

# VERMONT DOC STABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Vermont Joint Legislative Justice Oversight Committee

Presentation: September 15, 2022

# STABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

The Vermont Department of Corrections (DOC) Stability and Sustainability (S&S) Plan was introduced to all DOC staff on July 6, 2022. Key goals of the plan include:

**Establishing a Vermont DOC 50/50 Work/Life Balance 12-hour Shift Schedule for facility security staff**



**Conducting a market factor analysis to inform fair compensation for all DOC staff**



**Building a permanent, systematic commitment to and investment in professional development for staff**



**Promoting and supporting staff wellness through an inclusive effort to promote physical, mental, and emotional health;**



**Designing and implementing a Research and Data Unit to maximize available data to drive decision making, trend identification, and solution creation**

# VERMONT DOC STAFF SURVEY

## BASELINE DATA COLLECTION

- To help evaluate plan success, the first S&S Plan staff survey was created and made available to all DOC staff from *1300 HRS 7/27/2022* until *0700 HRS 7/29/2022*. The survey included all employed Vermont DOC staff, even those on leave, were temporary, or were part-time.
- The survey asked questions about employee job satisfaction, work/life balance, the S&S Plan bargaining agreement between the DOC and Vermont State Employee Association (VSEA), and demographics.
- Survey responses were optional, so staff could skip any question they did not want to answer.



# VERMONT DOC STAFF SURVEY

## BASELINE RESULTS



- **68.2%** completion rate for **all DOC staff** (**573** of 866 completed the survey).
- **70.0%** completion rate for facility security staff (COs and CFSSs; **273** of 390 completed the survey).
- Security staff at facilities close to the 50/50 Model lower staff threshold also voted on if they wanted to move to the new model once the lower threshold was met.
  - Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility (CRCF), Marble Valley Regional Correctional Facility (MVRCF), and Northeast Correctional Complex (NECC) voted during this survey.

# NORTHEAST CORRECTIONAL COMPLEX (NECC)

## BASELINE RESULTS

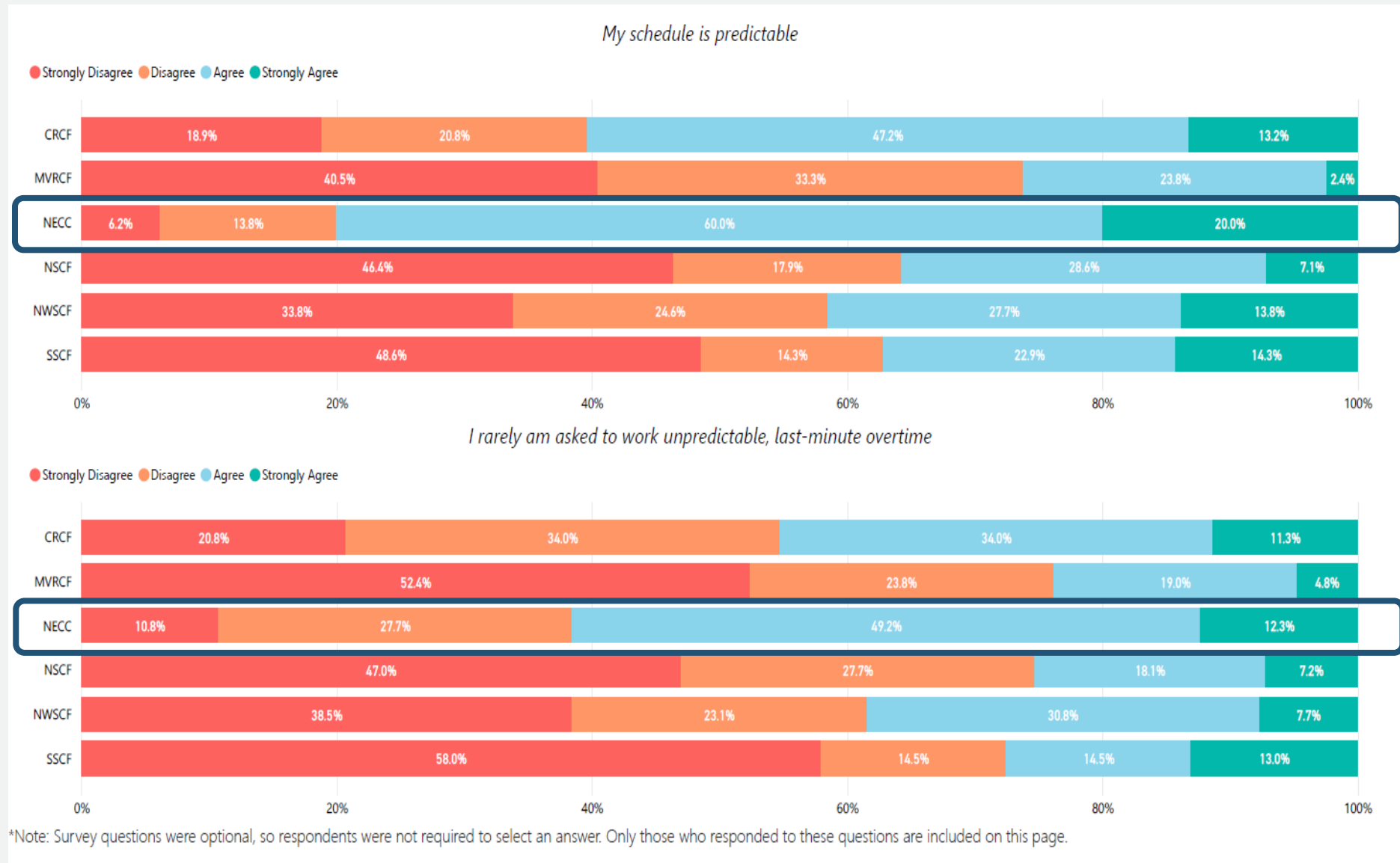
- At time of survey, **NECC** was the **only** facility that had been operating on emergency 12-hour shifts for extended time (since January 2022).
- NECC had a **79.1%** completion rate for facility security staff (COs and CFSSs; **53** of 67 completed the survey).
- NECC voted to move to the 50/50 Model: **67.9%** of NECC facility staff voted **YES**.
- Overall, NECC had more favorable results across all staff satisfaction and views on the fairness of the S&S Plan bargaining agreement:
  - Questions from staff satisfaction included job satisfaction, compensation, career advancement/building, social connection, receiving adequate communication, and DOC leadership



