

City of Alexandria, Virginia
FY 2027 Proposed Operating Budget & CIP
Budget Questions & Answers

March 25, 2026

Question:

What are the options for bringing in inmates from other jurisdictions to increase the number of inmates in the jail to the capacity amount of 340 or reducing the number of inmates to below 150? Could you provide a potential cost savings of outsourcing the incarceration of female inmates at the jail? Are there any precedents for outsourcing any inmates and if so, are there any traditional partners in this space and estimates on what other regional jails charge for housing of out of jurisdiction inmates? What if we chose a classification of male inmates to outsource (i.e. only maximum security, or only minimum security)?

Response:

Inter-locality jail contracting is a well-established and legally authorized option in Virginia, with the most common model being regional jail authorities in which multiple localities jointly own and govern a shared facility. Typically, smaller localities without their own facilities contract with regional jails to house inmates. One example is the Rappahannock Regional Jail (serving Stafford, Spotsylvania, King George, and Fredericksburg).

Classification-based transfers are also common, particularly for female inmates, as smaller jails may lack a dedicated female housing unit and contract with neighboring facilities accordingly. Medical, mental health, and security-classification transfers occur as well. Virginia's administrative code formally recognizes these arrangements (including payment agreements, courtesy holds, and exchange agreements) as standard categories of inter-locality correctional practice.

The Virginia Compensation Board's Annual Jail Cost Report is the most relevant publicly available resource. However, this document provides aggregate cost data, not individual, inter-locality contracts or agreements with specific per-diem rates for female inmates or inmates of a particular classification. Those agreements are negotiated locally between sheriffs and receiving jails or regional jail authorities. The resulting contracts themselves are held at the locality level and would need to be obtained individually, typically through a FOIA request to the relevant sheriff's office or jail authority.

City staff will lead the effort to study this model and develop a proposal to further study options for interlocal jail contracting. Developing any detailed cost benefit proposal will

take longer than the few weeks remaining until the FY 2027 budget Add/Delete deadline. However, staff will report back to Council no later than fall 2026 to provide an update.