individuals cited 97 reasons.

<sup>a</sup> Includes seven cases where no further information was provided, one case where the position was not refunded, and two cases in which provided information was insufficient to determine the reason for separation.

Source: Strategic Intelligence analysis of Office of Performance Evaluations' survey of former Department of Correction employees (1999).

1999.<sup>4</sup> To handle the increasing number of inmates, department authorized staffing increased almost 22 percent during this period.

<sup>4</sup> The Department of Correction also houses inmates in county jails and out-of-state facilities. According to the department, the total inmate population grew from 3,624 at the beginning of fiscal year 1997 to 4,404 at the end of fiscal year 1999.

- **Changes in hiring practices.** The department has made several changes in its hiring practices for correctional officers. For instance, correctional officers now begin official employment with the department prior to beginning pre-service training, rather than after this training is complete. As a result, those individuals that fail to successfully complete training are now counted as turnover whereas previously, they were not. Changes in hiring standards for correctional officers, which also occurred during this period, may also have impacted the department's turnover rate.
- **Change in the length of the probationary period for correctional officers.** The department increased the probationary period for correctional officers at the beginning of fiscal year 1998, to provide additional time to evaluate staff performance before the employee completes probation. This may have resulted in a greater number of terminations for failure to complete probation.

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**Several other factors may have impacted the department's turnover rate in recent years.**

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### **Variation in Turnover by Facility**

Most institutions experienced an increase in the rate of turnover during the past three years. To look at these changes more closely, we assessed turnover among institutions and between work locations. We found:

- **Turnover rates varied greatly among work locations, ranging from 0 to 37 percent in fiscal year 1999.**

Turnover rates for each of the department's prison facilities is presented in Table 2.3. As shown, turnover rates varied noticeably among facilities. For example, in fiscal year 1999, turnover varied from a low of 13 percent in two facilities to a high of 37 percent at the Idaho Maximum Security Institution. In each of the past three years, the Idaho State Correctional Institution and the Idaho Maximum Security Institution, both Boise area prisons, ranked in the top three for turnover at the seven state prison facilities.

Table 2.3 also shows variation in turnover rates within the Field and Community Services Division. In this division the differences in turnover rates ranged from 0 to 18 percent in fiscal year 1999. Although the overall turnover rate for the division has ranged from 11 to 13 percent during fiscal years 1997 through

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**Turnover among employees at the prisons ranged from a low of 13 percent at two facilities to a high of 37 percent at one facility.**

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**Table 2.3: Turnover Rates by Work Location, Fiscal Years 1997–1999<sup>a</sup>**

<u>Work Unit</u>	<u>1997<sup>b</sup></u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>
Central Office	16%	13%	22%
Prisons			
Idaho State Correctional Institution (ISCI)	17%	23%	23%
South Idaho Correctional Institution (SICI)	12	11	13
Idaho Correctional Institution Orofino (ICI-O)	16	24	13
Northern Idaho Correctional Institution (NICI)	16	15	25
Idaho Maximum Security Institution (IMSI)	17	23	37
St. Anthony Work Camp (SAWC)	11	14	23
Pocatello Women's Correctional Center (PWCC)	24	17	15
Overall	17%	20%	23%
Field and Community Services			
Probation and Parole			
District 1 Coeur d'Alene	4%	16%	0%
District 2 Lewiston	11	5	17
District 3 Caldwell	9	14	3
District 4 Boise	8	16	17
District 5 Twin Falls	27	12	15
District 6 Pocatello	11	5	16
District 7 Idaho Falls	28	17	9
Community Work Centers			
Nampa	8%	17%	17%
Boise	18	17	18
South Boise	–	0	0
Twin Falls	8	8	18
Idaho Falls	8	9	9
Overall	13%	13%	11%
Correctional Industries	22%	21%	21%
Agency Overall	16%	19%	20%

<sup>a</sup> Turnover figures and staff counts were determined using pay location information from the Employee Information System within the Office of the State Controller. Excludes members of the Board of Correction, Parole Board, Parole Board staff, and temporary employees.

<sup>b</sup> Excludes 46 turnovers in the department's medical section. In October 1996 the department eliminated the medical section and began contracting for these services.

Source: Office of Performance Evaluations' analysis of turnover and staffing information obtained from the Office of the State Controller, Division of Human Resources, and Department of Correction.

1999, several work locations have generally had higher turnover rates than the division average. The probation and parole districts in Boise, Twin Falls, and Idaho Falls, as well as the community work centers in Nampa and Boise, exceeded the division's average turnover rate in at least two of the three years reviewed.

According to the National Institute of Corrections 1996 study, large variations in turnover within prison systems are not uncommon.<sup>5</sup> Turnover rates may vary between facilities for a variety of reasons. The National Institute of Corrections study stresses the need to monitor variations in turnover by institution and work location and identify the reasons for differences in turnover rates. This type of effort can help in management's efforts to develop staff retention strategies.

### **Variation in Turnover by Employee Job Function**

To examine differences in turnover by job function, we focused on the two largest groups of positions within the department—security staff and probation and parole staff. Security staff include correctional officers, corporals, sergeants, lieutenants, and captains. Together these accounted for 54 percent of all active department employees as of June 30, 1999. Probation and parole staff, including pre-sentence investigators, probation and parole officers, senior probation and parole officers, drug and alcohol counselors, supervisors, and district managers made up 14 percent of active department staff. We found:

- **Turnover rates for security staff have exceeded the department's overall turnover rate, while turnover among probation and parole staff has been lower than the department average in fiscal years 1997 through 1999.**

As shown in Table 2.4, the overall turnover rate for security staff was 25 percent in fiscal year 1999. Correctional officers, which comprised about three-quarters of all security staff in fiscal year 1999, had the highest turnover rate, at 29 percent. Similarly, in fiscal year 1999, correctional officers comprised 42.3 percent of all employees department-wide, but made up 61 percent of all turnovers. However, turnover among correctional officers varied

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**Turnover was generally lower in Field and Community Services than in other areas of the department.**

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**In fiscal year 1999, the turnover rate was 25 percent for security staff and 9 percent for probation and parole staff.**

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<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections, *Managing Staff: Corrections' Most Valuable Resource* (1996), 51.

**Last year, correctional officers made up 42 percent of all department employees, but accounted for 61 percent of all turnover.**

by institution. For example, at the Idaho Maximum Security Institution, a full 50 percent of the correctional officer positions turned over last year. In contrast, only 14 percent of correctional officers at the Idaho Correctional Institution-Orofino turned over that year.

Appendix C presents turnover figures for correctional officer positions in Idaho and neighboring states for calendar year 1997, as taken from *The Correctional Yearbook 1998*. Readers should use caution when drawing conclusions from these figures, as they are self-reported. Further, states calculate turnover in varying ways.

**Table 2.4: Turnover Rates for Selected Positions, Fiscal Years 1997–1999**

<u>Position</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>
<b>Security staff<sup>a</sup></b>			
Correctional officer	21%	27%	29%
Correctional corporal	8	10	21
Correctional sergeant	9	9	5
Correctional lieutenant	0	15	9
Correctional captain	0	0	0
Weighted average	17%	23%	25%
<b>Probation and parole staff</b>			
Pre-sentence investigator	4%	22%	7%
Probation and parole officer	8	11	6
Senior probation and parole officer	11	9	8
Drug and alcohol rehabilitation counselor	14	50	57
Probation and parole section supervisor	0	10	0
Probation and parole district manager	33	17	0
Weighted average	10%	13%	9%

<sup>a</sup> Includes correctional staff in prisons, Community Work Centers, and other work units, but excludes temporary staff, such as reserve officers and correctional technicians.

Source: Office of Performance Evaluations' analysis of the Office of the State Controller, Division of Human Resources, and Department of Correction turnover and staffing information.

Table 2.4 also provides turnover information for probation and parole staff. As shown, the overall turnover rate for probation and parole staff was 9 percent in fiscal year 1999. In fiscal year 1999, probation and parole officers and senior probation and parole officers made up 70 percent of all probation and parole staff. Yet, in each of the three fiscal years under review, turnover in these two classes was 11 percent or less. On the other hand, 50 percent or more of the drug and alcohol rehabilitation counselor positions turned over in both fiscal year 1998 and 1999.<sup>6</sup>

### **Variation in Turnover by Employees' Length of Service**

We also examined turnover by employees' length of service with the department. We calculated the length of time between each employee's most recent start date and his or her separation date for employees that left the department in each of the past three years. We found:

- **Employees who had been with the department for under a year accounted for more of the overall turnover in fiscal year 1999 than in fiscal year 1997.**

As shown in Table 2.5, 27 percent of those who left their employment with the department in fiscal year 1997 had been with the department less than one year. By fiscal year 1999, 46 percent of those who left the department had worked there for less than one year. A 1996 National Institute of Corrections study of turnover at nine correctional facilities in four other states also found that turnover was highest among new staff.<sup>7</sup> According to this report, among the employees who left the nine institutions being reviewed, 48 percent had been working in corrections for a year or less.

Many of the employees who left the department within the first year were correctional officers (the entry level security staff position). In fiscal year 1999, 75 percent of those leaving the department with less than a year of service were correctional

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**In fiscal year 1999, nearly half (46 percent) of those who left the department had been with the department less than one year.**

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<sup>6</sup> There were six individuals in drug and alcohol rehabilitation counselor positions at the end of fiscal year 1998 and seven at the close of fiscal year 1999.

<sup>7</sup> National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, *Managing Staff: Corrections' Most Valuable Resource* (1996), 74.

officers. As noted previously, department officials indicated that the increase in the probationary period for correctional officers to one year may have contributed to increasing turnover rates in this position classification. Table 2.6 presents turnover information for correctional officers by length of service.

**Table 2.5: Employee Turnover by Length of Service in Department, Fiscal Years 1997–1999**

<u>Length of Service</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>
Less than 6 months	15%	29%	20%
6 months to 0.99 year	12	10	26
1 year to 2.99 years	25	27	26
3 years to 4.99 years	14	12	9
5 years to 9.99 years	26	14	13
10 years or more	9	9	6
Total	100% <sup>a</sup>	100% <sup>a</sup>	100%

<sup>a</sup> Does not sum due to rounding.

Source: Office of Performance Evaluations analysis of the Office of the State Controller, Division of Human Resources, and Department of Correction turnover and staffing information.

**Table 2.6: Correctional Officer Turnover by Length of Service in Department, Fiscal Years 1997–1999**

<u>Length of Service</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>
Less than 6 months	16%	38%	24%
6 months to 0.99 year	18	10	33
1 year to 2.99 years	31	28	23
3 years to 4.99 years	14	9	6
5 years to 9.99 years	18	11	12
10 years or more	3	4	3
Overall	100%	100%	100%

Source: Office of Performance Evaluations' analysis of the Office of the State Controller, Division of Human Resources, and Department of Correction turnover and staffing information.

## **DEPARTMENT EFFORTS TO MONITOR TURNOVER**

The department's personnel office reviews turnover within the department each year for Equal Employment Opportunity purposes. Department staff review information from the state's Employee Information System (EIS) and employee personnel files to calculate an overall turnover rate for the department, as well as turnover rates for women and minorities. As part of these efforts, department staff also calculate turnover rates for each of the seven prison facilities and other major divisions within the department. We reviewed the department's efforts to analyze turnover and found:

- **The Department of Correction has been inconsistent in its analysis of turnover data in recent years and could have more fully used available information to monitor turnover trends.**

The department has not established a standardized methodology for calculating turnover rates within the department. Without a standardized methodology, decisions about how to calculate turnover rates have been left to the staff person that prepares the reports. However, in the past four years, three different staff persons have been assigned responsibility for preparing turnover reports. They have each used somewhat different methodologies. For example:

- Temporary employees were included in turnover figures in some years and not in others.
- The types of staff included in the security staff calculation varied from year to year.

The department has not fully used available information to assess turnover trends. Each year, the department receives printouts with turnover data for the previous year from the Office of the State Controller. As noted above, department staff have used this information to examine turnover in a number of ways. However, while staff have calculated turnover rates for each of the prison facilities, they have not calculated turnover rates for other work locations within the department, such as the probation and parole district offices and the community work centers. This has restricted management's ability to monitor variations in turnover by work location. In addition, department staff have not examined turnover by job classification. As a result, information

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**The department has been inconsistent in how it calculates employee turnover.**

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**The department has not monitored turnover trends for all work locations and position classes.**

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**Further analysis of turnover trends could provide management with information needed to more effectively manage staff.**

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about turnover among correctional officers, probation and parole officers, and other job classes has not been readily available for management review.

A 1996 study by the National Institute of Corrections discusses the importance of analyzing turnover data. According to this report, “large variations [in turnover] within systems are not uncommon, and getting to the roots of those variations with the help of comprehensive data goes a long way toward building a foundation for successful methods of managing the agency’s most valuable resource [its staff].”<sup>8</sup> Therefore:

*We recommend the Department of Correction establish and document a standard methodology for calculating turnover and begin monitoring turnover for all work locations and classes of employees.*

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<sup>8</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections, *Managing Staff: Corrections’ Most Valuable Resource* (1996), 74.

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# Use of Administrative and Legal Actions to Resolve Employment-Related Concerns

## Chapter 3

In requesting this evaluation, the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee asked us to determine the number of lawsuits Department of Correction employees had filed against the department. In addition, the committee asked us to determine whether the number of employee lawsuits had recently surpassed the number of inmate lawsuits. To respond to these concerns, we reviewed the number and nature of employment-related administrative and legal actions, such as the problem solving and due process procedures, tort claims, and employment lawsuits that were used by department employees to resolve employment-related concerns during the last two to five years. We compared this information to similar information for three other state agencies that operate under the same statewide set of policy structures.

Overall, we found that the department imposed discipline at higher rates than two of the three other agencies we analyzed. Employees appealed disciplinary actions at a higher rate than two of these agencies; the department's action was overturned in 3 of 11 cases heard, and, in each case, the department appealed unsuccessfully to the next level. We also found that inmates named the Department of Correction in lawsuits 28 times more often than did employees during fiscal years 1994 through 1999. Also, during fiscal years 1994 through 1999, the Office of Insurance Management paid an average of about \$16,700 on four Department of Correction employment-related claims that incurred loss.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE AND LEGAL ACTIONS USED BY DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION EMPLOYEES**

There is a variety of actions through which employment-related complaints and grievances may be addressed. In general terms, these grievance resolution mechanisms fall into two broad

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**We gathered information about the number and nature of employment-related grievances and lawsuits involving department employees.**

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**A variety of administrative and legal mechanisms may be used to address employment-related concerns.**

categories: administrative actions and legal actions. For classified employees, available administrative actions include a problem solving process, the due process procedure, and the filing of a complaint with the Idaho Human Rights Commission. Legal actions include tort claims filings and lawsuits. Figure 3.1 illustrates the various administrative and legal actions and the purposes of each. It also specifies which party (employee or agency) may initiate each action listed. Note that employees sometimes use more than one available action at the same time, or use an alternative action if they are not satisfied with the result of other actions pursued.

