



2025-2026

STRATEGIC PLAN



UTAH DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

**WORKING TOGETHER
TRANSFORMING LIVES
PROTECTING COMMUNITIES**

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Our Mission

Working Together
Transforming Lives
Protecting Communities

Our Vision

We envision a safer Utah by
providing opportunities for people to improve.

Our Values

Service, Professionalism,
Accountability, Respect, Knowledge



The Utah Department of Corrections stands at a pivotal moment in its history, defined by innovation, accountability, and a shared commitment to public safety and rehabilitation. This Strategic Plan serves as our roadmap for the next several years, aligning our mission, vision, and values with clear goals that reflect the evolving needs of our workforce, the individuals in our care, and the communities we serve. Our dedicated staff are the cornerstone of this plan's success, and their expertise and commitment are vital in achieving our objectives.

Grounded in our core principles of service, professionalism, accountability, respect, and knowledge, this plan builds upon the foundation of progress we have made in professionalizing our operations, enhancing transparency, and strengthening partnerships across state and local systems. It outlines key priorities designed to improve outcomes, modernize infrastructure, and empower our staff to lead with purpose and compassion, recognizing that their continuous growth and well-being are paramount to our collective achievements.

We recognize that sustainable success requires both courage and collaboration. The initiatives detailed in this plan will require the continued dedication of every member of Team UDC, as well as the trust and engagement of our external partners. Together, we will continue to move corrections forward in Utah safely, responsibly, and with a vision for lasting change.

Jared Garcia, Executive Director

INTRODUCTION

The Utah Department of Corrections (UDC) is poised for an impactful FY26, building on the significant systemic transitions and concerted efforts of the past year. Our updated strategic plan is deeply informed by comprehensive internal and external audits, providing a clear roadmap for our continued evolution. For FY26, UDC will intensify its focus on:

- **Staff Investment:** Further enhancing recruitment and retention strategies, we will continue to cultivate a robust, well-trained, and dedicated workforce, recognizing that our team is our greatest asset.
- **Safety:** We remain committed to prioritizing the safety and security of our staff, incarcerated individuals, and UDC facilities. Building on previous planning and the expertise of specialized professionals, we will implement advanced measures to ensure a secure environment.
- **Collaboration:** Fostering an even more collaborative environment, we will strengthen partnerships both within the Department and with external stakeholders, including legislative bodies and industry experts, to drive collective success.
- **Innovation:** We will continue to champion innovative practices and solutions, leveraging new technologies and creative approaches to further improve operational efficiency and effectiveness across all areas.
- **Health & Rehabilitation:** Our commitment to delivering personalized, evidence-based assessments that prioritize the health, rehabilitation, and successful reentry of incarcerated individuals will be further solidified through expanded programs and enhanced support systems.

The FY26 plan represents these five invigorated pillars. We are proud that staff throughout the Department continue to see their daily work reflected in one or more of these core areas. By engaging our entire team around a consistent set of broad goals and making them actionable through our annual work plan with targeted objectives and measurable outcomes, UDC is ideally positioned to deliver on its mission of working together, transforming lives, and protecting communities, ensuring a fresh and impactful year ahead.

OUR ORGANIZATION

The Utah Department of Corrections' nearly 2,300 employees supervise more than 17,000 individuals in the community and approximately 6,400 incarcerated individuals.

The Department collaborates with a wide variety of stakeholders ranging from the Board of Pardons and Parole to community treatment providers, other law enforcement agencies, and NGOs to effect positive change in the lives of those we serve.

Admin Ops & Quality

Performs a wide variety of functions, ranging from day-to-day admin operations to coordinating various public services and continuous improvement.

Facilities Management

Provides many services to the UDC, including project management for new buildings and building maintenance and management.

Law Enforcement Bureau

Similar to a detective or investigative unit of any community police agency, but instead of a city, they serve UDC staff and the incarcerated population.

Recruitment & Retention

Provides hosting of department recruitment events, generates media for recruitment and retention, and facilitates recruitment and onboarding.

