

SYNDICAT DES EMPLOYÉ-E-S DE LA SÉCURITÉ ET DE LA JUSTICE



UNION OF SAFETY AND JUSTICE EMPLOYEES

August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Hon. Gary Anandasangaree  
Minister of Public Safety of Canada  
House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario

***Re: Comprehensive Expenditure Review at the Correctional Service Canada***

Dear Minister Anandasangaree:

I am writing to you today to alert your Ministry to a serious issue within the federal Correctional Service Canada (“CSC”).

You will recall that, during our virtual call on June 17, 2025, I raised significant concerns around future budget cuts (under the Refocusing Government Spending initiative) and how such cuts would overburden the public safety frontline and compromise public safety outcomes.

To meet the government’s demand for deep departmental cuts, the CSC has recently announced an ill-conceived direction to increase inmate employment within the federal correctional institutions as a means to offset staff resources. Below is an excerpt from a message sent to, among others, all Deputy Wardens in Ontario federal institutions:

*“As budget’s tighten, one of the areas regions have been asked to review, is where we can enhance Inmate Employment to help take on work in certain areas to assist, and lessen the need for staff resources. ...*

*We are being asked to provide updates to NHQ to confirm that we have solid processes in place for hiring inmates within our institutions to offset staffing requirements.”*

The Union of Safety and Justice Employees (“USJE”) immediately flagged this messaging with CSC’S National Headquarters. We voiced urgent health and safety concerns around such an approach that would, in essence, create a heavy reliance on inmate labour for essential services within federal institutions. Unfortunately, our plea appears to have fallen on deaf ears in regards to our communications with the Commissioner and her team; hence, the necessity to direct our concerns to you.

SYNDICAT DES EMPLOYÉ-E-S DE LA SÉCURITÉ ET DE LA JUSTICE



UNION OF SAFETY AND JUSTICE EMPLOYEES

In 2021, an employee was brutally attacked by an inmate while working in the kitchen of Stony Mountain Institution in Manitoba. The assault left the employee with significant physical and psychological injuries, such that they have not been able to return to work.

Following that incident, an independent investigation revealed that CSC had "not properly identified, assessed and protected against all the hazards in the workplace."

This is why USJE has consistently requested more FOS members in the kitchens in order to improve efficient and safe operations, which includes the hiring of more indeterminate/determinate staff as opposed to relying on casuals and inmate labour. Further, USJE has been adamant that there needs to be an increased presence of Correctional Officers to ensure the security of both employees and offenders in the kitchen.

While such assaults are unfortunately not unheard of, they are becoming more prevalent. Just this week, there was a violent assault on an employee in the kitchen at Port Cartier Institution in Quebec. The incident resulted in the employee being taken for outside medical attention.

Respectfully, initiatives that seek to reduce an already overworked workforce, by placing knives and other would-be weapons in the hands of even more federally incarcerated inmates, can only be characterized as unsafe and irresponsible.

If this government is steadfast in its intent to refocus government spending, such initiatives need to be done in a responsible and secure manner. We urge your immediate attention to this matter before another federal public safety worker is hurt or worse, killed, in the name of saving on government spending.

Respectfully yours,

David Neufeld  
National President