**Figure 3.1: Administrative and Legal Actions Available to Classified Employees**

Administrative Actions		Legal Actions	
<u>Remedy</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Remedy</u>	<u>Purpose</u>
Problem solving process	To resolve non-disciplinary matters with the lowest degree of formality. (Initiated by employee)	Tort claims	To ensure the state is notified of complaints and permit settlement without resorting to a court of law. (Initiated by employee)
Due process procedure	To ensure the employee is provided an opportunity to respond to proposed disciplinary actions. (Initiated by agency)	Lawsuits	To permit adjudication of complaints in a court of law. (Initiated by employee)
Administrative appeals	To ensure discipline is imposed for good cause and is based on substantial and competent evidence, and to ensure employees are not denied rights or benefits to which they are entitled by law. (Initial appeal filed by employees, subsequent steps by certain employees or agency)		
Complaints to the Human Rights Commission	To ensure employees are not subjected to unlawful discrimination. (Initiated by employee)		

Source: IDAHO CODE §§ 6-901–925, 67-5315–5318, and 67-5901–5912 (1999).

## Administrative Actions

Since 1997, Idaho Code has mandated that state agencies adopt a two-track process for resolving employee grievances and imposing employment-related discipline.<sup>1</sup> As noted in Figure 3.1, (page 32) the “problem solving” track is intended to address non-disciplinary, job-related matters and the “due process” track affords employees an opportunity to challenge disciplinary actions being proposed by their employers. Either of these actions may be appealed to the Idaho Personal Commission in many instances. As shown, employees may also file a complaint with the Idaho Human Rights Commission if they believe they have been the subject of unlawful discrimination.

### *Problem Solving Process*

The problem solving process is intended to resolve non-disciplinary, employment-related issues with the least amount of formality and at the lowest organizational level. Under a process generally set out for classified employees statewide, when a grievance of this nature arises, the employee first must make a reasonable effort to resolve the problem with his or her immediate supervisor. If the problem cannot be resolved, the employee may enter the problem solving process. Figure 3.2 includes an overview of this process.

We reviewed the problem solving requests filed by Department of Correction employees in fiscal years 1998 and 1999 and found:

- **On average, three percent of Department of Correction employees filed problem solving requests each of the past two fiscal years.**

In the two years since the problem solving process was established, 82 department employees (an average of about 3 percent of department employees per year) filed 100 problem solving requests.<sup>2</sup> This equates to an annual average rate of about 3.8 requests per 100 employees. The requests involved issues such as reprimands, grooming standards, compensation, or promotions. As shown in Table 3.1 (page 35), 35 of the requests

<sup>1</sup> IDAHO CODE § 67-5315 (1999).

<sup>2</sup> Some employees filed more than one request.

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**Administrative actions include the problem solving process, the due process procedure, and the filing of human rights complaints.**

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**Employees may use the problem solving process to address non-disciplinary, employment-related issues.**

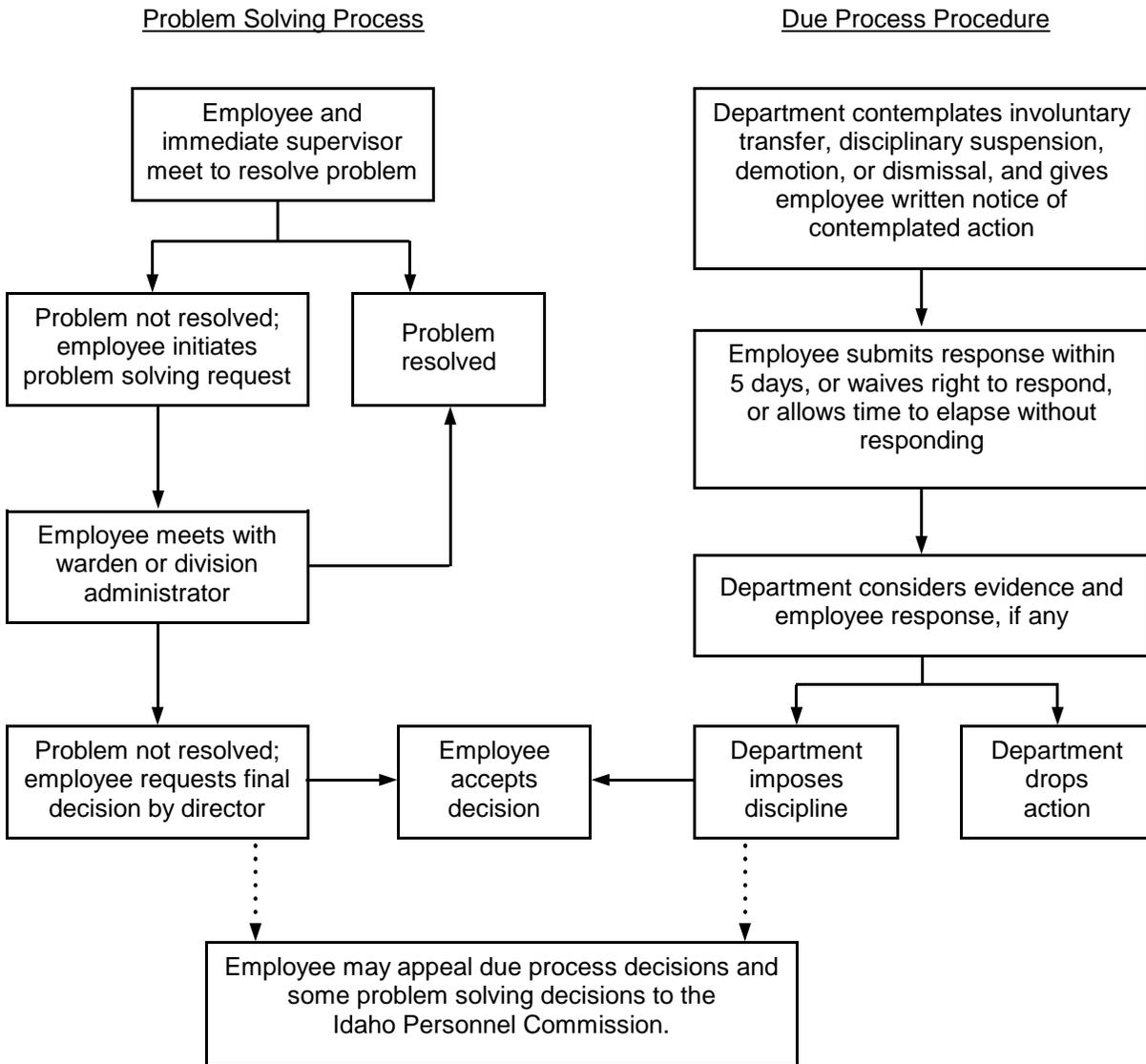
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**In fiscal years 1998 and 1999, 82 department employees filed 100 problem solving requests.**

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**Figure 3.2: Department of Correction Problem Solving Process and Due Process Procedure, 1999**



Source: Office of Performance Evaluations' analysis of IDAHO CODE § 67-5315 (1999), IDAHO ADMIN. CODE, July 1, 1998, Vol. 2, IDAPA 15.04.01.200, and Idaho Department of Correction, *Policy and Procedure Manual*, Sec. 203, "Problem Solving Policy and Procedure" (1997).

**Table 3.1: Summary of Department of Correction Employee Problem Solving Requests and Outcomes, Fiscal Years 1998–1999**

<u>Issue Involved</u>	<u>Number Filed</u>	<u>Outcomes</u>			
		<u>Granted or Compromised<sup>a</sup></u>	<u>Denied</u>	<u>Withdrawn or Dismissed</u>	<u>Could Not Be Identified<sup>b</sup></u>
Reprimands	30	7	13	7	3
Compensation/promotion	21	13	4	3	1
Grooming standards	19	3	13	3	0
Assignment	10	4	6	0	0
Evaluation	6	3	0	2	1
Working conditions	2	0	2	0	0
Other <sup>c</sup>	<u>12</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>
Total	100	35	41	16	8

<sup>a</sup> Compromised means that an issue was resolved through negotiations between management and employee.

<sup>b</sup> Department of Correction logs indicate that issue was addressed but the outcome could not be determined.

<sup>c</sup> Includes cases where employees allege improper documents in their personnel file, training issues, employees who had heard they were under investigation and wanted clarification, and allegations that problem-solving requests were not answered timely.

Source: Office of Performance Evaluations' analysis of Department of Correction data.

resulted in granting the employees' requests or in a compromise between management and the employee. In 41 cases, the request was denied.

### *Due Process Procedure*

Unlike the problem solving process, the due process procedure is initiated by the agency. Idaho Code requires that before an involuntary transfer or disciplinary dismissal, demotion, or suspension may become effective, the affected employee must be given notice and the opportunity to be heard. The Division of Human Resources keeps these notices on file, and records the department's final action in cases where they have been notified. Figure 3.2 (page 34) also illustrates this procedure.

To determine how frequently the department has taken disciplinary action under this procedure in comparison to selected

**The due process procedure allows employees to respond to or challenge department-initiated disciplinary actions.**

agencies, we reviewed the notices of contemplated actions and all available outcomes filed with the Division Human of Resources for fiscal years 1998 and 1999.

We found:

**In fiscal years 1998 and 1999, the department took formal disciplinary action against employees 34 times.**

- **During fiscal years 1998 and 1999, the Department of Correction imposed discipline at a higher rate than two of the three other state agencies we analyzed.**

Table 3.2 shows the number of disciplinary actions the Department of Correction and three other state agencies each took during fiscal years 1998 and 1999. During this two-year period, the Department of Correction averaged 17 disciplinary actions, representing 1.27 disciplinary actions per 100 employees annually.<sup>3</sup> The Department of Health and Welfare had a lower rate of 0.81 per 100 employees. The Idaho Transportation

<sup>3</sup> To account for differences in the number of employees of the agencies we compared, we computed rates per 100 employees using the average number of full-time positions authorized each year and the average number of disciplinary actions taken during the same years. We used the same method to compute rates for human rights complaints and legal actions later in this chapter.

**Table 3.2: Number and Rate of Disciplinary Actions for Department of Correction and Comparative Agencies, Fiscal Years 1998–1999**

<u>Department</u>	<u>Annual Average Number of Disciplinary Actions<sup>a</sup></u>	<u>Average Rate per 100 Employees</u>	<u>Annual Average Number of Dismissals</u>	<u>Average Rate per 100 Employees</u>
Correction	17.0	1.27	5.5	0.41
Health and Welfare	29.0	0.81	14.0	0.39
Law Enforcement	7.0	1.31	1.0	0.20
Transportation	7.5	0.43	1.0	0.06

<sup>a</sup> Includes dismissals, demotions, and suspensions. Does not include letters of reprimand.

Source: Office of Performance Evaluations' analysis of Division of Human Resources and Department of Correction data.

Department was also lower at 0.43 per 100 employees respectively. On the other hand, the Department of Law Enforcement had a rate of 1.31 per 100 employees.

Of available disciplinary actions, the Department of Correction dismissed employees at a higher rate than each of the other agencies we examined. Table 3.2 also shows that the Department of Correction dismissed an average of 5.5 employees each year during fiscal years 1998 and 1999, a rate of 0.41 per 100 employees annually. This is higher than the average annual rate of dismissals for the Departments of Health and Welfare (0.39), Law Enforcement (0.20), and the Idaho Transportation Department (0.06).

In addition to these disciplinary actions, one Department of Correction employee resigned in lieu of discipline. By comparison, 17 Department of Health and Welfare employees, two Department of Law Enforcement employees, and two Idaho Transportation Department employees resigned in lieu of discipline.

#### *Appeals of Department Decisions on Problem Solving Requests and Disciplinary Actions*

Idaho Code provides two levels of appeal to the Personnel Commission, plus a provision to appeal the Personnel Commission's decision to the district court.<sup>4</sup> Classified employees who have completed the problem solving process may appeal the department's decision if the decision involves the denial of a right or benefit to which the employee is entitled by law. Classified employees who have completed their probationary period may appeal disciplinary actions to the Personnel Commission. Figure 3.3 sets out the appeal process.

