

## John Ripley

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**From:** Drew Vetter <dvetter@baltimorecountymd.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 18, 2019 11:24 AM  
**To:** jripley@aft-maryland.org  
**Cc:** Rhoda Benjamin; Stacy L Rodgers  
**Subject:** Correctional Officer Salary Survey Request  
**Attachments:** Response - Corrections Salary Survey Request.pdf; Corrections Salary Survey Request Letterhead.docx

John:

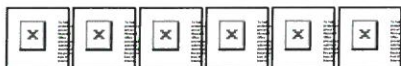
You have raised the issue of compensation levels for our Correctional Officers relative to other jurisdictions, and highlighted impacts on recruitment and retention. Therefore, Director Watts has requested that OHR conduct a salary survey. The review will provide the information necessary to consider any adjustments going forward. Thank you.

Drew

Drew Vetter  
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JOHN A. OLSZEWSKI, JR.  
*County Executive*



GAIL M. WATTS, *Director*  
*Department of Corrections*

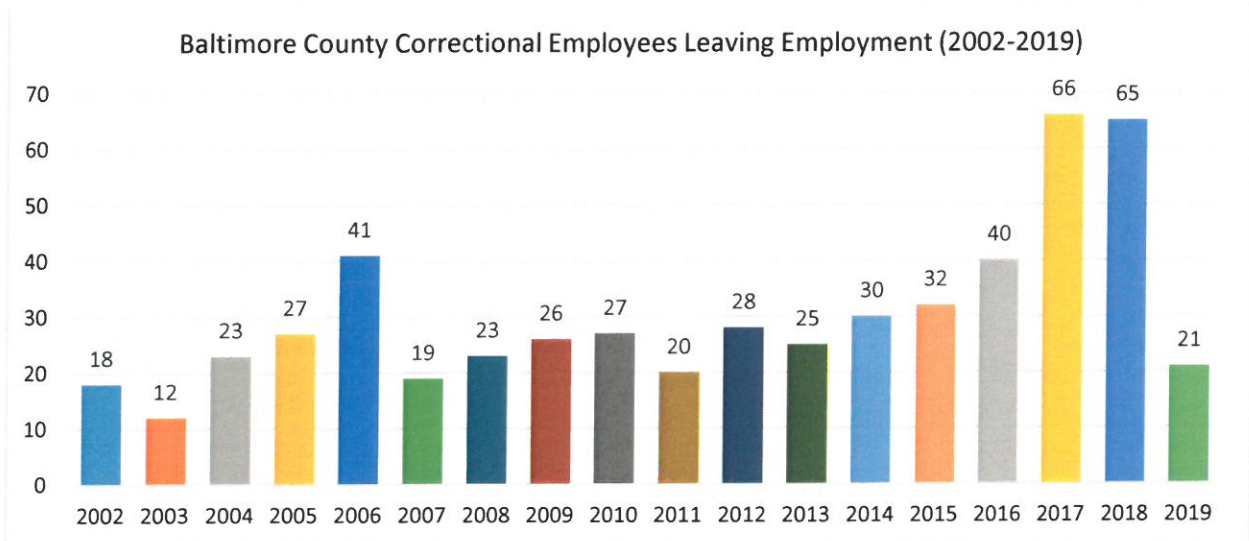
Rhoda Benjamin  
Human Resources Director  
308 Allegheny Avenue  
Towson, Maryland 21204

Dear Ms. Benjamin:

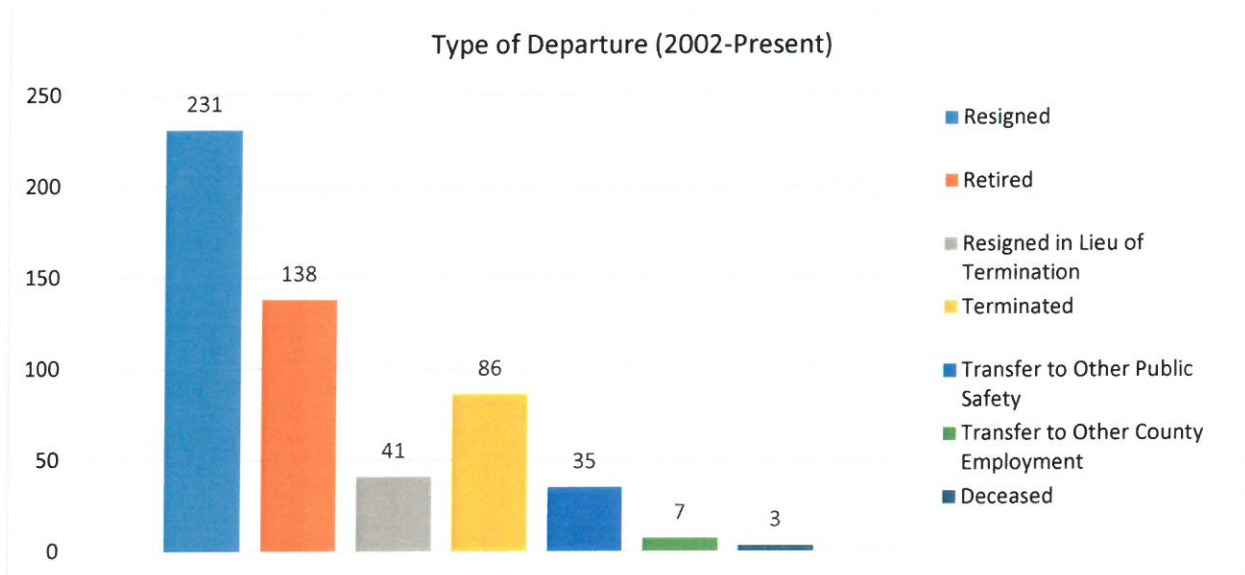
The purpose of this correspondence is to request that the Office of Human Resources conduct a salary survey for all ranks of Correctional Officers in the Baltimore County Department of Corrections. Typically, comparisons related to Corrections focus on Anne Arundel, Montgomery and Prince George's counties, as these are closest to Baltimore County in the number of citizens and the population of their correctional facilities. It is suspected that comparisons with neighboring corrections agencies will reveal Baltimore County lagging behind the other agencies.