# NORTHEAST CORRECTIONAL COMPLEX (NECC)

## BASELINE RESULTS: WORK/LIFE BALANCE

- **80%** of NECC staff agreed/strongly agreed that their schedule is predictable.
- **61.5%** of NECC staff agreed/strongly agreed that they are rarely asked to work unpredictable, last-minute overtime.
- The other work/life balance questions pertained to having enough time off for vacation or hobbies/activities. The results showed that all staff feel they need better work/life balance.



# FEELINGS FROM THE FRONTLINES

## ANECDOTES FROM NECC

“I can actually **plan my life**.”

– COMMON FEELING EXPRESSED BY NECC STAFF

“For the first time in my career at DOC we have a '**Go Home Early**' book. On days where we have above our minimum required staff for normal operations, we are able to send some people home after eight hours on shift. I actually saw someone skipping to their car!”

– CHRIS CADORETTE, NECC ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

# STABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

## SUCCESSSES

- Reached agreement on benefits package to compensate and recognize Vermont DOC's staff contribution to stabilize the state's corrections system.
- The 170<sup>th</sup> Academy, beginning October 3<sup>rd</sup>, is **over 2X larger** than the average academy class size over the past two years.
  - 68 background checks were requested
  - 45 currently scheduled to attend
  - New recruits are reporting 12-hour shifts as a key reason for joining Vermont DOC
- Created facility-specific 50/50 schedules that are more efficient and designed to optimize the use and number of each post.
- Two of six facilities are on the 50/50 schedule with two more likely to start schedule within next couple of months.



# STABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

## CURRENT WORK

- Restructuring the Office of Professional Standards and Compliance (OPSC) to create a division solely focused on staff experience from recruitment to retirement.
- Appointing Vermont DOC recruitment specialists at each facility to assist in recruiting efforts.
- Building first-ever Vermont DOC Research & Data Unit, housed within executive leadership, to use data analysis to inform operations, policies, and initiatives.
- Working strategically with each facility to help reach the 50/50 Model.