

Brooklyn Urgent Action Team
Fact Sheet as of September 19, 2024

The Urgent Action Team is a group of FBOP executives with subject matter expertise in human resources, facilities, procurement, budget, custody and security, medical care, and technology, who are working together to address serious concerns with MDC Brooklyn. The Warden of MDC Brooklyn is part of the Team, which is chaired by the FBOP Associate Deputy Director.

Recognizing the urgent nature of the conditions at MDC Brooklyn, the FBOP Director formed a Team empowered to make decisions, allocate resources, and ensure that action is taken to address the issues at MDC Brooklyn. The decision to use this novel approach and create this Team reflects the serious nature of the conditions at MDC and FBOP's recognition that sustained and focused executive leadership will be required to achieve lasting change at MDC Brooklyn.

Although its work is ongoing, since its inception, the Team has facilitated the following positive changes at MDC Brooklyn:

- **Significantly increased staffing levels, particularly for Corrections Officers (COs) and medical personnel:** 70% of CO positions are filled compared with 55% in January. About 90% of medical positions are filled compared to 69% in January. Notably, in January, MDC Brooklyn had one nurse on staff. It now employs six nurses on staff.
- **Increased pay for employees at MDC, which is critical to maintaining and increasing staffing levels.** The base starting salary for COs in the New York City area is \$57,340. FBOP offers a 25% recruitment incentive to all new COs. In spring 2024, MDC Brooklyn was approved by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to pay a 35% retention incentive to all employees. This significantly increased CO pay, which has allowed MDC Brooklyn to retain experienced employees.

Change to CO Compensation Since January

	In January 2024	Now	Difference
Base starting salary	\$71,675 (salary plus 25% recruitment)	\$71,675.00 (salary plus 25% recruitment)	same
After one year	\$68,415.60 (salary plus 10% retention)	\$83,964.00 (salary plus 35% retention)	\$15,549
At five years	\$84,190.70 (salary plus 10% retention)	\$103,324.95 (salary plus 35% retention)	\$19,134

- **New tools to streamline and accelerate CO hiring:** Since January, MDC Brooklyn has received approval to use Direct Hire Authority, a hiring authority that streamlines and accelerates the hiring process for COs. This has allowed us to hire more quickly and was a key tool in raising the staffing levels at MDC Brooklyn.
- **Improved the ratio of COs to adults in custody:** FBOP has taken several steps to manage the population at MDC Brooklyn to do more with existing resources. Although we cannot detail

these steps for safety and security reasons, they have had a significant impact. In January, MDC Brooklyn had about 1580 adults in custody. Currently, the population is about 1220. Increasing the number of COs and decreasing the number of adults in custody has improved the ratio of COs to adults in custody.

- **Initiated the use of telehealth at MDC Brooklyn.** MDC Brooklyn has partnered with a local hospital to begin providing telehealth services for some medical needs. In addition, MDC Brooklyn utilizes telehealth to allow FBOP medical providers to offer certain types of care to adults in custody. In spring 2024, new telehealth equipment was installed in each housing unit. The Urgent Action Team is working with MDC Brooklyn to expand its telehealth program to new specialties. The use of telehealth has a dynamic impact on staffing needs. For example, we are able to provide 9 AICs with specialist consults during a telehealth day. Prior to the use of telehealth, each of these AICs would need to be escorted to an outside medical facility by two employees. With telehealth, each of these appointments frees up approximately 8 hours of custodial staff time.
- **Completed significant facilities repairs and improvements.** In spring 2024, over four weeks, two teams deployed to MDC Brooklyn to make a wide range of repairs at the facility. The teams completed over 800 work orders, including electrical and plumbing upgrades and repairs to food service, maintenance to HVAC systems, repair and replacement of broken windows, installation of lighting and security cameras, and upgrades to equipment in control centers. During this period, the facilities teams went cell to cell and resolved all plumbing and most electrical issues that were identified.
- **Installed dozens of new computers in housing units to facilitate individual's access to legal documents.** More than 40 new computers were installed to allow adults in custody greater access to review their legal documents.