While the starting salaries of these other agencies are very similar to Baltimore County, the maximum salaries all exceed ours, some significantly. It seems that one of the most significant contributors to the disparity with other corrections agencies is the number of incremental pay increases built into the pay scales. One example of this is Anne Arundel County, where correctional officers' starting salary is \$41,795 and the maximum salary is \$75,487 after 21 years. In comparison, Baltimore County's starting salary for correctional officers is \$43,782 and the maximum salary is \$68,671 after 30 years. It appears that all three agencies provide annual merit increases until the maximum salary is reached. Baltimore County provides annual increases for the first five years of employment, then every five years thereafter. The result of this is that while other agencies increases initially occur at the same rate as Baltimore County, theirs continue to grow after we plateau. This may be one reason that more than half of the separations of Baltimore County Correctional Officers take place before five years of service.

Although a salary survey is the main request, it is hoped that the result of the comparison may reveal a method to address the difficulties of recruiting and retaining qualified correctional officers. As shown on the following graph, correctional officer separations are steadily increasing yearly. The preceding two years had the highest number of separations in a decade by far.

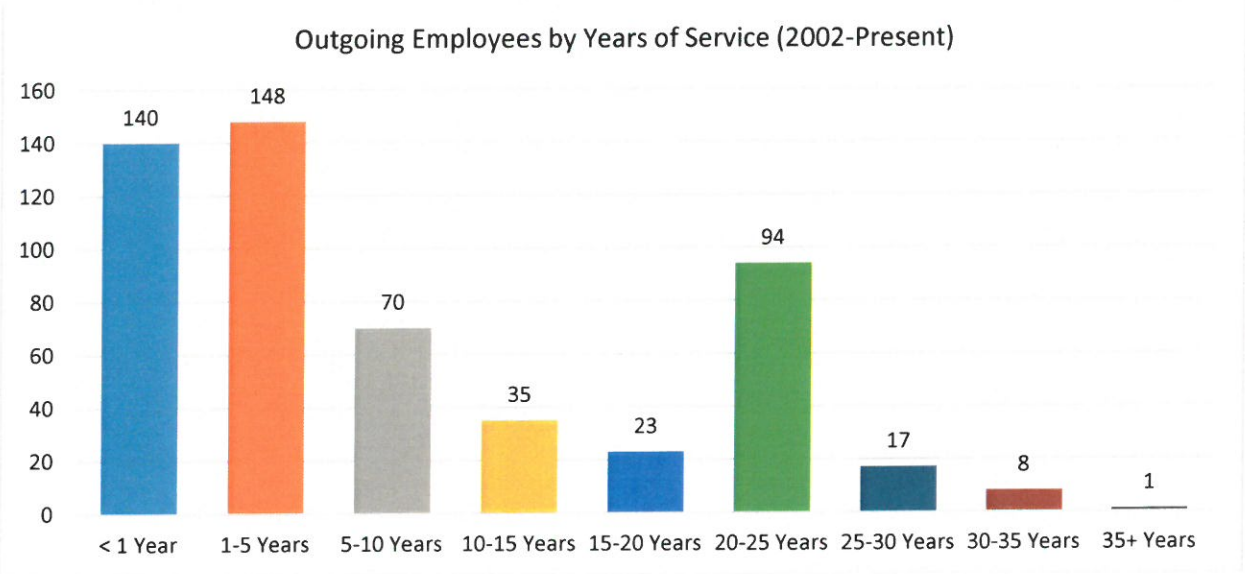


The next graph shows a breakdown of the reasons for separation over the same time frame. The number of employees terminated or resigning in lieu of termination exceeds the number of employees remaining until retirement. A significant percentage of employees leave to pursue public safety careers, either in Baltimore County or in other jurisdictions, while a small percentage of employees move to other employment in Baltimore County.



Also concerning is the length of time employees remain employed with Corrections, as detailed on the following graph. Only 1 employee during the reported time frame separated with more than 35 years of service, 8 with 30-35 years and 17 with 25-30 years. The 94 employees separated with 20-25 years of service represent the bulk of those who make it to retirement. The remaining 416 employees did not make it to the minimum 20 years for retirement. The overwhelming majority of these 416 employees either resigned or were terminated. Quite startling is the 140 employees who separate with less than 1 year of employment and the additional 148 employees leaving with less than 5 years of employment. Overall, these numbers

show that employees are far more likely to leave within the first 10 years of employment than to make it to retirement.



Sincerely,

Gail M. Watts  
Director





JOHN A. OLSZEWSKI, JR.  
*County Executive*

RHODA BENJAMIN, *Director*  
*Office of Human Resources*

June 11, 2019

Gail Watts  
Director, Department of Corrections  
720 Bosley Avenue  
Towson, MD 21204

Dear Director Watts,

The Office of Human Resources is in receipt of your letter dated June 6, 2019 requesting for a salary survey to be conducted for all correctional officer ranks. OHR's Classification and Compensation Division will initiate the process of the salary survey with emphasis on the concerns listed in your letter and get back to you with a thorough and justifiable response by July 31, 2019.

Please contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rhoda Benjamin", is written over the typed name.

Rhoda Benjamin  
Director, Office of Human Resources