At the first level, appeals are assigned by the Idaho Personnel Commission to a hearing officer who reviews evidence, hears testimony, and makes a decision. Where the action in dispute was a dismissal, demotion, or suspension, and the hearing officer determines that proper cause for the action did not exist or the action was taken by reason of illegal discrimination, the hearing officer must order the reinstatement of the employee.<sup>5</sup> The

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**During this two-year period, the department dismissed 11 employees and 1 resigned in lieu of discipline.**

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**Employees can appeal the department's problem solving decisions and disciplinary actions.**

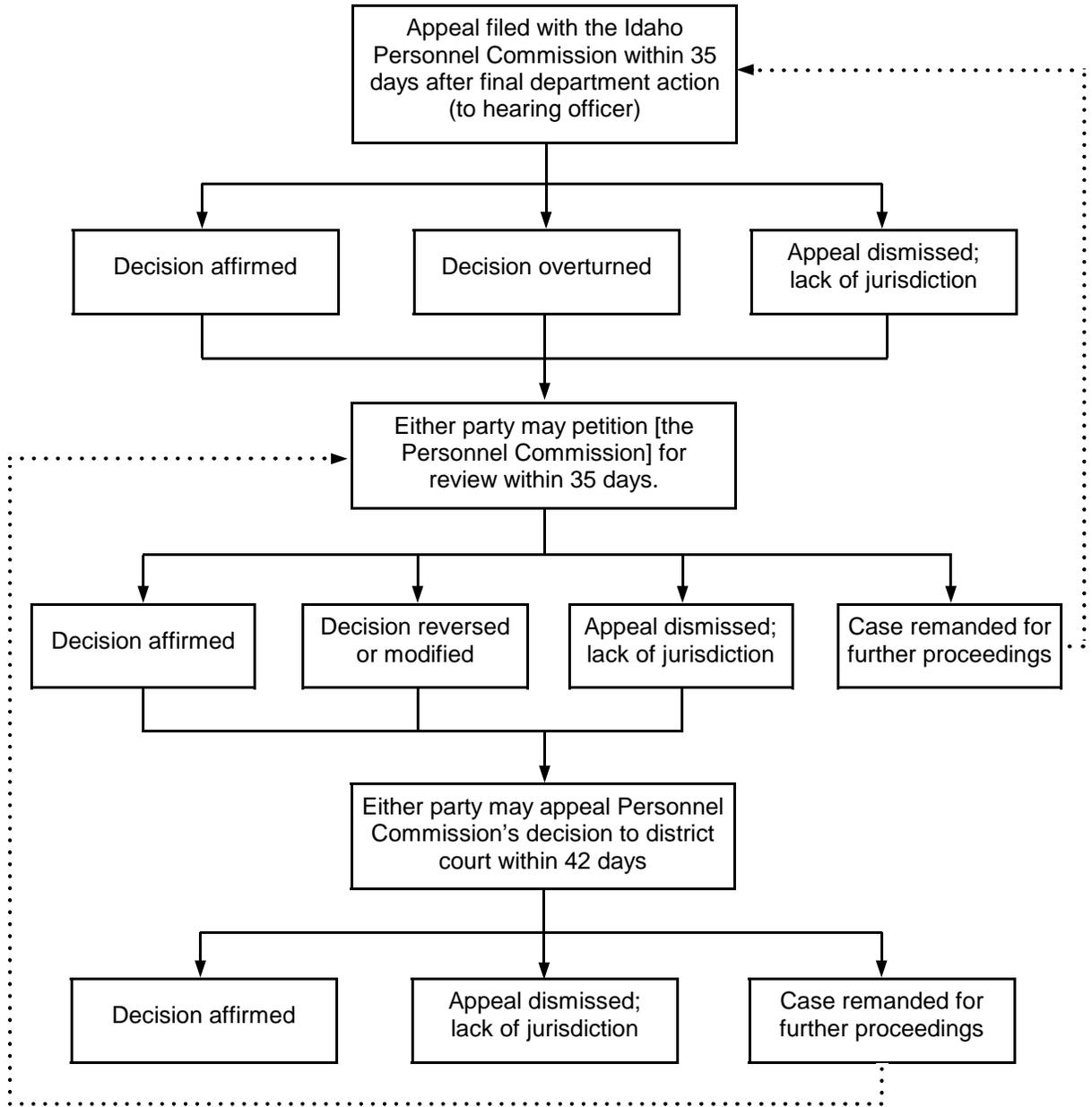
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<sup>4</sup> IDAHO CODE § 67-5316-5318 (1999).

<sup>5</sup> IDAHO CODE § 67-5316 (1999).

**Figure 3.3: Appeals of Problem Solving Process and Due Process Procedure Decisions**



Source: Office of Performance Evaluations' analysis of IDAHO CODE § 67-5316-5318 (1999).

hearing officer may order reimbursement of attorney fees and costs to the employee. A hearing officer may also find that the appeal is not within the jurisdiction of the Personnel Commission and dismiss the appeal.

As Figure 3.3 also shows, either party may petition for review of a hearing officer's decision to the Personnel Commission itself. Finally, parties may appeal the Personnel Commission's decision to the district court. This appeal is not a lawsuit, but instead is a focused review of the commission's decision.

We reviewed Division of Human Resources records to determine how often problem solving decisions were appealed. Of 100 requests filed during fiscal years 1998 and 1999, employees appealed 7. The hearing officer acting for the Personnel Commission dismissed 6 of the 7 employee appeals because the commission lacked statutory authority to consider them. In the 7th case, the employee withdrew his appeal.

We also examined how the number of employee appeals of disciplinary actions compared with those of three other state agencies. We found:

- **Department of Correction employees appealed disciplinary actions at a higher rate than two of the three agencies we studied and at a lower rate than the third agency during fiscal years 1998 and 1999.**

During fiscal years 1998 and 1999, Department of Correction employees appealed an average of about 29 percent of disciplinary actions taken. During this same period, Department of Law Enforcement employees appealed about 38 percent of their disciplinary actions. On the other hand, 24 percent of Department of Health and Welfare and 13 percent of Idaho Transportation Department disciplinary actions were appealed during this same two-year period.

To determine the outcome of Department of Correction employee appeals, we examined Idaho Personnel Commission hearing officers' decisions on 20 appeals filed by department employees and decided during fiscal years 1998 and 1999.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Because the appeal process is lengthy, many of the appeals of disciplinary actions imposed during fiscal years 1998 and 1999 were still undecided. As a result, we analyzed the cases that were *decided* during this two-year period.

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**In fiscal years 1998 and 1999, employees appealed the department's decisions on problem solving requests seven percent of the time.**

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**Employees appealed 29 percent of the department's disciplinary actions during the same period.**

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**The department's disciplinary actions were overturned in 3 of 11 cases decided by IPC hearing officers in fiscal years 1998 and 1999.**

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We found:

- **During fiscal years 1998 and 1999, the Department of Correction's disciplinary action was overturned in 3 of 11 cases decided by hearing officers appointed by the Idaho Personnel Commission.**

As Figure 3.4 shows, Idaho Personnel Commission hearing officers decided on 11 of the 13 disciplinary actions appealed by Department of Correction employees.<sup>7</sup> In 3 of the 11, the department's action was reversed, employees were ordered reinstated, and, in some instances, were awarded back pay, benefits, and attorney's fees. The department's disciplinary action was upheld in 7 other cases. One appeal was dismissed, which effectively upheld the department's action.

In summary, hearing officers rendered decisions on 17 of the 20 cases during fiscal years 1998 and 1999. Of these 17, a total of 8 were petitioned for review to the Personnel Commission (5 by employees and 3 by the department). Of the Personnel Commission's actions on these eight, five were appealed to the district court (three by the department and two by employees).

We found:

- **During fiscal years 1998 and 1999, the Department of Correction appealed each case in which the Idaho Personnel Commission overturned its disciplinary action, and the department's appeals were unsuccessful in every case.**

As shown in Figure 3.4, in all cases where the hearing officer set aside the department's disciplinary action, the Personnel Commission upheld the hearing officer's decision. The district court also upheld the hearing officer's decision in one case. Two cases are still awaiting the court's decision.

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**The IPC dismissed most appeals of department problem solving decisions due to lack of jurisdiction.**

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<sup>7</sup> Hearing officers' determinations were not made in the remaining 2 cases because they were withdrawn or settled before the appeal was heard. One of these resulted in the reinstatement of the employee and payment of back pay and benefits.

**Figure 3.4: Outcomes of Appeals to the Idaho Personnel Commission and District Court, Decided During Fiscal Years 1998–1999**

<u>Hearing Officer Decision</u>	<u>Petition for Review</u>		<u>Appeal to District Court</u>	
	<u>Filed By</u>	<u>Outcome</u>	<u>Filed By</u>	<u>Outcome</u>
<b>Discipline Cases</b>				
Discipline affirmed	–	–	–	–
Discipline affirmed	–	–	–	–
Discipline affirmed	–	–	–	–
Discipline affirmed	–	–	–	–
Discipline affirmed	–	–	–	–
Discipline affirmed	Employee	Affirmed <sup>b</sup>	–	–
Discipline affirmed	Employee	Affirmed <sup>b</sup>	Employee	Pending
Discipline set aside	Department	Affirmed <sup>b</sup>	Department	Pending
Discipline set aside	Department	Affirmed <sup>b</sup>	Department	Affirmed <sup>b</sup>
Discipline set aside	Department	Affirmed <sup>b</sup>	Department	Pending
Dismissed <sup>a</sup>	Employee	Affirmed <sup>b</sup>	Employee	Pending
Settled (discipline set aside)	–	–	–	–
Withdrawn by employee	–	–	–	–
<b>Problem Solving Requests</b>				
Dismissed <sup>a</sup>	–	–	–	–
Dismissed <sup>a</sup>	–	–	–	–
Dismissed <sup>a</sup>	–	–	–	–
Dismissed <sup>a</sup>	–	–	–	–
Dismissed <sup>a</sup>	Employee	Affirmed <sup>b</sup>	–	–
Dismissed <sup>a</sup>	Employee	Affirmed <sup>b</sup>	–	–
Withdrawn by employee	–	–	–	–

<sup>a</sup> Personnel Commission cited lack of jurisdiction.

<sup>b</sup> “Affirmed” means that the earlier decision was upheld. When discipline was “affirmed,” the hearing officer upheld the department’s decision. On a Petition for Review, the Personnel Commission upheld the hearing officer’s decision. On an appeal to the district court, the court upheld the commission’s decision.

Source: Office of Performance Evaluations’ analysis of Division of Human Resources and Department of Correction data.

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**Employees may file allegations of unlawful discrimination with the Human Rights Commission.**

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*Human Rights Complaints*

Under the Idaho Human Rights Act, any person who believes he or she is the victim of unlawful discrimination based on gender, race, religion, national origin, age, or disability may file a complaint with the Idaho Human Rights Commission.<sup>8</sup> Figure 3.5 (page 43) provides an overview of the complaint resolution process.

We reviewed information about the 16 complaints employees filed with the Idaho Human Rights Commission against the Department of Correction between July 1994 and June 1999. Three of these cases were pending as of July 1999. We found:

- **Over the last five years, the Idaho Human Rights Commission has found probable cause that discrimination occurred in 1 of 13 employees cases against the department that have been decided .**

As shown in Table 3.3 (page 44), of the 13 that have been decided, 1 employee's complaint resulted in a finding of probable cause that discrimination had occurred. A full 9 cases resulted in a finding of no probable cause, and the others had varying outcomes.

We compared the annual rates at which human rights complaints were filed against the Department of Correction and two other state agencies during the last five fiscal years.<sup>9</sup> We found:

- **Department of Correction employees filed human rights complaints at a higher annual rate than one agency we used for comparison purposes and a lower rate than one other during fiscal years 1995 through 1999.**

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**Department employees filed 16 human rights complaints in fiscal years 1994–1999.**

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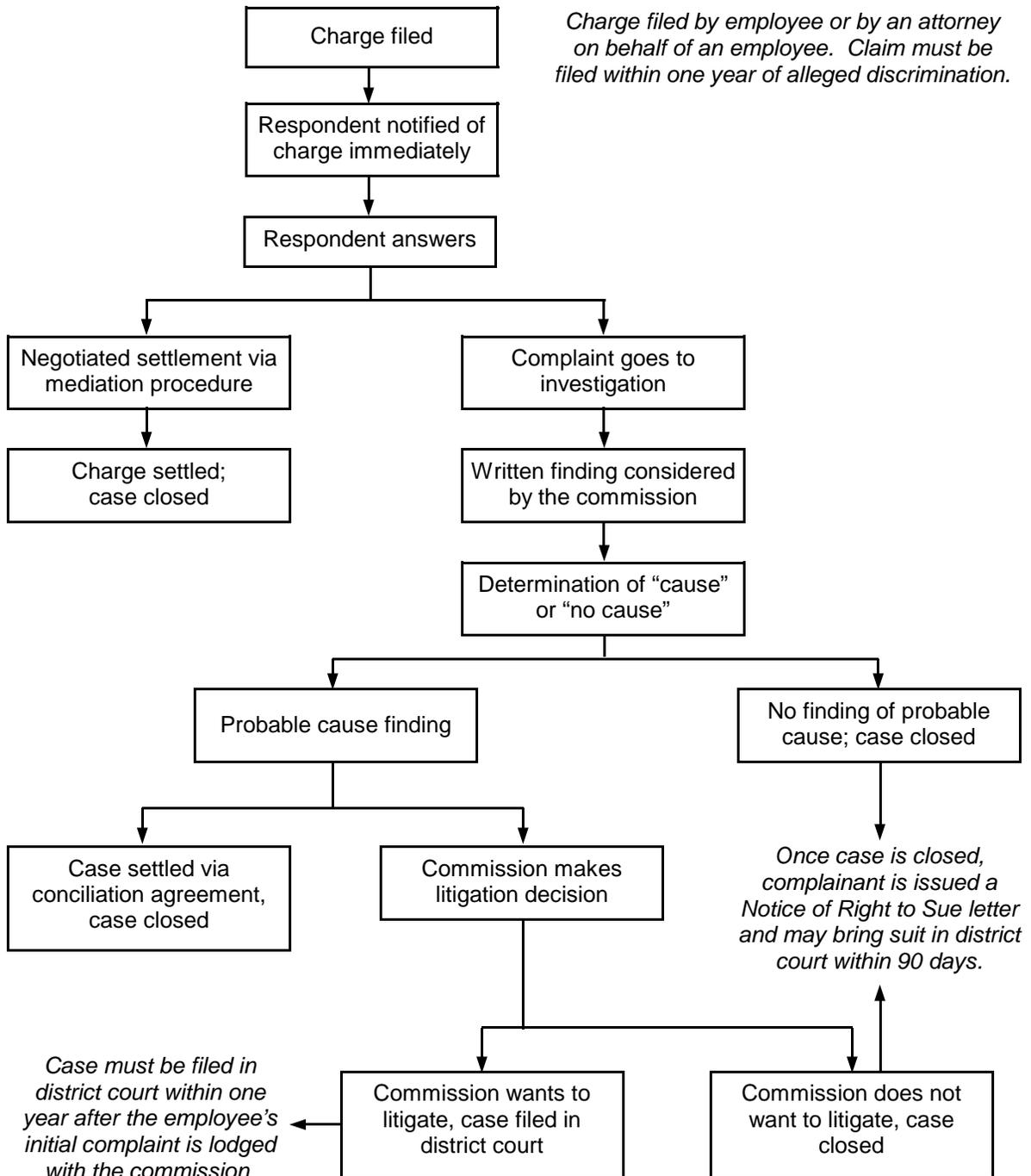
As noted, Department of Correction employees filed 16 complaints with the Idaho Human Rights Commission between July 1994 and June 1999. This is equivalent to a rate of 0.27 per 100 employees each year. By comparison, Department of Law Enforcement employees filed complaints at an annual rate of 0.37 per 100 employees and Idaho Transportation Department employees filed at an annual rate of 0.06 per 100 employees during the same period.

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<sup>8</sup> IDAHO CODE § 67-5901–5912 (1999).