Adult Probation & Parole

Helps individuals become productive members of their communities through tailored supervision and effective interventions.

Finance

Provides accurate and timely financial information and services that enable the UDC to safeguard and facilitate the use of department funds.

Performance Audit

Provides systematic evaluation to enhance the Utah Department of Corrections' performance, accountability, and transparency.

Reentry & Rehabilitation

Provides evidence-based, individualized interventions to reduce risk and promote behavioral change and facilitates successful community reentry.

Communications

Utilizes a variety of communications methods to provide internal and external communications for staff and stakeholders across the State of Utah.

Innovation & Tech

Provides timely and insightful data and analysis to support the department in making data-driven decisions while ensuring database and app security.

Prison Operations

Provides general security and transport operations associated with incarceration within Utah's two correctional facilities as well as various county jails.

Safety, Risk, & Standards

Provides safety and compliance assessments and enhancements, oversees professional standards, and facilitates risk mitigation.



Training

Establishes and maintains a foundation of professionalism and education for correctional staff throughout the state of Utah.

UCI

Dedicated to public safety through innovative career building, community partnerships, and quality production to develop successful people.

Victim Services

Provides information and services to victims of crimes committed by individuals housed within UDC facilities or supervised by AP&P.

While each division plays a unique role in the Department's operations, cross-team collaboration and communication ensure success. Through a department-wide work plan included in the next section, we aim to achieve enhanced collaboration in carrying out our goals and objectives outlined in the prior section of this strategic plan.

OUR STRATEGIC PILLARS



WHY IT MATTERS

As our number one stakeholder, our staff are the foundation upon which we build the success and safety of our community. Without a healthy, well-trained, engaged team, we cannot achieve these ambitious goals. Creating environments that foster continuous learning, skill development, and staff wellness will make a lasting difference.

Safety is always our top priority, in our facilities and in our community. Prioritizing staff input and creating a culture where mistakes are seen as an opportunity to improve, not a reason to discipline, helps us to continuously improve. Illegal substances in our facilities amplify other safety issues in our system. As such, we must prioritize eliminating them.

Relationships are key to advancing our goals. Corrections can't do this impactful work alone. We see the most success when we work together, across divisions, departments, and communities to improve safety for all. Keeping all stakeholders informed and involved in our work creates better outcomes.

Staying open to new ideas from all stakeholders helps us be better in every way. To maintain a continuous state of improvement, we must try new things and be willing to take ownership over our hits and misses. Effective and efficient government needs current technology to build long-lasting success.

Public safety, health, and rehabilitation are one and the same. We can improve lives and reduce recidivism by delivering quality programs, healthcare, and treatment while managing cases with a person-focused approach. This requires the foundational elements of assessment of risk, responding to the risk with the right services, to address their specific needs.

REENTRY

Successful reentry is more likely to occur when the UDC focuses on staff investment, safety, collaboration, innovation, health, and rehabilitation.

GOAL & WHY	OBJECTIVES	MEASURE
Staff Engagement: The UDC will retain a prepared, informed, healthy, and involved staff engaged in the success of the department. An engaged staff will help the agency achieve our ambitious goals.	Training and Development Communication Wellness Involvement	Goal Measure: Employee Engagement Index (aggregate of DHRM employee survey measures)
Safety: The UDC will increase safety in our communities and correctional facilities while disrupting cycles of violence and drug use through improved investigative efforts that are informed and bolstered by people who feel safe and supported in reporting wrongdoing. Safer communities enable more focused and effective rehabilitation.	Safe Reporting Reduced Violence Eliminating Drugs Improved Investigations	Goal Measure: Crime rate (in community & in facilities) [aggregated incidents for communities and in facilities]
Collaboration: The UDC will enhance collaboration by establishing and strengthening relationships and experiences with stakeholders both within the Department and outside in order to build more informed and effective policy. Collaboration will ensure our efforts are transparent, encourage feedback, and improve the lives of all.	Building Relationships Effective Policy One Team Expanded Partnerships	Goal Measure: Stakeholder satisfaction ratings [standardized metric measures the quality of interactions individuals and organizations report having with the UDC]
Innovation: The UDC will implement innovation by encouraging visionary and open-minded solutions to intractable social issues, fueled by modern technologies that aid our teams as they improve our systems and processes. Innovation will ensure our teams are supported by up-to-date information and data to drive important decisions and outcomes.	Creativity Leveraging Technology Improved Systems & Processes Keeping Open Minds	Goal Measure: Percentage of legacy systems upgraded or new systems integrated by year end
Health & Rehabilitation: The UDC will deliver personalized, evidence-based assessments that prioritize the health, rehabilitation, and reentry of incarcerated individuals. These assessments will guide comprehensive case plans, strengthened by robust partnerships with sister agencies, community organizations, and stakeholders.	Treatment Partnerships Case Management Healthcare Person-Focused Services	Goal Measure: Successful Reentries (successful terminations) [the intent of this measure is to approach recidivism from a more positive perspective]

