



Fiscal Note
Legislative Council Staff
Nonpartisan Services for Colorado’s Legislature

SB 25-208: DOC INMATE PHONE COSTS

Prime Sponsors:

Sen. Amabile; Bridges
Rep. Bird; Sirota

Fiscal Analyst:

Aaron Carpenter, 303-866-4918
aaron.carpenter@coleg.gov

Published for: Senate Appropriations
Drafting number: LLS 25-0893

Version: Initial Fiscal Note
Date: March 31, 2025

Fiscal note status: The fiscal note reflects the introduced bill, which was recommended by the Joint Budget Committee as part of the FY 2025-26 Long Bill budget package.

Summary Information

Overview. The bill requires the state to cover 75 percent of the cost of phone calls made by individuals in the Department of Corrections, instead of 100 percent, in FY 2025-26 only.

Types of impacts. The bill is projected to affect the following areas on an ongoing basis:

- State Expenditures

Appropriations. For FY 2025-26, the bill includes an appropriation of \$1.4 million to the Department of Corrections.

Table 1
State Fiscal Impacts

Type of Impact	Budget Year FY 2025-26	Out Year FY 2026-27
State Revenue	\$0	\$0
State Expenditures	-\$2,308,237	\$0
Transferred Funds	\$0	\$0
Change in TABOR Refunds	\$0	\$0
Change in State FTE	0.0 FTE	0.0 FTE

Summary of Legislation

Under current law, the Department of Corrections (DOC) must provide phone calls free of charge to inmates by July 1, 2025, up from covering 35 percent of the cost. The bill delays the requirement for the DOC to cover 100 percent of the cost for phone calls for one year, and requires the DOC to cover 75 percent of the cost in FY 2025-26.

Background and Assumptions

[House Bill 23-1133](#) required the DOC to cover the cost of inmate phone calls on a phased-in basis over three years: 25 percent in FY 2023-24, 35 percent in FY 2024-25, and 100 percent in FY 2025-26. The fiscal note for HB 23-1133 assumed a 200 percent increase in phone calls by FY 2025-26, resulting in an estimated cost of \$1.1 million at full implementation.

Since the bill's passage, the DOC revised the data provided for the fiscal note from a baseline of 29 million minutes of inmate phone calls per year to over 80 million minutes per year. In addition, the DOC saw a significant increase in phone call usage by inmates.

In the figure setting document for the department, JBC Staff estimated a cost of \$1,434,634 for the DOC to cover 35 percent of the cost of inmate phone calls. This bill includes the additional appropriation estimated to cover 75 percent of phone calls, estimated at \$2,870,799.

Assuming there will be an increase in call volume when calls are free, JBC Staff estimates that covering 100 percent of phone call costs will be \$5.2 million per year. These costs are assumed to be required under current law, and are not included in this fiscal note.

State Expenditures

On net, the bill decreases state General Fund expenditures in the Department of Corrections by \$2.3 million in FY 2025-26 by requiring the state to cover 75 percent of the cost of inmate phone calls, rather than 100 percent of the cost, as shown in Table 2. Out year costs are estimated at \$5.2 million per year.

Table 2
State Expenditures
Department of Corrections

Cost Component	Budget Year FY 2025-26
Estimate for covering 100% of phone call costs	\$5,179,036
Estimate for covering 75% of phone call costs	\$2,870,799
Change in State Expenditures	-\$2,308,237

Effective Date

The bill takes effect upon signature of the Governor, or upon becoming law without his signature.

State Appropriations

Based on the fiscal note for House Bill 23-1133 and JBC figure setting, the FY 2025-26 Long Bill is assumed to include a General Fund appropriation of \$1,434,634 to the Department of Corrections for inmate phone calls. This bill includes an additional General Fund appropriation of \$1,436,165 to the Department of Corrections. Together, these appropriations total \$2,870,799 for inmate phone calls in FY 2025-26.

State and Local Government Contacts

Joint Budget Committee Staff

The revenue and expenditure impacts in this fiscal note represent changes from current law under the bill for each fiscal year. For additional information about fiscal notes, please visit the [General Assembly website](#).