<sup>9</sup> This information was not available for the Department of Health and Welfare, the third agency with which we made most comparisons.

**Figure 3.5: Idaho Human Rights Commission Complaint Filing Through Resolution**



Source: Idaho Human Rights Commission, 1999

**Table 3.3: Resolution of Complaints Filed With the Idaho Human Rights Commission by Department of Correction Employees, Fiscal Years 1994–1999**

<u>Idaho Human Rights Commission Determination</u>	<u>Number</u>
No probable cause to believe discrimination occurred	9
Probable cause to believe discrimination occurred; unsuccessful attempts to conciliate <sup>a</sup>	1
No subject matter jurisdiction	1
Complainant withdrew charge	1
Complainant obtained <i>Notice of Right to Sue</i> <sup>a</sup>	1
Currently in investigation	<u>3</u>
Total Cases	16

<sup>a</sup> Involves the same employee.

Source: Idaho Human Rights Commission.

### Legal Actions

#### **Legal actions include tort claims and lawsuits.**

As noted previously, employees may also use legal actions to address employment-related concerns. In the case of tort claims, the Idaho Tort Claims Act requires that employees and other individuals follow certain procedures for filing tort claims against the State of Idaho.<sup>10</sup> The process for filing and resolving a tort claim is outlined in Figure 3.6.<sup>11</sup>

#### *Tort Claims*

We reviewed the number and type of employment-related tort claims filed by employees against the Department of Correction for fiscal years 1994 through 1999, and compared these with the number and type of tort claim filings against the Department of Law Enforcement, Department of Health and Welfare, and the Idaho Transportation Department.

<sup>10</sup> *Idaho Tort Claims Act*, IDAHO CODE § 6-901–929 (1999).

<sup>11</sup> A tort claim is a claim for money damages and is intended to give the state an opportunity to investigate and, when appropriate, settle a claim before a lawsuit is filed.

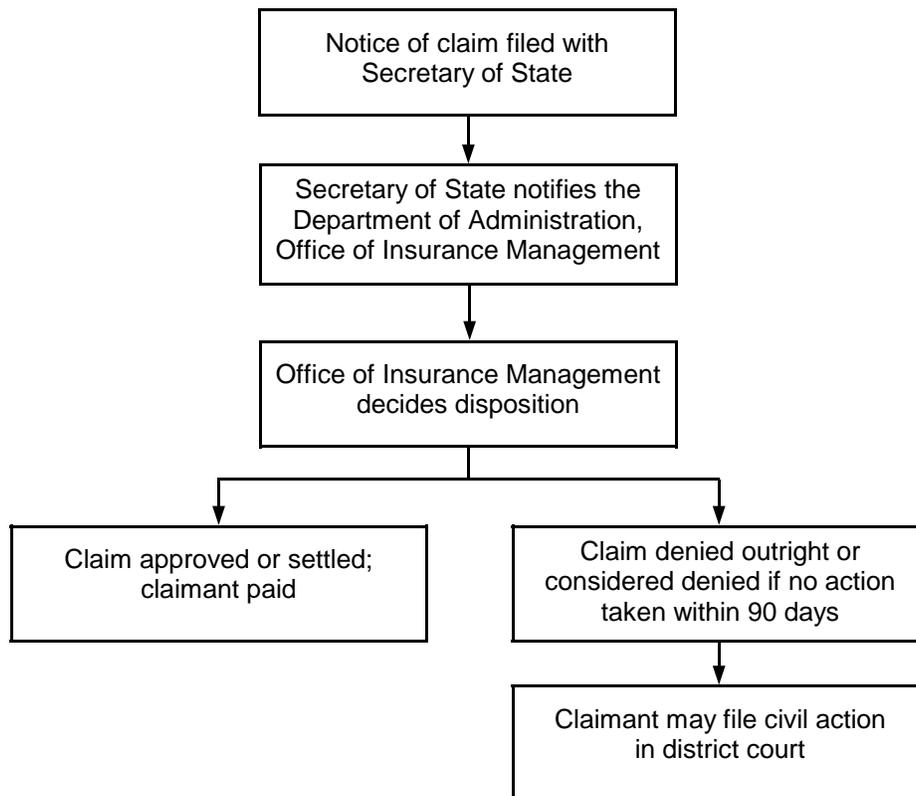
We found:

- **During fiscal years 1994 through 1999, Department of Correction employees filed more employment-related tort claims than did employees in the three other agencies we reviewed.**

The Department of Correction was named as a defendant in 13 employment-related tort claims during the last five fiscal years. In comparison, the Department of Health and Welfare was named in eight, the Idaho Transportation Department was named in ten, and the Department of Law Enforcement was named in one.

**Department employees filed 13 employment-related tort claims from fiscal years 1994–1999.**

**Figure 3.6: Tort Claim Filing Through Resolution**



Source: *Idaho Tort Claims Act*, IDAHO CODE § 6-901–929 (1999).

*Employee Lawsuits Against the Department*

Employees may also initiate employment-related lawsuits. To determine the number of employment-related lawsuits filed against the Department of Correction and three comparison agencies in the last five years, we reviewed data provided by each agency, the Office of the Secretary of State, the Office of Insurance Management, and the Civil Litigation Division within the Office of the Attorney General.

**During the last five years, department employees filed five employment-related lawsuits against the department, with most alleging wrongful termination.**

We found:

- **During fiscal years 1994 through 1999, Department of Correction employees filed employment-related lawsuits at an annual rate higher than two agencies and equal to one agency we reviewed.**

Table 3.4 shows the total number of employment-related lawsuits filed against each department during fiscal years 1994 through 1999. As reflected in the table, employees of the Department of Correction filed lawsuits at a higher rate than employees of the Departments of Law Enforcement and Health and Welfare, and at a rate equal to Idaho Transportation Department employees. In the Department of Correction’s case, four of the five suits alleged wrongful terminations, and the remaining case alleged human rights violations. Of these, one resulted in a judgment in favor of the department, one was settled, and three are still pending.

**Table 3.4: Employment-Related Lawsuits, Fiscal Years 1994–1999**

<u>Department</u>	<u>Number of Lawsuits</u>	<u>Annualized Rate of Lawsuits Per 100 Employees</u>
Correction	5	.07
Health and Welfare	6	.03
Law Enforcement	1	.03
Transportation	7	.07

Source: Office of Performance Evaluations’ analysis of data provided by the Secretary of State, Department of Correction, Department of Health and Welfare, Department of Law Enforcement, Idaho Transportation Department, and U.S. District Court, case search, visited September 14, 1999 <[www.id.uscourts.gov/wconnect/wc.dll?usdc\\_racer~get\\_case\\_main](http://www.id.uscourts.gov/wconnect/wc.dll?usdc_racer~get_case_main)>.

*Employee Versus Inmate Lawsuits Filed Against the Department*

In the request for this evaluation, we were specifically asked if the number of employee lawsuits had recently surpassed the number of inmate lawsuits. We reviewed information from the Office of Insurance Management, Office of the Secretary of State, and the Department of Correction. We found:

- **During fiscal years 1994 through 1999, inmates named the Department of Correction in lawsuits at least 28 times more often than did employees.**

As Table 3.5 shows, inmates filed a total of 140 state lawsuits naming the Department of Correction as defendant during fiscal years 1994 through 1999. This total does not include federal lawsuits because we were unable to accurately identify all federal lawsuits by inmates. In contrast, we identified a total of five lawsuits filed by department employees during this same period. The number of employee-filed lawsuits includes both state and federal actions.

*State Losses on Employment-Related Claims*

As the state’s insurer, the Office of Insurance Management maintains data on potential claims, claims, and lawsuits that may require payment. We reviewed employment-related claim loss data, including payments to claimants and legal defense costs for

**During the last five years, inmates filed 28 times more lawsuits against the department than did employees.**

**Table 3.5: Number of Employee and Inmate Lawsuits Naming the Department of Correction, Fiscal Years 1994–1999**

<u>Claim/Lawsuit Type</u>	<u>Number by Employees<sup>a</sup></u>	<u>Number by Inmates<sup>b</sup></u>
State lawsuits	4	140
Federal lawsuits	1	unknown

<sup>a</sup> Includes tort lawsuits and civil rights complaints.

<sup>b</sup> Includes writs of habeas corpus, civil rights violations, and post conviction relief.

Source: Office of Performance Evaluations’ analysis of data from the Secretary of State, Department of Correction, and U.S. District Court, case search, visited September 14, 1999 <[www.id.uscourts.gov/wconnect/wc.dll?usdc\\_racer~get\\_case\\_main](http://www.id.uscourts.gov/wconnect/wc.dll?usdc_racer~get_case_main)>.

**The state makes payments on some employment-related claims.**

fiscal years 1994 through 1999 for the Department of Correction and three other agencies. We found:

- **During fiscal years 1994 through 1999, the Office of Insurance Management paid an average of \$16,737 on four Department of Correction employment-related claims that incurred loss.**

Table 3.6 shows the average Office of Insurance Management payment per claim that incurred loss for the four agencies over the last five years. Note that these sums do not include costs arising from the reversal of employment-related disciplinary actions, such as back pay and benefits, attorney fees, and reimbursement for other costs of pursuing an administrative appeal.

**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION EMPLOYEES USING MORE THAN ONE ADMINISTRATIVE OR LEGAL ACTION**

We reviewed the employees involved in each administrative and legal action to determine the extent to which the same employees were involved in more than one process.

**Table 3.6: Office of Insurance Management Payments on Employment-Related Claims With Loss, Fiscal Years 1994–1999**

<u>Department</u>	<u>Number of Claims With Loss<sup>a</sup></u>	<u>Total Paid</u>	<u>Average Paid Per Claim With Loss</u>
Correction	4	\$ 66,949	\$16,737
Health and Welfare	6	422,629	70,438
Law Enforcement	1	6,492	6,492
Transportation <sup>b</sup>	6	78,945	13,158

<sup>a</sup> Includes tort claims and lawsuits.

<sup>b</sup> Includes one claim in which the initial claim was filed in fiscal year 1993, but the subsequent lawsuit was filed in fiscal year 1994.

Source: Office of Performance Evaluations' analysis of Office of Insurance Management claims data.

We found:

- **Of 123 employees using department or employee-initiated administrative and legal actions, 11 used more than one to address one or more employment-related concerns in fiscal years 1998 and 1999.**

In fiscal years 1998 and 1999, 82 employees filed problem solving requests, 9 filed human rights complaints, and 3 filed lawsuits.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, 40 employees were notified of contemplated disciplinary action under the due process procedure.<sup>13</sup> As shown in Figure 3.7, 11 employees, or about nine percent of all those involved in these actions, were involved in more than one action. The greatest overlap was between the problem solving process and due process procedure. Specifically:

- Seven employees filed problem solving requests and were also subject to the department's due process procedure.
- Two employees were the subject of the department's due process procedures and then filed lawsuits.
- Two employees filed both problem solving requests and complaints with the Idaho Human Rights Commission.

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**Most employees used only one administrative or legal action to resolve an employment-related concern.**

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<sup>12</sup> Department employees filed 6 other human rights complaints and 2 lawsuits in fiscal years 1994 through 1997. These cases were not included in our review of overlap because comparable information in employee grievances was not available for those years.

<sup>13</sup> Three employees were later subject to the due process procedure a second time, bringing the total of due process notifications to 43. Ultimately, 7 of these were not disciplined or disciplinary actions other than suspension, demotion, or dismissal were imposed. Accordingly, these 7 were not included in our analysis of disciplinary actions.

**Table 3.7: Department of Correction Employees Involved in More Than One Administrative or Legal Action, by Employee, Fiscal Years 1998–1999**

<u>Employee<sup>a</sup></u>	<u>Administrative Actions</u>			<u>Legal Actions</u>
	<u>Problem Solving Requests</u>	<u>Due Process Actions</u>	<u>Human Rights Commission Complaints</u>	<u>Lawsuits</u>
No. 1		X <sup>b</sup>		X
No. 2	X <sup>c</sup>		X	
No. 3	X	X		
No. 4	X <sup>c</sup>	X <sup>b</sup>		
No. 5	X	X		
No. 6	X	X		
No. 7	X	X <sup>c</sup>		
No. 8	X	X		
No. 9	X		X	
No. 10	X	X <sup>b</sup>		
No. 11		X <sup>b</sup>		X

<sup>a</sup> For confidentiality purposes, numbers have been substituted for employee names.

<sup>b</sup> Employees appealed department's due process actions.

<sup>c</sup> Employee filed more than one of the designated actions.

Source: Office of Performance Evaluations' analysis of Department of Correction, Division of Human Resources, Human Rights Commission, and Office of Insurance Management data.

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# Explaining and Improving Employee Morale and Job Satisfaction

## Chapter 4

As described in Chapter 1, morale in the Department of Correction is low and job satisfaction is only moderately higher. This chapter discusses five factors that affect department employee morale and job satisfaction and the relative impact of these factors, and makes recommendations to constructively address the problems identified. The factors identified may also help to explain employee turnover (Chapter 2), and the number and nature of administrative and legal actions employees use to resolve employment-related concerns. (Chapter 3).

Overall, we conclude that the greatest impact on employee morale and job satisfaction is likely to come from efforts in improving aspects of employee management and supervision and the interaction between co-workers. The next greatest impact is likely to come from making similar improvements in levels of compensation. Improving training or changing specific departmental policies is not as likely to result in improvements to morale, although these efforts could have a positive impact by helping to demonstrate genuine attention to employee needs. We conclude with four recommendations for the improvement of the department's operations related to the issues discussed.

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**A variety of factors appear to impact employee morale and job satisfaction within the department.**

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### BACKGROUND

We interviewed current and former employees and reviewed available documentation to consider the problems employees identified, the potential causes of these problems, and potential solutions. In our survey of the department's work environment, we asked a number of questions about basic employment practices, employee/supervisor interactions, employees' ability to

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**We used factor analysis to determine what had the greatest impact on employee morale and job satisfaction.**

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air ideas and voice concerns without fear, and the resolution to employee concerns.<sup>1</sup>

Given low employee morale and moderate job satisfaction, we analyzed survey responses for correlations that would explain what would have the greatest impact on morale, job satisfaction, and work motivation, and would, therefore, present the greatest opportunity for positive change.<sup>2</sup> This analysis identified five factors, which are groupings of survey questions (in order of impact on morale): management and supervision, co-worker interaction, compensation, training, and departmental policies. These factors and their relative impact on morale, job satisfaction, and work motivation (“outcomes”) are shown in Figure 4.1.