ANNUAL WORK PLAN FY26						
Pillar(s)	Champion	Goal	Strategy	Timeline	Resources Needed	Measure
Goal 1: Retain a prepared, informed, healthy, and involved staff engaged in the success of the department.						
Objective 1.1: Provide training and development opportunities to staff						
Staff Investment	Division directors	1.1.1	Ensure every UDC staff member has access to at least one educational opportunity, conference, or similar enhanced training experience during the fiscal year	Measured Quarterly	Funding for investment in staff education, training, conference	Staff response to DHRM professional improvement question results
Objective 1.2: Improve internal communication quality						
Staff Investment	Communications Office	1.2.1	Tailor organizational communication styles to better match staff needs	Measured Quarterly	Adequate time to tailor processes and consistent feedback from staff	Internal Quarterly Survey Results*: % of staff who feel engaged by internal communications
Objective 1.3: Enhance staff wellness						
Staff Investment	Stakeholder Experience Coordinator	1.3.1	Support staff in becoming the most physically and mentally well they can be in order to perform well at their jobs and in their personal lives.	Measured Quarterly	Adequate contracted services with wellness resource providers	Internal Quarterly Survey Results*: Staff Wellness Likert Scale Responses
Staff Investment	Executive leadership, Division directors	1.3.2	Eliminate mandatory overtime for all UDC staff while maintaining the opportunity for voluntary overtime for those who wish to work it	Measured Weekly	Internal and external communications, funding for staffing	Hours of Mandatory Overtime Worked at Utah State Correctional Facility
Objective 1.4: Foster an environment of staff involvement						
Staff Investment	Executive leadership, Division directors, managers	1.4.1	Ensure all staff feel connected with organizational goals.	June 30, 2025	Internal documentation and communication around strategic plan	Internal Quarterly Survey Results*: % of staff who report understanding how their role contributes to the overall organizational strategies
Staff Investment	Executive leadership, Division directors, managers	1.4.2	Ensure staff are recognized for their contributions to the Department	Measured Monthly	Tools and supportive policies for staff recognition	Internal Quarterly Survey Results*: Staff Recognition
Goal 2: Increase safety in our communities and correctional facilities while disrupting cycles of violence and drug use through improved investigative efforts that are informed and bolstered by people who feel safe and supported in reporting wrongdoing.						
Objective 2.1: Ensure staff, stakeholders, and those under supervision feel safe reporting incidents, deficiencies, and concerns						
Safety	Office of Safety, Risk, and Standards	2.1.1	Collaborate with staff throughout the agency to proactively identify and fix specific operational or process issues that will lead to a safer environment	Measured Monthly	Funding and staffing to follow through on recommendations and provide feedback to staff	% of Validated Safety Issues Addressed by the Safety Office
Safety	Executive leadership, division directors	2.1.2	Foster a culture of comprehensive personal safety throughout the Department.	Measured Quarterly	Ongoing training, internal communications, staff funding	Internal Quarterly Survey Results*: Staff Safety
Objective 2.2: Reduce all incidents of violence throughout all UDC facilities						
Safety	Division directors: Innovation & Tech; Law Enforcement Bureau; Prison Operations; AP&P; Office of Safety, Risk, and Standards	2.2.1	Enhance efforts in reentry & rehabilitation and housing assignment management to minimize the opportunities for violence among housed populations	Measured Monthly	Innovation & Tech's support to develop leading indicators to support rehabilitative opportunities, productive time, discovery of contraband, disciplinary incidents, etc.	Per capita rate of violent incidents inside CUCF, USCF, among contract state inmates, and at Community Correctional Centers

