



OKLAHOMA COUNTY DETENTION CENTER ISSUES URGENT WARNING OF BUDGET SHORTFALL THREATENING JAIL OPERATIONS IN AUGUST

OKLAHOMA CITY (June 27, 2025) – The Oklahoma County Criminal Justice Authority (OCCJA) today announced that the Oklahoma County Detention Center is facing a significant budget shortfall that could leave the facility without sufficient operating funds as soon as August 1, 2025.

Budget projections reveal a \$5.8 million funding gap between anticipated revenues and essential expenses for the remainder of the fiscal year.

The Authority projects total annual revenue of \$38.8 million, consisting of:

- \$33.7 million from the Oklahoma County General Fund
- \$5.1 million in Special Revenue (contracts with the Department of Corrections, municipal inmate fees, commissary sales, and phone revenue)

By contrast, projected expenses total \$44.7 million, driven by the unavoidable costs of operating the county's only detention facility:

- Payroll & Benefits for 392 Full-Time Employees: \$30.2 million
- Maintenance & Operations: \$13.4 million
- Capital Needs: \$1 million
- Travel and Training Expenses: \$44,000

"These numbers are not abstract accounting exercises," said Paul Timmons, Interim Chief Executive Officer of the Oklahoma County Detention Center. "This is about whether we can pay our staff, maintain basic safety and sanitation, and meet the legal obligations to everyone housed in our facility. Our dedicated team of detention officers, medical staff, and support personnel work hard every single day under extremely challenging conditions. They deserve to know that we will fight to secure the resources needed to support them and keep everyone safe."

Without new funding or emergency support, the Authority projects available operating funds will be depleted following July 31, 2025.

Authority leaders point out that the financial crisis is compounded by the high fixed costs of running an aging and overcrowded facility, rising inmate healthcare needs, court-mandated safety staffing, and maintenance expenses driven by vandalism and deferred infrastructure repairs.

"We want to be transparent with the public and our partners in county government," said Steven Buck, Chairman of the Oklahoma County Criminal Justice Authority. "That's why the Trust voted to actively engage with the Board of County Commissioners to discuss realistic solutions, funding strategies, and the ongoing direction of the Authority. It is absolutely in the public's interest that these conversations happen openly, with urgency, and with full accountability to all residents of Oklahoma County who rely on us to ensure safety, security, and operational excellence at the jail."

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