In the following, we describe each of the factors and how they might be addressed to improve morale. We have also added quotes from employee interviews and correspondence that are representative of what we learned from employees overall. Summary survey results, from which the percentages and average scores are drawn, are included as Appendix A.

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**Employee concerns about management and supervision within the department most strongly relate to low morale.**

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### **FACTOR 1: MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISION**

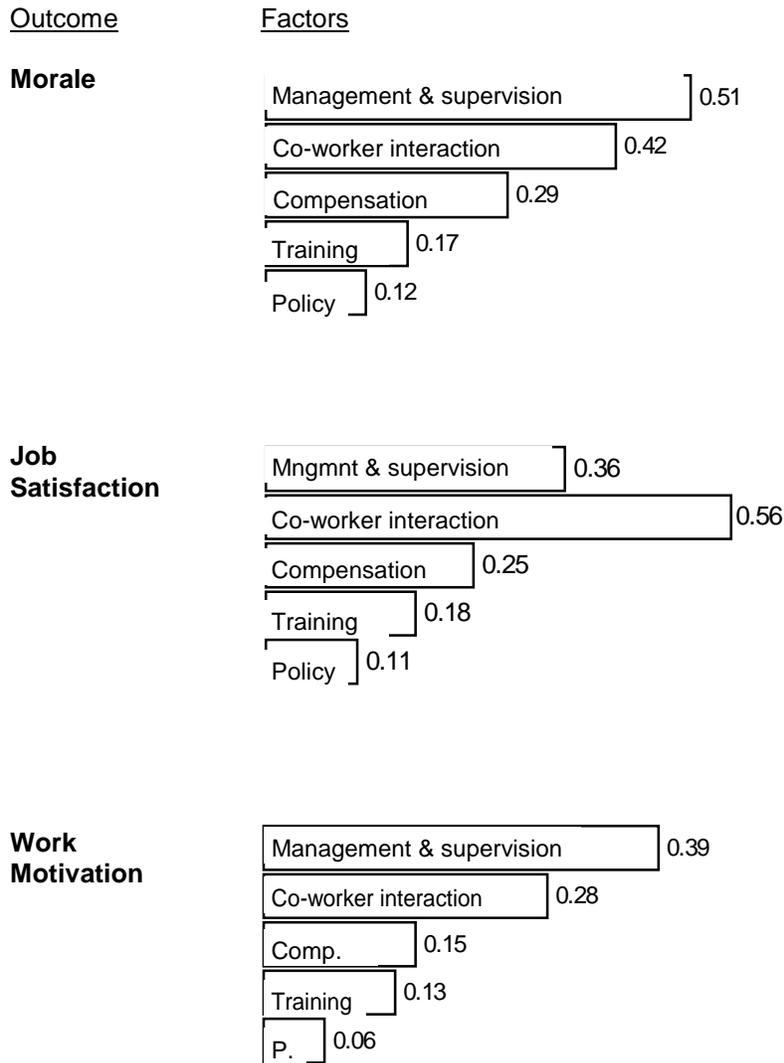
Compared to the four other factors measured, employee concerns with various aspects of management and supervision within the department most strongly relate to low employee morale. Figure 4.1 shows that each of the identified factors has a varying impact on morale, job satisfaction, and work motivation. Figure 4.2 shows how the factor called “management and supervision” relates to each of the outcomes. The thick black line illustrates that it is more strongly related to employee morale than to either of the other two outcomes.

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<sup>1</sup> Many of these areas of concern were brought to our attention during early interactions with the department’s wardens and senior staff as well as current and former employees who initiated contact with our office.

<sup>2</sup> We used a statistical method called factor analysis. This method takes each of the areas of interest in the survey, groups them based on statistical relationships, calculates correlations with the outcome variables that have been established and then calculates average scores for each group of questions. We then calculated correlations of the groups with the outcome variables that had been established.

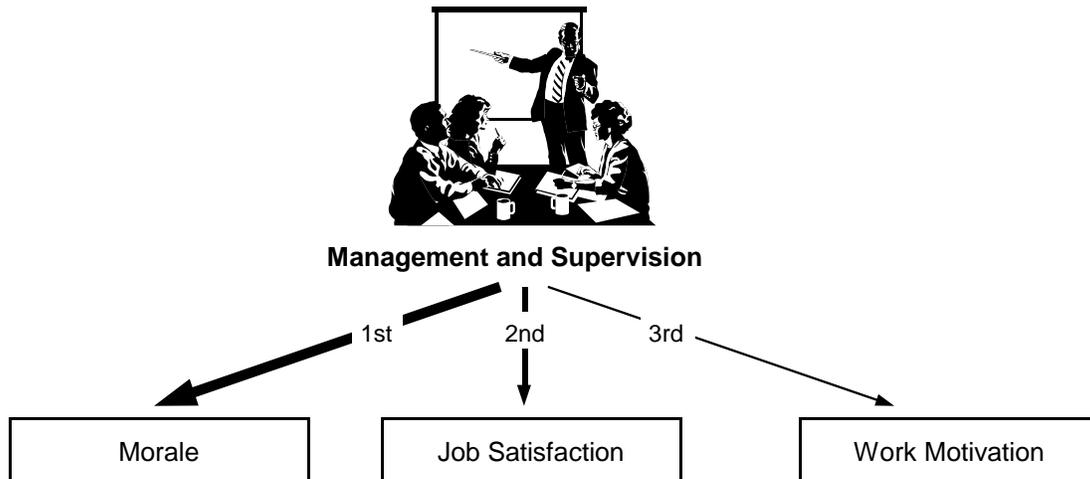
**Figure 4.1: Relative Impact of Five Factors on Employee Morale, Job Satisfaction, and Work Motivation**



Note: Numbers denote correlation of the factor on the outcome. A correlation with a value of 0.10 or greater is statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

Source: Strategic Intelligence analysis of Office of Performance Evaluations' survey of Department of Correction employees, 1999.

**Figure 4.2: Strength of Relationship Between Management and Supervision Factor and Employee Morale, Job Satisfaction, and Work Motivation**



Source: Strategic Intelligence analysis of Office of Performance Evaluations' survey of Department of Correction employees, 1999.

The factor "management and supervision," includes many of the aspects of employee interaction we asked about in our employee morale survey. Figure 4.3 shows the average scores (on a 5-point scale) for each of these in our survey; a low average indicates a high need for improvement.

Below, we describe the various aspects of management and supervision in the order presented in Figure 4.3, which corresponds roughly to the order in which they should be addressed.

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**More than half of employees surveyed did not feel work-related grievances would be resolved fairly.**

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### **Fair Application of Policies**

We found:

- **Overall, employees are concerned that work-related grievances will not be resolved fairly and that discipline may not be uniformly applied.**

**Figure 4.3: Employee Ratings of Aspects Related to Management and Supervision, With Average Scores and Order of Importance Shown**

	Average Score (5-point scale)	Order of Importance to Be Addressed
<b>Fair Application of Policies</b>		
Grievances fairly resolved.	2.67	2
Discipline uniformly applied.	3.03	5
Fair treatment of subordinates by supervisor.	3.05	6
Performance fairly evaluated.	3.67	14
<b>Responsiveness to Employee Ideas for Improvement</b>		
Employee ideas implemented.	2.83	3
Personal ideas respected.	3.13	7
Comfortable voicing ideas.	3.31	8
<b>Freedom to Expression Concerns</b>		
Employees may talk without fear of retaliation.	2.45	1
Can discuss concerns with supervisor.	3.67	13
<b>Quality of Direct Supervision and Communication</b>		
Work responsibilities coordinated within division.	3.02	4
Department keeps supervisor informed.	3.45	9
Supervisor keeps staff informed.	3.47	10
Supervisor communicates expectations.	3.56	11
Supervisor is able to perform job.	3.62	12
Supervisor recognizes achievements. <sup>a</sup>	2.39	15
Supervisor treats with courtesy and respect.	3.96	16

<sup>a</sup> For this item, a "3" was a desirable response. Anything greater than 3 denotes too much recognition, while less than 3 denotes too little. As a result, a rating of 2.39 denotes a fairly positive response by employees.

Source: Strategic Intelligence analysis of Office of Performance Evaluations' survey of Department of Correction employees, 1999.

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**Almost 40 percent of those surveyed disagreed that supervisors apply disciplinary policies uniformly.**

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Over 51 percent of survey respondents disagreed that their work-related grievance would be resolved fairly. The average score for this survey question was among the lowest of all. Further, 38 percent of respondents disagreed that supervisors apply disciplinary policies and procedures uniformly, and 42 percent disagreed that supervisors treated all subordinates fairly. Perceptions of inconsistency in the treatment of subordinates may be related to concerns about favoritism, as discussed later in this chapter.

In our interviews, we heard similar concerns from employees. For example:

- “Policies are unclear, inconsistent, and often interpreted to fit the current situation.”
- “One of the major culprits in this is the ‘problem solving’ system. This system is predicated on the idea that people want to solve problems. In the Department of Correction this is not true. If you have a reason to request problem solving you are sent back to the person who you had the problem with. If they do not solve it, it goes back to the Director who rubber stamps the ‘problem solving’ decision. This allows them to build up a paper trail of things on a person to make them look like an unsatisfactory employee. The elimination of the impartial review board was a severe blow to the employees.”<sup>3</sup>
- “IDOC management, in general, uses policies when they see fit and ignores them when they get in the way of what they’ve decided to do.”
- “The major problem that I see is the ‘don’t do as I do, do as I say syndrome.’... We should all be held to the same standard.”

### **Responsiveness to Employee Ideas for Improvement**

We also found:

- **Employees feel they can make suggestions for improvement in the workplace, but are less certain the suggestions will be implemented.**

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<sup>3</sup> As noted in Chapter 3, the statewide process for handling grievances was modified in fiscal year 1998. The new process has no provision for an impartial review board.

Approximately 46 percent of survey respondents said they could usually or always voice ideas for improvement in the workplace. Another 28 percent said they can voice ideas for improvement “sometimes.” Similarly, about 48 percent of respondents said their ideas for improvement are respected (48 percent agree or somewhat agree). In contrast, only 24 percent reported that employee suggestions are usually or always implemented.

In our interviews, employees said that “management” did not solicit employee input into decision making and that they would like to be a part of the process. For example:

- “[In the department,] there is a strictly defined chain of command. The members of this chain of command jealously guard their power and authority through the use of division directives, field memorandums, post orders, rank, uniforms and insisting that they are the only authority on what is good [prison] practice and what is not.... Employees who are not members of the hierarchy, who are not part of the power structure...are at times treated as second class employees.”
- “Consult people who will be affected by the decisions before doing [them].”
- “Input on policies would be good. When problems occur they need to involve direct staff—ask the troops to help with rules. Let us feel a part of it.”

### **Freedom to Express Concerns**

We found, however:

- **About two-thirds of employees do not believe they can discuss work-related problems without fear of retaliation, and about one-quarter feel they cannot discuss concerns with their immediate supervisor.**

As shown in Figure 4.3 (page 55), employees’ belief that they can discuss work-related problems without fear of retaliation received the lowest average score (2.45 on a 5-point scale) of each survey question related to management and supervision. A full 61 percent of respondents disagreed with the statement that “employees may talk openly about work-related problems without fear of retaliation.” Another 9 percent of respondents were neutral in response to this question.

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**Although a majority of employees felt they could voice ideas for improvement at least sometimes, only a quarter thought their suggestions would be implemented.**

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**One of the biggest concerns that emerged in our survey was a fear of retaliation.**

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During the course of our review, we received multiple contacts from employees who told us they feared retaliation and had to remain anonymous. We read in the letters we received and heard in our interviews that it was their perception:

- “If you ask questions you get retaliated against.”
- “If you don’t agree with people, it’s held against you.”
- In reference to management actions: “If you tell on them, they can fire people or discipline them in retaliation.”
- “They single out people who are not ‘in’ and then hound them, misrepresent facts, etc. in order to get rid of them. People are going to the [Employee Assistance Program], taking anti-depressants because of the anxiety due to the harassment.”

---

**Correctional officers and probation and parole officers were most likely to express concerns about management fairness and retaliation.**

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Overall, correctional officers (all levels) and probation and parole officers were more likely than others to identify concerns related to fair treatment by their supervisors, consistency in the application of disciplinary policies and procedures, and retaliation for speaking openly. Also, they were less likely to feel they could make suggestions for improvement, that they could discuss concerns with their immediate supervisor, or that their grievances would be resolved fairly.

In addition, survey results showed that approximately 26 percent of respondents disagreed that they would be able to discuss concerns with their supervisor, and another 11 percent were neutral on the question. One interviewee reported that: “[There is] friction between supervisors/managers and employees. Negativity is out of control. Communication is not good and if this were better, morale would follow.”

### **Quality of Direct Supervision and Communication**

Yet, we found:

- **Employees appear to have fewer frustrations with direct supervisors than with senior management.**

While on one hand, employees overall see room for improvement in their relationships with their supervisors, in our interviews, most employees who perceived problems with “management”

tended to focus instead on the management level above their supervisor or on “Central Office.”<sup>2</sup> When asked to rank a list of eight issues in order of importance, nearly a quarter (24 percent) of survey respondents ranked addressing their working relationship with their immediate supervisor in the top three. On the other hand, as Figure 4.3 (page 55) shows, respondents gave their own interactions with supervisors higher ratings than upper management’s communication with their supervisor.

In our interviews and other contacts with employees, we were told that:

- “Why are most of the questions [on the survey] relating to only my supervisor or immediate supervisor? Where are the questions that refer to our warden or administration? They are the major problems at [our facility].”
- “Most problems are not within our district, but come from Boise.”
- “I am concerned and disappointed with the animosity between institutional staff and Central Office staff...a certain level of this is to be expected, but surely not to the degree I have experienced.”
- “We need good communication from Administration that is consistent...not shot from the hip.”

## **Factor 2: Co-Worker Interaction**

Our survey analysis showed that employee concerns about interaction amongst co-workers within the department are second

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<sup>2</sup> Shavitt, S., *Attitude Structure and Function*, A.R. Pratkanis, S.J. Breckler, and A.G. Greenwald, “Operationalizing functional theories of attitude,” (Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, 1989), 311–338, and Shavitt, S., *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, “The role of attitude objects in attitude functions,” 26 (1990), 124–148. Negative employee perceptions of upper level management are not uncommon. The closer a manager is in the hierarchy to an employee, the more the employee can view the manager as part of his or her “ingroup;” the more distant up the hierarchy a manager is, the easier it is for the employee to view that manager as part of the “outgroup.” Higher ratings of “ingroup” members maintain self-esteem by allowing the respondent to share in that positive evaluation.

