



## Fiscal Note

### Legislative Council Staff

Nonpartisan Services for Colorado's Legislature

## HB 26-1256: PROCEDURES & DATA INDIVIDUAL'S RELEASE FROM DOC

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**Prime Sponsors:**

Rep. Jackson; Mabrey  
Sen. Cutter

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**Published for:** House Judiciary**Drafting number:** LLS 26-0586**Version:** Initial Fiscal Note**Date:** March 16, 2026**Fiscal note status:** The fiscal note reflects the introduced bill.

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### Summary Information

**Overview.** The bill requires the Department of Corrections to provide \$100 and a 30-day bus pass to offenders released from custody.

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

- State Expenditures
- Statutory Public Entity

**Appropriations.** No appropriation is required; see State Appropriations section.

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**Table 1**  
**State Fiscal Impacts**

<b>Type of Impact</b>	<b>Budget Year FY 2026-27</b>	<b>Out Year FY 2027-28</b>
State Revenue	\$0	\$0
State Expenditures (General Fund)	\$288,992	\$577,818
Transferred Funds	\$0	\$0
Change in TABOR Refunds	\$0	\$0
Change in State FTE	0.0 FTE	0.0 FTE

## Summary of Legislation

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The bill requires the Colorado Department of Corrections (CDOC) to provide \$100 to each individual released from custody and to provide a 30-day bus pass, or equivalent subsidy, for the released individual's metropolitan area. By July 1, 2027, and annually thereafter, the CDOC is required to publish a report to its website that includes information about release allowances, and include this reporting during its annual SMART Act hearing.

In addition, the bill requires offenders to affirmatively notify the CDOC if they wish to opt-out of the Colorado Offender Identification Program. The bill prohibits the CDOC from denying identification due to outstanding restitution, child support, fines, or other legal financial obligations. Any fees for identification documents must be charged to the offender after the offender is released and may be consolidated with existing legal financial obligations. The CDOC and the Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) must collaborate to administer the identification program. The CDOC is required to provide information about offender identification during its annual SMART Act hearing.

## Background

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### Release Allowance

Currently, the CDOC provides a \$100 release allowance—also referred to as “gate money”—to individuals who qualify under [Administrative Regulation 200-01](#). The CDOC has spent an average of \$325,726 per year on release allowances over the past five years.

### Transportation Allowance

The CDOC provides bus passes or arranges transportation to every offender released to a metropolitan area, which represent 85 percent of releases. The department makes bulk purchases of bus passes, which offenders can reject in favor of an alternative mode of transportation. The CDOC has spent an average of \$39,881 per year on transportation allowances over the past five years.

### Offender Identification

The CDOC currently has processes to procure identification documents for offenders. This includes working with the Social Security Administration and the Department of Revenue on social security cards and state identification cards, respectively. Any identification issuance denial comes from the issuing agencies. Additionally, the department currently collects data on offenders who affirmatively opt-out of participation in its Offender ID program.

## CDOC Dress Out Line Item

As part of the FY 2025-26 supplemental process, the CDOC requested a [decrease of \\$400,000](#) from their “dress out” line item, which includes release and transportation allowances, due to underspending the line item. According to the request, the department has underspent by approximately \$400,000 per year over the last five fiscal years. The Joint Budget Committee [denied the request](#) on March 5, 2026.

## Assumptions

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According to the [CDOC Monthly Report for February](#), the department released 6,216 individuals in FY 2023-24, 6,218 individuals in FY 2024-25, and are on pace to release 5,798 individuals in the current FY 2025-26. This results in a projected three-year average of 6,077 individuals released from the CDOC. The fiscal note assumes that all individuals released will receive \$100 in release allowance and 85 percent of individuals will receive transportation funding. In FY 2026-27, these costs fall below current CDOC underspending on the dress out line item, as discussed in the Background section; as a result, the fiscal note assumes first-year costs require no change in CDOC appropriations.

## State Expenditures

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The bill increases state expenditures in the CDOC by about \$289,000 in FY 2026-27 (half-year impact) and by \$578,000 in FY 2027-28 and ongoing. These costs, paid from the General Fund, are summarized in Table 2 and discussed below.

**Table 2**  
**State Expenditures**  
**Department of Corrections**

<b>Cost Component</b>	<b>Budget Year FY 2026-27</b>	<b>Out Year FY 2027-28</b>
Release Allowance – All Offenders	\$141,038	\$281,974
Transportation Allowance – 85% of Offenders	\$147,954	\$295,844
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>\$288,992</b>	<b>\$577,818</b>

## Department of Corrections

Using the assumptions outlined above, the fiscal note calculates the cost of providing \$100 in gate money and \$65 in bus passes for 6,077 offenders per year, less average annual spending for those offenders who qualify for this funding under current CDOC regulations. Costs in the first year are prorated for a January 1, 2027, starting date.

As outlined in the Assumptions section, the CDOC currently has an Offender ID program; no change in appropriations is required.

Finally, the bill increases workload for the department to collect and report the required data on release allowances and ID issuance. This work can be accomplished within existing resources.

## Statutory Public Entity

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The bill increases revenue to the Regional Transportation District to the extent the CDOC purchases more 30-day bus passes for offenders whose final destination is within the district. The exact increase will depend on the negotiated purchase price for bulk passes and the number of individuals who end up residing within the district upon release.

## Effective Date

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The bill takes effect January 1, 2027, assuming no referendum petition is filed.

## State Appropriations

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Due to the underspending of the dress out line item outlined in the Background and Assumptions sections, the fiscal note assumes that the additional expenditures can be covered by existing appropriations, therefore, no change in appropriation is required for FY 2026-27. However, if the General Assembly modifies spending of that line item at a later date, the fiscal note will be revised to reflect a required appropriation.

## State and Local Government Contacts

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Corrections

Public Health and Environment

Revenue

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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](#).