

## Media Release

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For Immediate Release

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### Director Frakes Announces Retention Bonuses

**LINCOLN, Neb.** – Today, Director Scott R. Frakes announced in a memo to staff that he will be providing one-time \$500 retention bonuses to staff members in high turnover/high vacancy positions (Officer, Corporal, Caseworker, Food Service Specialist, Chemical Dependency Counselor, Chemical Dependency Treatment Specialist, Licensed Mental Health Practitioner I & II, Registered Nurse, Licensed Practical Nurse). The bonuses will be paid on September 14, 2016.

This announcement follows several initiatives launched by the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services over the past few months to address staffing and retention challenges. Those initiatives include the following:

**Professional Partnership:** In May, Corrections announced a partnership with the Correctional Peace Officer Foundation. The collaboration aims to provide support to correctional staff by promoting a positive image of the profession and assisting the families of fallen correctional professionals. Details on the partnership [here](#).

**Culture Study:** In early June, Corrections released a culture study led by Gov. Ricketts' Chief Human Resources Officer. The study identified several key areas where NDCS could improve the culture of the agency including employee safety, communication, inmate culture, training, compensation, and facilities. The full study is [here](#).

**Retention Funding:** In mid-June, Corrections detailed plan for use of \$1.5 million in retention funds passed by the Legislature and approved by Governor Ricketts. The funds will be used to provide better training; bonuses to cover the cost of commuting to Tecumseh State Correctional Institution; and better wellness amenities among other areas. Full details about how the retention funds are [here](#).

**Study Response Initiatives:** In July, Corrections unveiled four initiatives to address workforce concerns in culture study. Those initiatives include a twelve-hour shift pilot program; shift sergeants pilot program; facility security/procedure audits; and constructing a 100-bed temporary housing unit. Full details about the initiatives [here](#).

**Union Negotiations:** Last week, Gov. Ricketts and the Nebraska Department of Administrative Services reached out to union to bargain on staffing issues regarding Corrections. In a letter to the Legislature, Governor Ricketts outlined why it is important to address staffing issues at the bargaining table now. You can read the letter [here](#).

NDCS continues to collaborate with Governor Ricketts to address urgent staffing and retention issues, and anticipates taking further steps to address these challenges with the submission of their biennial budget request this fall.

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*See attached memo to NDCS Staff*