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**Employees generally gave their immediate supervisor higher ratings than division or department management.**

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**Employee perceptions of co-worker interaction and communication within the department are second most strongly related to low employee morale.**

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most strongly related to low employee morale. Just as with the factor that incorporated aspects of management and supervision, the factor called “co-worker interaction” has a varying impact on morale, job satisfaction, and work motivation. Figure 4.4 depicts the relative strength of relationship between “co-worker interaction” and job satisfaction, morale, and work motivation. The thick black line illustrates that it more strongly relates to job satisfaction than to either of the other two outcomes.

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**Approximately one-third of those interviewed during site visits mentioned communication as one of the top three issues to address.**

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“Co-worker interaction” is the interaction and communication of employees with others in the workplace. We found:

- **Over half of all survey respondents rated communication with co-workers as “fair” or “poor,” while not quite one-third rated it as “good” or “excellent.”**

In survey responses, approximately 52 percent of respondents indicated that communication among those they work with each day is fair or poor. Another 19 percent indicated that communication is adequate and 29 percent rated it good or excellent. On the other hand, over half (55 percent) of survey respondents said they felt employees usually or always worked together to solve problems, and about another quarter (28 percent) indicated this cooperation occurred “sometimes.”

In about one-third (30 of 91) of individual site visit interviews, communication within the department was mentioned as one of the top three issues interviewees felt should be addressed. For example, employees said:

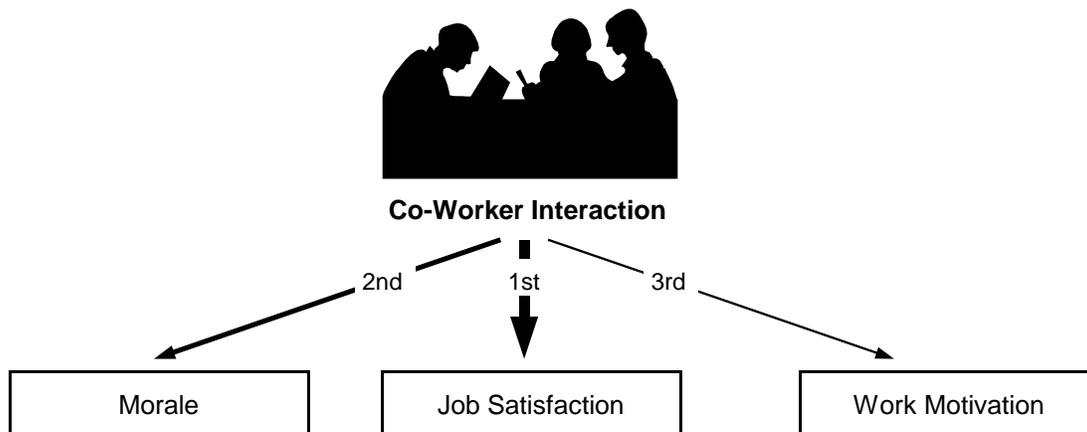
- “Communication between staff is poor. We need to share power (authority) and share information to run [the] institution.”
- “There seems to be no effective interaction skills, none, etc. Keep increasing communication effectiveness between people and between divisions.”
- “Communication of lieutenants and above, information-sharing, involving staff in decisions, interpersonal skills, all need improvement.”
- “Communication and information-sharing needs improvement.”

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**Those in division and department management gave far higher ratings to communication than did others in the department.**

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**Figure 4.4: Strength of Relationship Between Co-Worker Interaction Factor and Employee Morale, Job Satisfaction, and Work Motivation**



Source: Strategic Intelligence analysis of Office of Performance Evaluations' survey of Department of Correction employees, 1999.

Correctional officers, those working in trades and facility support positions, then program staff and probation and parole officers rated communication with their co-workers the lowest. Those in division and department management and administrative support positions rated it the highest.

### Factor 3: Compensation

Employee concerns about compensation (salary and benefits) within the department were the third most strongly related to low employee morale. In other words, making improvements in issues related to compensation holds less promise for improving morale than comparably large improvements in management and supervision and co-worker interaction.

Even so, we found:

- **Employees want issues about compensation and benefits addressed, and some have been demoralized by their perception of a lack of support from upper administration on these issues.**

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**Employee concerns about compensation were third most strongly related to low employee morale.**

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**37 percent of survey respondents identified compensation as the number one issue to address.**

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**In interviews, employees often said that pay issues were key to morale.**

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Survey responses and employee interviews clearly indicate that department employees, overall, are concerned about salary levels and are discouraged by what appears to them as low or non-existent administrative support for pay increases in the future. About 37 percent of survey respondents ranked compensation as the most important of eight issues that should be addressed in the department. Similarly, when asked to rate how compensation impacted their morale, nearly three-quarters of respondents (73 percent) indicated it had a negative impact or highly negative impact. These sentiments were most prevalent among correctional officers and probation and parole officers.

In our interviews, we heard repeatedly from employees that they considered their pay to be inadequate. Many went further to say they thought upper management had not worked to improve their base salaries, which caused frustration and anger:

- “Biggest step to morale improvement is to make pay and overtime more fair.”
- “Lack of overtime pay is a major issue along with pay in general. I’d work for Oregon if I were closer.”
- “We are some of the lowest paid correctional staff in the country and [personnel] and those above [personnel] have done nothing to help us... That includes the Legislature too.”
- “Pay is unfair. After promotions you ‘top out’ and no raises. No pay incentives for education, etc. Longevity pay was taken away. After promotions, raises are five years away.”
- “Give raises appropriately. The comparison of Central Office raises and front line workers raises is demoralizing and dehumanizing. Pay needs to be studied.”

In addition, employees in both staff and management positions voiced frustration over other aspects of employee compensation. Non-management staff members said that while they accrue comp time, staffing levels are so low they are not able to schedule time off. Some employees in management positions also told us staffing levels are inadequate and they struggle to make scheduling adjustments to allow employees to take accrued time:

- “Do you have any idea how hard it is to get a 3-day weekend even if you have 240 hours of leave on the books?”

- “Staffing is short. We can’t get sick or take vacation or comp time because there’s no one to help.”
- “Low wages and the lack of consistent payment of overtime is bad [for morale].”
- “Comp time management is still an issue. I want time off when I want it rather than when they tell us to ‘burn it off’.”

Although a salary rate comparison was outside the scope of the requested evaluation, we have summarized 1998 salary levels for correctional officers and probation and parole officers in Idaho and neighboring states in Appendix D. Appendix E summarizes additional information about compensation for correctional officers in Oregon, given high interest comparisons with this neighboring state.

Furthermore, we found:

- **Most employees rated opportunities for advancement within the department “fair” or “poor.”**

About 69 percent of survey respondents rated opportunities for advancement as “fair” or “poor.” Only 12 percent felt these opportunities were “good” or “excellent.” Employees in department and division management positions feel the most positive about advancement opportunities, while correctional officers and probation and parole officers feel the least positive. Some correctional officers also told us they thought there was favoritism in promotions. When discussing their concerns, employees stated, for example:

- “There is no place to go—no promotions possibilities—there is no incentive to stay.”
- “You lose seniority when you move to lieutenant or sergeant; [there is] no incentive to go up.”
- “If you’re not CERT/SORT you won’t get promoted. Promotions are based on playing the game; if [upper management] doesn’t like you, you won’t get ahead.”
- “Advancement is decided by who knows policy, who taps whom, who knows whom.”

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**Employees told us that other issues related to compensation, such as payment for overtime and the inability to take comp time, also impact morale.**

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**About 69 percent of survey respondents rated advancement opportunities within the department as “fair” or “poor.”**

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**Employees also expressed concern about the fairness of promotional practices within the department.**

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- “I don’t apply for promotions because I know I won’t get it since promotions are based on who you know and why.”
- “Administration’s favoritism towards certain types of employees makes promotions easy for some and impossible for others simply because they are not one of the elite in Administration’s eyes.”

#### **Factor 4: Training**

To a lesser extent, employee concerns about the levels of training provided were also related to low employee morale. That is, making improvements in training is less likely to improve morale than commensurate improvements in management and supervision, co-worker interactions, and compensation. Nonetheless, we found:

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**Employee concerns about training were less strongly related to low employee morale.**

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- **Many employees said that pre-service and in-service training are inadequate, and see lowered levels of training as a lack of concern for their professionalism and safety.**

When asked about the adequacy of *pre-service* training they received, 48 percent of survey respondents stated they received too little training, 44 percent felt they received the right amount, and 8 percent thought they received too much. Similarly, when asked about the adequacy of *in-service* training they received, 49 percent of respondents said they did not receive enough training, 44 percent said they received enough, and 7 percent felt they received too much. Probation and parole officers and correctional officers rated the adequacy of pre-service training they received the lowest, while program staff, correctional officers, and probation and parole officers rated in-service training received the lowest overall.

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**Nearly half of those surveyed felt they received too little pre-service and in-service training.**

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As we began our evaluation, department officials indicated they thought the restructuring of the department’s Training Academy in 1995 was a factor in low employee morale.<sup>3</sup> In our survey, we

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<sup>3</sup> In 1995, the department decentralized its Training Academy to save funds in response to a statewide budgetary holdback. Simultaneously, management reduced pre-service training, which has been subsequently extended somewhat. According to department staff, the original course content has been compressed and a week of on-the-job training has been added.

asked respondents to indicate what impact this had on their morale. Over half of respondents (53 percent) said it had a negative impact. Of all respondents, employees who work in the prisons and Community Work Centers indicated the most negative impact from this change.

According to department officials, the department subsequently increased pre-service training somewhat after the restructuring of the Training Academy. However, in our interviews, we learned that many employees continue to view the restructuring of the Training Academy as a lack of commitment to their professionalism and safety. For example, employees said about pre-service training:

- “Training is not adequate. Pre-service is not enough and this can be dangerous.”
- “Training needs to be improved. It has lost its ability to help. People do not feel safe or competent.”
- “Training is an issue. People don’t get well-rounded training in the general pre-service training.”
- “The closing of our training academy, resulting in inadequate training for staff and many inconsistencies in basic procedures which should be learned prior to duty. This has also increased the termination rate for probationary and veteran staff because we have not provided the tools they need to perform their duty.”

Employees voiced similar concerns about in-service training:

- “Training quality is gone and amount of training is inadequate.”
- “Need training for supervisors to help them better understand how to lead, train and be mentors. While growth can be a positive it can also put pressure on people. Sometimes we promote people and there isn’t time for adequate training.”
- “Leadership training needs a redo. It needs to communicate the fact that you can make it safe and talk about problems. [They] need to communicate what is expected of us and then hold [us] accountable. There is no consistency due to lack of training.”

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**More than half of survey respondents felt the 1995 restructuring of the department’s pre-service training academy had a negative impact on morale.**

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- “[We] need ethics training and interpersonal skills training.”
- “More structured and tracked in-service training is needed. Get training back and help us all be safe and productive.”

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**Employee concerns about recent policy changes—such as in the grooming and smoking policies—were the least strongly related to low employee morale.**

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**Recent policy changes have negatively impacted some employees’ morale, but concerns are greater that policies have been inconsistently applied.**

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## **Factor 5: Department Policy Issues**

As we began our evaluation, department officials told us that a handful of departmental policies, such as a new grooming policy in the prisons, largely accounted for low morale. As a result, we asked employees about the impact of two specific policies on their morale. We learned that about 40 percent of respondents felt the grooming policy or the smoking policy negatively impacted their morale. About 30 percent of employees said these policies had positively impacted their morale, and the rest said the policies had no impact on morale. Employees who had worked for the department longer had the greatest difficulty with the policies, while employees who were hired more recently tended to be neutral or positive toward them.

Furthermore, in interviews and in their written comments, employees often communicated that they were concerned that department policies were inconsistently applied. For example:

- “The grooming policy (hair up, no beards and mustaches) has caused so much unnecessary grief for people. Again, administrative staff are not held to the same standard and it causes resentment. The Deputy Warden has a beard.”
- “The grooming policy was taken too far (i.e., jewelry), but also needs to pertain to all staff.”
- “All other state employees have smoking areas.”
- “Rules that are not good include: uniform allowance removal, grooming policy, [and the] inconsistency of any rule.”

Therefore, we conclude:

- **Overall, employees appeared to be less opposed to specific departmental policies than to what they perceive is the inconsistent application of these policies.**

Finally, we found:

- **The department’s personnel office is generally perceived as unresponsive to the needs of those in both management and non-management positions.**

In our interviews, staff in both management and non-management positions expressed frustration with the department’s personnel office. On one hand, some managers told us they felt the personnel office did not provide the information and coaching needed to appropriately and lawfully address employee concerns in their areas. On the other hand, some non-management staff said they felt that the personnel office existed for management rather than staff. In their view, the personnel office did not always keep employees informed of changes in policies or benefits, and tended to side with “management” in employment disputes without fully considering employee concerns.

Furthermore, in our interviews, employees often attributed the problems they perceived with the calculation and payment of comp time and overtime to the personnel office, and said that the office did not advocate for them in salary and other employment issues.<sup>4</sup> For example, employees told us:

- “You cannot depend on the Personnel Department of the Department of Correction for help, it will not be forthcoming. The saying among employees is, the Personnel Department exists not for the employees but to allow the Department to do as they wish to the employee.”
- “We don’t have proactive Human Resource people. The field offices are isolated. We need to make employee relations proactive to help with employee issues.”
- “It would be helpful if Personnel could train managers and supervisors on policy changes affecting employees and changes to administrative process.”
- “Resources and direction are needed in Human Resources.”

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**Employees at all levels frequently expressed concern about the role and functioning of the department’s personnel office.**

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<sup>4</sup> A number of employee email exchanges on this subject were brought to our attention as we finalized our report.

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**Concerns about the personnel office may be pronounced because the office is involved in most employment issues.**

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As was the case in other areas of our review, we did not assess each of the concerns employees expressed about the personnel office to determine their validity, because doing so would have been outside the scope of the requested evaluation. However, morale is strongly affected by employee *perception*. Note, however, that employee concerns about the personnel office may be particularly pronounced because personnel—the office that handles employee compensation and disputes—is at the hub of most employment issues. Below, we recommend improvements and offer suggestions for ensuring the personnel office plays a key role in improving department employee morale.

