



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Governor Tony Evers / Secretary Kevin A. Carr

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Secretary Kevin A. Carr Announces Retirement from DOC

Madison, Wis. – Secretary Kevin A. Carr, who was appointed by Governor Tony Evers in 2019 as head of the Wisconsin Department of Corrections and helped lead the agency through the COVID-19 pandemic and statewide staff shortages, has announced his retirement effective Friday, March 8.

“The past five years have been quite memorable and I could not be prouder to have worked with some of the finest public servants in the country who are doing amazing work every day under very difficult conditions,” said Secretary Carr. “I have truly been inspired and impressed by the dedication and professionalism of everyone at the DOC. I want to thank them for their incredible work, and I also want to express my gratitude to Governor Evers for giving me such a wonderful opportunity to lead this agency and work with so many remarkable people.”

Before joining the DOC, Secretary Carr spent 42 years in public service. Most recently, he was a U.S. Marshal in the Eastern District of Wisconsin, a position he was appointed to by President Barack Obama. Before that, he spent 30 years with the Milwaukee County Sheriff’s Office.

When Secretary Carr arrived in 2019, the DOC faced several challenges not unfamiliar to correctional systems nationwide, including high staff vacancies and other resource shortages. In 2020, the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated those challenges, and the agency’s statewide vacancy rate at adult institutions climbed from 17% at the time of Secretary Carr’s arrival to more than 36%.

Secretary Carr led the creation of dedicated recruitment team and fought to secure compensation increases, which were included in the new Compensation Plan approved last year by Governor Evers and the State Legislature. What followed were some of the largest correctional officer academies in department history, with the [latest class reaching 214 new officers](#) – the biggest class size since at least 1981. The DOC’s current vacancy rate for correctional officers and sergeants at adult institutions is 21.3%. Given the size of the latest correctional officer academy, which began February 26 and will graduate in April, the vacancy rate is expected to drop lower than it was when Secretary Carr was appointed.

“As a team, we have accomplished something that’s pretty amazing,” said Secretary Carr. “Staffing-wise, we’re projecting that our adult institutions will be in the best position they’ve been in for more than a decade by this summer. This will significantly improve the quality of life for both our adult institutions staff and the persons in our care.”

Additionally, under Secretary Carr's leadership the DOC recreated the Internal Affairs Office, expanded its communications capacity, increased transparency through community and stakeholder engagement, established a dedicated open records unit, expanded training for management, and is developing a new program to provide greater support for staff who have experienced work-related trauma.

Secretary Carr also led initiatives to increase educational opportunities for persons in our care, expand the Earned Release Program to increase eligibility, and expand Medication Assisted Treatment for those on supervision and in custody.

Following his retirement, Secretary Carr's leadership team will oversee the DOC until a new appointment is made by Governor Evers.