Key

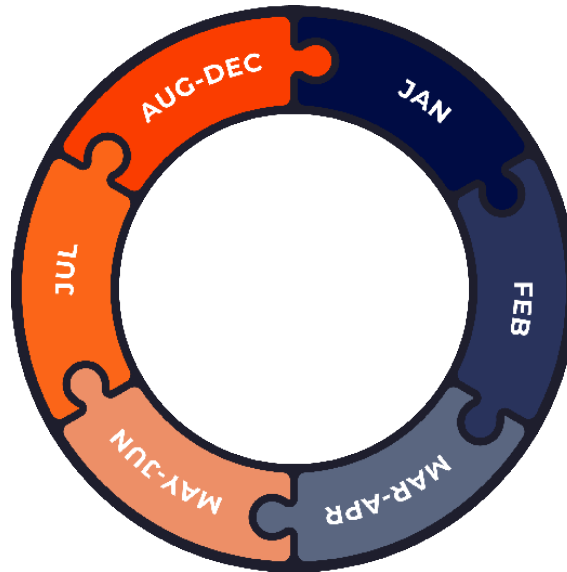
Yellow - measure creation in progress
 Green - measure implemented
 *Survey or tool creation in progress

Pillar(s)	Champion	Goal	Strategy	Timeline	Resources Needed	Measure
Objective 2.3: Eliminating contraband from all UDC facilities						
Safety	Law Enforcement Bureau, Prison Operations, AP&P, Innovation & Tech	2.3.1	Enhance efforts to identify drugs entering UDC facilities via visitation, mailroom, off-site work crews, etc.	Measured Weekly	Data and policy/process support to tell the story and address it organizationally	Rate of positive UAs received in UDC facilities
Safety	Law Enforcement Bureau, Prison Operations, AP&P, Innovation & Tech	2.3.2	Enhance efforts to locate and prevent the introduction or production of weapons inside the facilities	Measured Weekly	Data and policy/process support to tell the story and address it organizationally	Ratio of searches to discovered weapons
Objective 2.4: Improve investigative efforts in facilities and in the community						
Safety	Law Enforcement Bureau; Office of Safety, Risk, and Standards	2.4.1	Enhance fugitive apprehension efforts in the community	Measured Monthly	Collaboration with partner agencies and staffing afforded time to focus on fugitive apprehension or to be part of apprehension teams	# of apprehended fugitives in the community compared to previous month (+/-)
Objective 2.5: Effectively manage UDC facility capacity						
Safety	Executive leadership, Division of Prison Operations leadership, Innovation & Tech	2.5.1	Enact capacity management plan that results in a net reduction of 20 individuals (or more) from both returns and releases each week, resulting in an annual capacity buffer of 1,560.	Measured Weekly	Collaboration with external subject matter experts, internal data analysis resources	Net reduction of individuals from returns and releases
Goal 3: Enhance collaboration by establishing and strengthening relationships and experiences with stakeholders both within the Department and outside in order to build more informed and effective policy.						
Objective 3.1: Building Relationships						
Collaboration	Innovation & Tech, Stakeholder Experience Coordinator	3.1.1	Expand on successes of UDC stakeholder group by building more community coalitions to help with re-entry and rehabilitation, and also establish panels to involve experiences and feedback from incarcerated individuals	Measured Quarterly	Survey technology for incarcerated and partners; an audience for the survey to target	Pulse surveys for incarcerated individuals and stakeholder groups
Objective 3.2: Effective Policy						
Collaboration	Division directors and PAC members	3.2.1	Align practices with policies	Measured Monthly	Participation from all divisions/bureaus, contributions from PAC members	% of policies reviewed within the past five years
Collaboration	Executive leadership, Communications Office, division leaders, managers	3.2.2	Ensure that staff are familiarized with all policies and procedures	Measured Monthly	Supporting technology	Policy Attestation %
Objective 3.3: One Team						
Collaboration	Project managers and Division directors	3.3.1	Appoint project managers to enhance project coordination and implementation department-wide	Measured Monthly	Department-wide Project Managers with authority to call to action and manage cross-divisional committees	Internal Quarterly Survey Results*: Involvement in cross-divisional collaboration response.
Objective 3.4: Expanded Partnerships						
Collaboration	Inmate Placement Program	3.4.1	Effectively utilize jail contracting, particularly through leveraging treatment beds	June 30, 2025	Effective transportation, individual tracking	% utilization of increased county jail treatment beds
Collaboration	Volunteer leadership	3.4.2	Maximize the utilization of volunteer resources.	Measured Monthly	Supporting technology	Number of volunteer hours worked at UDC facilities and monetary equivalent
Collaboration	Executive leadership, Division of Prison Operations, Reentry & Rehabilitation	3.4.3	Work collaboratively with DHHS/CHS to align with RBA plan and further improve health outcomes for incarcerated individuals	Measured Quarterly	Cross-agency communication and collaboration	Alignment of measures with the DHHS RBA plan