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**Taking some key steps could go a long way to improving employee morale.**

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

We conclude that the key factors discussed in this chapter, management and supervision, co-worker communication, compensation, and, to a lesser extent, the perceptions about the adequacy of training and departmental policies, help to explain low overall morale and only moderately higher job satisfaction within the Department of Correction. These factors may also contribute to higher levels of turnover and employment-related administrative and legal actions among department employees. Our analysis indicates that taking steps to address these factors will lead to improvements in morale and job satisfaction among employees, and could improve staff retention.

### **Management and Supervision**

Our review assessed how employees perceive their work environment. Analysis of survey responses showed that employee concerns with aspects of management and supervision within the department most strongly relate to low employee morale. Overall, employees voiced concerns that their employment-related concerns would not be dealt with fairly and 61 percent of survey respondents said they could not speak about work-related problems without fear of retaliation. Also, we observed a tendency to escalate problem resolution to the next level of management rather than solve problems at the lowest level of supervision. Therefore:

*We recommend the Department of Correction train first-line supervisors in the use of problem solving skills to address employee concerns.*

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**Efforts to improve management and communication are likely to have the greatest impact on employee morale.**

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For the department to operate most effectively, employee concerns should be resolved at the lowest level of supervision. The department can encourage effective conflict resolution by developing the problem solving skills of its supervisors and managers. In July 1999, the department held the first in a series of week-long basic supervisory classes which appears to have included training in these key skills. The department should consider increasing the frequency of this training and making it mandatory for all supervisors.

The department should also consider providing training for the next level of managers. Currently, the department's Training Council is also considering a second level of supervisory training, tentatively scheduled to begin in January 2000. The department should consider beginning this training as early as possible and making it mandatory and regularly available.

### **Communication**

Concerns about communication within the department also were found to contribute to low employee morale within the department. Most survey respondents rated communication with co-workers as fair or poor. Often, employees perceived that they received inconsistent answers about employee-related policies and procedures and, at times, that their supervisors were not well-versed in responding to their questions. In addition, employees sometimes described communication as "one-way," with information flowing up to those in management positions, but little communication from management to staff. Board members and agency management have recognized the need to improve communication within the department. Therefore:

***We recommend the Department of Correction take steps to strengthen communication between all levels of management and staff.***

The department should make high priority efforts to improve day-to-day communication between all levels of management and employees. The department could consider steps such as:

- Increasing communication out from Central Office and making information about issues that impact employees and the organization more generally available. The department could begin by evaluating the effectiveness of current intra-

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**Training is needed to show managers how to resolve employment concerns at the lowest possible level.**

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**The department needs to increase communication from Central Office to other employees.**

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**Training in communication skills should be offered to staff throughout the department.**

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departmental communication mechanisms and doing away with those that are redundant or ineffective.

- Developing mechanisms to improve communication of employee concerns and ideas for improvement to those in management positions. Mechanisms should be established to be safe and fair to employees and result in communication back to employees with the results of efforts to address their concerns. As part of this effort, the department could provide training in communication skills to staff throughout the organization.
- Soliciting employee input on how they would improve communication within the department.

A 1996 study by the National Institute of Corrections identified a number of other basic management practices and characteristics that can help improve intra-agency communication and the work environment.<sup>5</sup> These practices and characteristics are listed in Figure 4.5.

### **Compensation**

As discussed earlier in this chapter, many employees identified compensation as the issue most needing to be addressed within the Department of Correction. Employees also identified concerns about difficulties in taking accrued leave due to low staffing levels and the fairness of promotional practices.

Therefore:

*We recommend the Department of Correction take the following steps to address compensation and benefit issues:*

- A. Work with the Division of Human Resources to conduct regional salary and benefit comparisons and make the results available to decision makers and employees.*

While Appendices D and E provide a summary of key correctional staff salaries in Idaho and neighboring states and information about employment and benefits in Oregon, this

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<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections, *Managing Staff: Corrections' Most Valuable Resource* (1996), 43.

**Figure 4.5: Management Practices and Characteristics Noticed and Respected by Correctional Staff**

- Regular presence in the institutions.
- Familiarity with institutional operations.
- Accessibility during facility visits and regular office activities.
- Visibility in going to bat for staff salaries and benefits.
- Fairness in disciplinary and promotional activities.
- Interest in lives and activities of line staff.
- Immediate feedback on employee activities.

Source: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections, *Managing Staff: Corrections' Most Valuable Resource* (1996), 43.

information is incomplete and will soon be dated. The Board of Correction and department management should consider working cooperatively with the Division of Human Resources to conduct a comparative study of correctional staff salaries and benefits in Idaho and neighboring states. Such a study would provide information needed to determine if adjustments would improve the department's ability to recruit and retain a competent work force.

As part of a study of salary and benefits, the department could use the staffing model that consultants are currently developing to assess the department's staffing needs. This staffing model is designed to help the department determine the number of staff needed at its facilities by examining each facility's: (1) inmate supervision requirements; (2) post requirements; (3) security designation; and (4) physical design and features. Incorporating a review of staffing needs into the study of salary and benefits would enable the department to develop a coordinated staffing plan for the department.

Once complete, the department should distribute the results of the salary and benefit comparisons to both decision makers and department staff. This type of objective information could be useful to decision makers as they consider the department's

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**The department should thoroughly review employee salaries and benefits as compared to other states and communicate the results to policymakers and staff.**

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budget and personnel needs. Importantly, distributing the study's results to employees would also help demonstrate to employees that board members and agency management are committed to addressing issues related to compensation, overtime, and compensatory time.

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**The department should take steps to ensure promotional practices are consistently applied.**

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***B. Conduct an internal review of promotional policies and practices to ensure they are consistently and fairly applied.***

The department's leadership should conduct an internal review of the agency's promotional policies and practices. Such a study could provide the information needed to ensure policies and practices are applied fairly throughout the department. As part of this review, the department should consider developing means to assist employees in their professional development and advancement.

**Department Personnel Management**

Our review focused on a variety of employee-related issues, including employee morale, the resolution of employment-related concerns, and other aspects about how employees are managed. As stated previously, we heard from some employees in management positions that they felt they didn't get the counseling and coaching they needed or expected from the personnel office to resolve employee concerns. On the other hand, we heard from employees in non-management positions that they felt the personnel office existed for management, that their grievances would not be fully and fairly considered, and that the personnel office was partly responsible for low pay and excesses in overtime and compensatory time. These perceptions, regardless of the extent to which they are grounded in actual experience, negatively impact morale. Therefore:

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**The department needs to take deliberate steps to improve the credibility of its personnel office with employees.**

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***We recommend the Department of Correction take steps to repair the credibility of the personnel office with employees, and improve the personnel office's ability to assist department management and employees with employment-related concerns.***

The department could take a number of steps to clarify and improve the functioning of its personnel office in addressing employee-related issues. Specifically:

- **Clarify the role of the personnel office in addressing employee-related issues.** The department's personnel office

plays at least two important roles, advising managers of personnel laws and policies and providing the means through which employee concerns may be addressed. However, the department should consider expanding the role of the personnel office in this area, making it a strategic partner with all other divisions in the department. Toward this end, the department could consider assigning a personnel specialist to each institution. Managers and employees require frequent access to employment-related information, answers to questions, and counseling in how to resolve workplace disagreements or concerns. Visibility and easy access may encourage use of the resources for which the personnel office has responsibility.

- **Involve personnel staff in studying salary and benefit issues.** The personnel office should assist in conducting regional salary comparisons. As recommended above, in conjunction with the Division of Human Resources, the personnel office should conduct a regional salary comparison for correctional positions. This would increase employee confidence that the office is taking steps to assess employee needs and advocate for them.
- **Expand the personnel office's role in staff recruitment.** The department's personnel office could be charged with developing a comprehensive recruitment plan to meet the needs of the prisons division. The personnel office should regularly meet with those responsible for management of the prisons to ensure the plan is refined and kept updated. In addition, the personnel office could evaluate the need for similar plans and coordination for all other divisions.
- **Increase the personnel office's efforts to analyze turnover.** As recommended in Chapter 2, the department should expand its efforts to analyze turnover trends within the department. Staff in the department's personnel office are currently responsible for preparing annual turnover reports, and are the logical choice to take on the additional responsibilities for evaluating turnover as suggested. In addition to carrying out the recommendations proposed in Chapter 2, the personnel office should begin conducting exit interviews with former employees to better understand the reasons for turnover within the department, which may help to decrease it in the long run.

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**A first step may be to ensure all employees understand the office's role.**

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**Steps also could be taken to improve the personnel office's effectiveness in recruitment and retention.**

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# Table of Contents to the Appendices

	Page	
Appendix A	Summary Survey Responses, Current Department of Correction Employees	77
Appendix B	Sample Sizes and Response Rates for Survey of Current Department of Correction Employees, by Sample Strata	81
Appendix C	Turnover in Correctional Officer Positions in Idaho and Neighboring States, Calendar Year 1997	83
Appendix D	Salary Comparison for Selected Positions in Idaho and Neighboring States As of January 1, 1998	85
Appendix E	Oregon Department of Corrections Salary and Benefit Information	87



# Appendix A

## Summary Survey Responses, Current Department of Correction Employees

	<u>Percent Disagree</u>	<u>Percent Somewhat Disagree</u>	<u>Percent Neutral</u>	<u>Percent Somewhat Agree</u>	<u>Percent Agree</u>	<u>Average Score (5-point scale)</u>
1. I feel personally motivated to do my best work while at my job. n = 450	8.4%	6.2%	6.7%	21.3%	57.3%	4.13
2. My ideas for improvements in the workplace are respected. n = 449	18.7	17.8	15.6	27.8	20.0	3.13
3. My supervisor lets me know what is expected of me. n = 448	11.4	15.0	14.3	24.6	34.8	3.56
4. When I have a concern, I am able to discuss it with my supervisor. n = 446	13.2	13.0	10.5	19.5	43.7	3.67
5. My supervisor treats all of his or her subordinates fairly. n = 450	27.3	14.9	12.7	16.0	29.1	3.05
6. My supervisor applies disciplinary policies and procedures uniformly to all of his or her subordinates. n = 446	28.5	10.8	17.5	16.1	27.1	3.03
7. I have confidence in my supervisor's ability to perform his or her job. n = 450	15.5	10.0	10.9	23.8	39.8	3.62
8. Within my division, work responsibilities are well-coordinated. n = 451	17.7	24.4	14.4	24.8	18.6	3.02
9. I believe that if I have a work-related grievance it will be resolved fairly. n = 451	35.7	15.7	13.7	15.5	19.3	2.7
10. My supervisor is kept informed of Department matters that affect us. n = 449	9.8	17.1	20.5	23.4	29.2	3.45

Office of Performance Evaluations

	<u>Percent Disagree</u>	<u>Percent Somewhat Disagree</u>	<u>Percent Neutral</u>	<u>Percent Somewhat Agree</u>	<u>Percent Agree</u>	<u>Average Score (5-point scale)</u>
11. Department employees may talk openly about work-related problems without fear of retaliation. n = 449	40.5%	20.3%	8.9%	14.3%	16.0%	2.45
12. In general, I am satisfied with my job. n = 450	10.7	12.9	16.4	25.3	34.7	3.60
	<u>Percent Never</u>	<u>Percent Rarely</u>	<u>Percent Sometimes</u>	<u>Percent Usually</u>	<u>Percent Always</u>	<u>Average Score (5-point scale)</u>
13. The people I work with each day work together to solve problems. n = 450	2.0%	14.2%	28.4%	42.7%	12.7%	3.50
14. I feel comfortable voicing ideas for improvement in my workplace. n = 450	7.6	18.4	27.8	28.0	18.2	3.31
15. My supervisor keeps me informed about matters that affect me. n = 449	4.2	13.6	31.4	32.1	18.7	3.47
16. My supervisor treats me with courtesy and respect. n = 450	3.6	6.9	18.7	32.2	38.7	3.96
17. My job performance is evaluated fairly. n = 446	7.2	11.0	17.7	35.7	28.5	3.67
18. Employee ideas for improvement are implemented. n = 447	7.6	31.5	36.9	18.3	5.6	2.83
	<u>Percent Not Enough</u>	<u>Percent Not Quite Enough</u>	<u>Percent Right Amount</u>	<u>Percent More Than Enough</u>	<u>Percent Too Much</u>	<u>Average Score<sup>a</sup> (5-point scale)</u>
19. The amount of guidance I receive is: n = 446	13.5%	26.5%	45.5%	9.4%	5.2%	2.66
20. The tools/equipment I receive are: n = 446	21.1	34.3	40.8	3.6	0.2	2.28
21. The pre-service training I received was: n = 443	23.3	24.8	44.0	6.3	1.6	2.38

*Employee Morale and Turnover at the Department of Correction*

	<u>Percent Not Enough</u>	<u>Percent Not Quite Enough</u>	<u>Percent Right Amount</u>	<u>Percent More Than Enough</u>	<u>Percent Too Much</u>	<u>Average Score<sup>a</sup> (5-point scale)</u>
22. The in-service training I receive is: n = 447	19.5%	29.5%	44.3%	4.7%	2.0%	2.40
23. Supervisor recognizes my achievements: n = 444	20.3	26.6	47.3	5.4	0.5	2.39
	<u>Percent Highly Negative Impact</u>	<u>Percent Negative Impact</u>	<u>Percent No Impact</u>	<u>Percent Positive Impact</u>	<u>Percent Highly Positive Impact</u>	<u>Average Score<sup>b</sup> (5-point scale)</u>
<u>Impact of Policy on Morale</u>						
24. Grooming policies n = 332	18.4%	22.6%	29.2%	21.1%	8.7%	2.79
Smoking policy n = 382	26.4	16.5	27.0	9.4	20.7	2.81
Restructured Training Academy n = 403	28.5	24.1	25.8	17.1	4.5	2.45
Level of compensation n = 428	40.0	33.4	10.3	13.8	2.6	2.06
	<u>Percent Poor</u>	<u>Percent Fair</u>	<u>Percent Adequate</u>	<u>Percent Good</u>	<u>Percent Excellent</u>	<u>Average Score (5-point scale)</u>
25. Overall, morale among the people I work with each day is: n = 451	40.4%	28.2%	9.3%	17.7%	4.4%	2.18
26. Communication among the people I work with each day is: n = 451	20.0	31.7	19.3	22.0	7.1	2.65
27. Opportunities for advancement within the department are: n = 448	37.9	31.0	19.4	8.9	2.7	2.07

N = 452

<sup>a</sup> In this scale, a "3" was a desirable response. Anything less than a 3 denotes too little was received, greater than 3 denotes too much was received.