Pillar(s)	Champion	Goal	Strategy	Timeline	Resources Needed	Measure
Goal 4: Implement innovation by encouraging visionary and open-minded solutions to intractable social issues, fueled by modern technologies that aid our teams as they improve our systems and processes.						
Objective 4.1: Creativity						
Innovation	Division directors, managers, Innovation & Tech	4.1.1	Provide staff the resources and culture necessary to inspire creativity at all levels of the department.	Measured Quarterly	Executive and leadership-level buy-in, strong internal communications	Number of validated staff suggestions acted upon by executive staff, division leaders, managers, or project managers
Objective 4.2: Leveraging Technology						
Innovation	CX Champion	4.2.1	Utilize insights via Qualtrics intercepts on external and internal systems and websites to improve customer experience and human-centered design.	Measured Quarterly	Executive support in systems and process improvements driven by CX champion	% improvement in Qualtrics satisfaction and effort measures
Objective 4.3: Improved Systems & Processes						
Innovation	Innovation & Tech leadership	4.3.1	Drive organization-wide efficiency improvements through the implementation of new and enhanced systems which empower staff and support data-driven decisions	June 30, 2025	Supporting funding, executive support in systems and process improvements, appropriate communication	Completion % of Business Intelligence System, Informix migration, O-Track usability/portability, and Intranet
Innovation	Reentry & Rehabilitation, IPP leadership	4.3.2	Enhance reliability of on-time prison releases from the Inmate Placement Program	Measured Monthly	Supporting funding, executive support in systems and process improvements, appropriate communication	Completion % of EPIC Efficiency recommendations
Goal 5: Deliver personalized, evidence-based assessments that prioritize the health, rehabilitation, and reentry of incarcerated individuals. These assessments will guide comprehensive case plans, strengthened by robust partnerships with sister agencies, community organizations, and stakeholders.						
Objective 5.1: Treatment						
Health and Rehabilitation	Executive leadership, division directors, managers	5.1.1	Offer increased treatment opportunities system-wide, including targeted treatment in lieu of returning people to prison	Measured Monthly	Treatment programs, staffing, and funding spread throughout the system (facilities and community)	Reduce the % of individuals unable to advance in their CAP goals due to being stuck as a result of the system's constraints and no fault of their own
Health and Rehabilitation	Reentry & Rehabilitation leadership, AP&P leadership, Facilities	5.1.2	Improve local treatment and housing opportunities by enhancing and expanding the availability of community correctional centers statewide.	Measured Annually	Facility and staff funding	Number of rescissions processed at UDC facilities due to lack of Community Correctional Center bedspace
Objective 5.2: Partnerships						
Health and Rehabilitation	Reentry & Rehabilitation leadership, AP&P leadership	5.2.1	Enhance our relationships with community treatment providers with a focus on improved access to treatment for incarcerated and supervised individuals to expand on the work in strategy 3.1.1	Measured Quarterly	Internal treatment program resources, access to funding for 3rd party programs, contract monitors	How many unique vendors are providing services to incarcerated and supervised individuals
Objective 5.3: Case Management						
Health and Rehabilitation	Reentry & Rehabilitation leadership, AP&P leadership	5.3.1	Align CAP priorities with assessment results to ensure our clients are constantly working toward self-improvement efforts as indicated by their needs	Measured Monthly	Ongoing training, fidelity checks	% of alignment between CAP goals and LS/RNR needs

Pillar(s)	Champion	Goal	Strategy	Timeline	Resources Needed	Measure
Objective 5.4: Healthcare						
Health and Rehabilitation	DPO leadership, R&R leadership and CHS leadership	5.4.1	Continue monthly quality and patient safety data visualization and discussion huddles and develop mechanism to track and report on relevant data trends and ongoing quality improvement work to UDC partners and external stakeholders by December 31, 2024	Measured Monthly	Collaboration with CHS and UDC, training	% of NCCHC standards on track for accreditation as verified by CHS tracker
Health and Rehabilitation	Reentry & Rehabilitation leadership, CHS leadership and AP&P leadership	5.4.2	Successfully develop discharge planning process with a multidisciplinary treatment team for identified populations	Measured Annually	Training, resources to ensure they can complete, fidelity checks	Completion of the development
Health and Rehabilitation	DPO leadership, R&R leadership and CHS leadership	5.4.3	Complete a collaborative evaluation with UDC of medical and mental health levels and propose revisions by June 30, 2025	Measured Annually	Training, resources to ensure they can complete, fidelity checks	Completion of the evaluation
Health and Rehabilitation	DPO leadership, R&R leadership and CHS leadership	5.4.4	Ensure collaborative approach to improve the timeliness of response to HCR turnaround times	Measured Monthly	Training, resources to ensure they can complete, fidelity checks	HCR turnaround times
Objective 5.5 Person Focused Services						
Health and Rehabilitation	Reentry & Rehabilitation leadership, AP&P leadership	5.5.1	Ensure incarcerated and supervised individuals are successfully completing their individualized CAP goals	Measured Monthly	Training, reliable data entry, resources to ensure they can complete	Number of CAP goals closed successfully

THE STRATEGIC PLANNING CYCLE



January: Review Plan

Consider any desired strategic plan updates. Strategic plans should be reviewed annually and review should include updates to strategies and work plans. Strategic plans should be significantly refreshed every four to eight years.

February: Organize and Inform

- Discuss timeline and process.
- Select strategic planning team members.
- Plan and execute a kickoff meeting/retreat, if needed, to address significant changes.
- Review current plans and materials.

March-April: Analyze and Prioritize

- Discuss critical questions
- Evaluate what information is needed and from whom, and the methods of collection to be used.
- Gather information from employees, stakeholders, customers, and the public.
- Assess performance, external opportunities and challenges, internal strengths and weaknesses.
- Analyze and compile feedback.
- Determine major findings and areas of focus for the strategic plan.

May-June: Write and Evaluate Draft Strategic Plan

- Choose a format for the plan, create the outline.
- Finalize details, write the plan.
- Determines timing and implementation of each strategy.
- Gather input on the draft plan from external stakeholders, employees, and stakeholders.
- Set processes for the plan to be regularly reviewed and used.

July: Final Plan

- Share the plan with employees and stakeholders.
- Share the plan with GOPB for the statewide agency strategic plan inventory.
- Publish on UDC website.
- GOPB uses the strategic plan to inform the FY 2026 budget process.

August-December: Use Strategic Plan

Use the strategic plan. Reference it in staff meetings, use it to make strategic decisions and guide agency work, monitor progress and update the annual work plan.



The Utah Department of Corrections