<sup>b</sup> In this scale, a "3" was a neutral response. Anything less than 3 denotes a negative impact; greater than 3 denotes a positive impact.

Source: Strategic Intelligence analysis of Office of Performance Evaluations' survey of Department of Correction employees, 1999.



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# Appendix B

## Sample Sizes and Response Rates for Survey of Current Department of Correction Employees, by Sample Strata

<u>Work Location</u>	<u>Number Sampled<sup>a</sup></u>	<u>Number Returned</u>	<u>Percent of Response</u>
Central Office	51	38	74.5%
Field and Community Services	84	71	84.5
Community Work Centers	35	22	62.9
Prisons	415	304	73.3
Correctional Industries	18	9	50.0
No location specified	—	8	—
Totals	603	452	75.0%

<sup>a</sup> Sample sizes are equivalent to approximately 43 percent of employees recorded within the specified work (pay) location as of July 1999.

Source: Sampling of Office of State Controller data by Boise State University, and Strategic Intelligence analysis of returns from the Office of Performance Evaluations' survey of Department of Correction employees, 1999.



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# Appendix C

## Turnover in Correctional Officer Positions in Idaho and Neighboring States, Calendar Year 1997

	Correctional Officer Turnover Rate <sup>a</sup>
Wyoming	25.0%
<b>Idaho</b>	<b>18.1<sup>b</sup></b>
Utah	16.5
Montana	11.0
Oregon	10.3
Washington	7.7
Nevada	n/a
U.S. average	14.9

<sup>a</sup> Rates self-reported by states. Methodologies in calculating turnover rates may vary.

<sup>b</sup> Turnover rates reported in *The Corrections Yearbook 1998* and the calculated rate in the body of the report vary due to time period and methodologies used.

Source: Criminal Justice Institute, Inc., *The Corrections Yearbook 1998*, (Middletown, 1998), 150.



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# Appendix D

## Salary Comparison for Selected Positions in Idaho and Neighboring States As of January 1, 1998

### Correctional Officer

	<u>Entry Level</u>	<u>At Completion of Training</u>	<u>At Completion of Probation</u>	<u>Maximum Salary</u>
Montana	\$16,639	\$16,639	\$16,639	n/a
Wyoming	18,420	18,420	19,620	\$30,792
Utah	21,110	21,694	23,532	37,313
Idaho	22,360	22,360	22,922	32,906
Washington	23,976	23,976	25,680	31,752
Nevada	25,046	25,046	28,314	36,472
Oregon	27,396	27,396	28,704	36,672

### Probation and Parole Officer

	<u>Entry Level</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Highest</u>
Wyoming	\$20,088	\$24,720	\$32,760
Utah	23,532	n/a	46,354
Montana	24,902	24,000	36,105
Washington	25,680	38,735	41,652
Idaho	27,400	32,000	41,500
Nevada	29,159	36,183	41,330
Oregon <sup>a</sup>	n/a	n/a	n/a

<sup>a</sup> Function performed at the county level. Salary information not available on a statewide basis.

Source: Criminal Justice Institute, Inc., *The Corrections Yearbook 1998*, (Middletown, 1998), 148–149, 202–203.



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# Appendix E

## Oregon Department of Corrections Salary and Benefit Information

Due to recent interest in how the compensation received by correctional staff in Idaho compares to similar positions in Oregon, we gathered information about salary and benefits received by correctional staff within the Oregon Department of Corrections.

One of the Oregon Department of Corrections' largest institutions, the Snake River Correctional Institution, is located in Ontario, Oregon. The facility, which opened in 1984, was originally designed to house 648 inmates, but is being expanded to be a 3,000 bed facility. As of September 1999, approximately 2,700 inmates were housed at the facility. Staffing at the facility has increased from 248 staff prior to the beginning of the expansion in 1996 to approximately 825 staff in September 1999. When expansion at the facility is complete, the Oregon Department of Corrections expects to have just under 1,000 staff at the facility. According to a recruiter for the Oregon Department of Corrections, the recruitment area for this facility is from Baker City, Oregon to Boise.

According to an official in the recruitment section of the Oregon Department of Corrections, Correctional Officers at the Snake River Correctional Institution currently receive a starting salary of \$27,408 annually. In addition, employees at the facility receive \$300 per month to cover their portion of benefits costs including health insurance, dental insurance, life insurance, and disability coverage. Any portion of this benefit allowance that is not used for benefits is added to an employee's pay check. As an additional benefit to correctional staff, the Oregon Department of Correction currently pays the employee's portion of retirement contribution costs.

Source: Data from the Human Resources Division, Oregon Department of Corrections, September 1999.



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# Response to the Evaluation





# STATE OF IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

**DIRK KEMPTHORNE**  
GOVERNOR

**BOARD OF CORRECTION**

**RALPH TOWNSEND**  
CHAIRMAN

**DWIGHT BOARD**  
VICE CHAIRMAN

**JANET JENKINS**  
SECRETARY

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## IDOC MEMORANDUM

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**DATE:** 10/13/99  
**TO:** JOINT LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE  
**CC:** GOVERNOR KEMPTHORNE, JAMES C. SPALDING,  
DIRECTOR, IDOC  
**FROM:** BOARD OF CORRECTION  
**RE:** RESPONSE TO THE OFFICE OF PERFORMANCE  
EVALUATIONS REPORT ON EMPLOYEE MORALE AND  
TURNOVER

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Chairs and members of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee (JLOC), the Board and Department of Correction (IDOC) appreciate the opportunity to respond to the Office of Performance Evaluations' report. You should be assured that the Board of Correction has taken this opportunity seriously and has attempted to respond in a positive manner. The Board has also undertaken its response mindful of IDOC's mission, which is "the protection of the public in a cost-effective manner while maintaining professional standards and promoting successful offender re-entry into the community." Finally, the Board considers staff opinion and support is critical to achievement of our mission.

The Board would like to express our appreciation to the Office of Performance Evaluations staff. They have kept us informed throughout the study and have made themselves available for questions and concerns.

Our response is in the following format and based on the October 6, 1999, final draft report prepared by the Office of Performance Evaluations:

1. General comments
2. Specific responses to five recommendations
3. Summary statement

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## General Comments

The Board urges you to take the following general comments into consideration.

Due to the short timeframe allotted this project, it was not possible for staff to thoroughly compare our department with other correctional agencies regionally or nationally. The Board maintains our staff assignments are not necessarily reflective of other agencies within the state of Idaho. The significant differences are in the areas of job duties, pay, hiring standards, minimum qualifications, probationary requirements, training and mission. These differences make intrastate agency comparisons difficult.

As to employee turnover, higher or similar turnover rates are being experienced in over 20 state correctional departments around the country. High levels of failure to complete probation and resignations for all classes of correctional employees contribute to the rate. Caution should be used in arriving at conclusions about this data without knowing the methodology used to make the determination. The department will standardize its methodology for determining turnover rates.

The Board would like to briefly respond to an issue referenced in the report concerning the personnel function of the department. A human resource department in the private sector compared to a personnel/payroll bureau in State government is extremely different. The report suggests the assignment of staff to institutions concerning personnel issues. Such an approach could be beneficial, albeit a departure from current practice. We now have a centralized process out of fiscal necessity. Full implementation of a de-centralized process could cost the IDOC a significant sum in salaries. The IDOC's challenge in this area lies in implementing the concept within existing resources.

One of the original charges to the JLOC committee staff was in the area of an "undue amount" of employee lawsuits in the Department of Correction. The data does not bear that out. In fact, the report states, "We also found that inmates named the Department of Correction in lawsuits 28 times more often than did employees during fiscal years 1994-1999."

The Board would be remiss in its concern for employees unless we encouraged the Committee to consider pay and benefits for all classes of correctional employees. Likewise, it is important to consider the impact of compensation on turnover, morale, job satisfaction and communication. This is an area of frustration for employees, which manifests itself in many ways. The Board would reference a July 23, 1999, article published in *The Correctional Professional, Volume 4, Issue 21*, entitled, "Pay Plan Slashes Officer Turnover Rate." This article states that in the correctional officer job classification, for example, was experiencing a 30% turnover rate in Arizona. A new pay plan was introduced and turnover dropped to 19% as soon as staff knew of the plan. This gives the Committee material to think about if turnover truly is a measurement of success as it relates to the mission of the agency.

Considering these general comments, our review of the recommendations is as follows:

**Recommendation #1** *We recommend the Department of Correction establish and document a standard methodology for calculating turnover and begin monitoring turnover for all work locations and classes of employees.*

The Department of Correction will standardize the methodology utilized to calculate turnover for monitoring purposes as recommended in the report. The analysis, realizing that a State model does not exist, will rely on regional approaches and practices consistent with the Department's mission statement. We will designate an organizational unit as the action agency.

**Recommendation #2** *We recommend the Department of Correction train first-line supervisors in the use of problem-solving skills to address employee concerns.*

The IDOC currently, as pointed out in the study, is providing a week-long basic supervisory class with every intention of expanding the levels of employee involvement. The IDOC training philosophy and the training policy will reflect this attitude. The ultimate goal is mandatory completion of a basic supervisory class, to include problem-solving skills for every supervisor in the IDOC.

**Recommendation #3** *We recommend that Department management take steps to strengthen communication between management and staff.*

IDOC is committed to good communication at all levels, as an important element in building teams to fulfill our responsibilities.

With this in mind the Board, prior to release or review of this report, ordered a full review of current methods of communication in the Department. Data being collected considers newsletters, internal/external correspondence, policy change implementation, pay issues, bulletin boards and other methods of communication. Once the data is collected, we will determine and measure communication for effectiveness and then decide on new methods, or refinement of existing methods to improve communication. Staff will be asked to provide input to the communication process. The IDOC may request outside assistance in this endeavor.

**Recommendation #4** *We recommend that the Department of Correction take the following steps to address compensation and benefit issues.*

A. *Work with the Division of Human Resources to conduct regional salary and benefit comparisons and make the results available to decision makers and employees.*

The IDOC and Division of Human Resources has reached an agreement to compile salary and benefit comparisons and the IDOC will make these comparisons available to decision-makers and employees.

The IDOC will continue to refine the correctional staffing model<sup>1</sup> and deal with the fiscal realities of implementation consistent with the Department's mission statement.

The IDOC will review its compensation policies and implement change where required.

*B. Conduct an internal review of promotional policies and practices to ensure they are consistently and fairly applied.*

The IDOC will cause a review of promotional policies and practices to ensure fair application. If deficiencies are noted, they will be eliminated and corrected by policy. The IDOC will also explore further professional development opportunities within existing resources or through the budget process for those that require additional funding.

**Recommendation #5** *We recommend the Department of Correction take steps to repair the credibility of the personnel office with employees and improve the personnel office's ability to assist department management and employees with employment-related concerns.*

The IDOC shall clarify the role of the Office of Personnel/Payroll and communicate this to staff at all levels. The IDOC will define the role and responsibilities of the personnel office using the Division of Human Resources' "New Directions in Human Resource Management," guide as a tool. The Office of Personnel/Payroll is given credit in this report for more responsibility than it currently has. The Office of Personnel/Payroll does not control discipline, training, pay, nor make internal hiring decisions. It provides response from headquarters to employee inquiries and function as advisors to the divisions. It is obvious, according to the survey results, employees consider the role of the Office of Personnel/Payroll to be different. Decentralization may be the preferred method, but when one considers the size of the agency and the geographical areas, that could be an expensive process.

The IDOC will consider acceptable personnel practices, evaluate their adaptability to the department, and will inform the employees of any changes. Other issues should also be reviewed, such as recruitment plans, retention issues and turnover. This will be a department-wide initiative.

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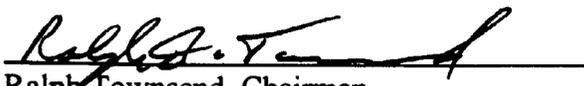
<sup>1</sup> The department released a request for proposal for a correctional staffing model in FY98. The project was funded in cooperation with the Division of Financial Management and Legislative Services Office, Budget and Policy Analysis for \$200,000.

**Summary Statement**

When one looks at the IDOC, one needs to ask whether it is carrying out its ultimate responsibility, as set forth in the mission statement earlier. The IDOC does protect the public by maintaining safe and humane institutions and districts. The IDOC gives the taxpayers good return for their dollar and have extremely dedicated employees who work hard for the pay they receive. Could IDOC do a better job communicating with our employees? The answer is yes. Should IDOC staff be paid more? The answer is also yes. Is that possible? Many play a role in that decision.

Please accept this response as a commitment to improve areas of need in our organization.

Submitted:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ralph Townsend, Chairman  
Board of Correction

## Completed Performance Evaluations

<u>Publication Number</u>	<u>Report Title</u>	<u>Date Released</u>
95-01	State Travel Management	August 1995
95-02	Medicaid Services for Children With Disabilities	November 1995
96-01	Safety Busing in Idaho School Districts	February 1996
96-02	Oversight of Pupil Transportation Contracts	February 1996
96-03	Use of Bus Routing Software in Idaho School Districts	May 1996
96-04	Contracted Versus District-Operated Pupil Transportation Programs: An Analysis of Cost and Program Differences	May 1996
96-05	State-Owned Dwellings	October 1996
96-06	Estimating and Reducing the Tax Gap in Idaho	December 1996
97-01	License Plate Design Royalties Paid to the Idaho Heritage Trust	May 1997
97-02	The Bishop's House Historic Site	July 1997
97-03	Alternatives to Incarceration: Opportunities and Costs	December 1997
98-01	Public School Use of Tobacco Tax Funds	January 1998
98-02	Medicaid Reimbursement for Outpatient Occupational and Speech Therapy	June 1998
98-03	Management of State Agency Passenger Vehicles	October 1998
98-04	Management Review of the Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired	October 1998
99-01	The State Board of Pharmacy's Regulation of Prescription Controlled Substances	June 1999
99-02	The State Board of Medicine's Resolution of Complaints Against Physicians and Physician Assistants	October 1999
99-03	Employee Morale and Turnover at the Department of Correction	October 1999

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