



The First 100 Days **ORLEANS PARISH** **SHERIFF'S OFFICE**



Sheriff
**MICHELLE M.
WOODFORK**

2800 Perdido Street | New Orleans, Louisiana 70119

A MESSAGE FROM SHERIFF WOODFORK

To the People of Orleans Parish

The first 100 days of any administration sets the direction for everything that follows. Ours began on May 4, 2026, under conditions harder than most people outside these walls ever knew.

Our facilities carried years of deferred maintenance. The city's appropriation for jail operations in 2026 had been cut to \$32.8 million, roughly 57 percent below the \$76 million appropriated in 2022. Over that same stretch, our detainee population grew from an average of 885 in 2021 to more than 1,400 today. Our standing under the federal Consent Decree had slipped. Our workforce was stretched thin, our purchasing controls had gaps, and questions about this office's financial practices had reached the Legislative Auditor and the federal courts.

This report is our accounting to you of what we found, what we've done, and what is still left to do. We built it in that order because that is how we approached the work: assess first, act next, and tell the truth about it the whole way through.

In 100 days, we have stabilized this office, restored fiscal discipline, and put Orleans Parish on a credible path out of the federal Consent Decree. Three more provisions have reached substantial compliance. The number remaining out of compliance is down from nine to six, and several of those six are moving in the right direction. I established an independent Security and Accountability Council by executive order. We re-engaged every party to the decree. Our facilities are safer today than they were on May 4.

We are not finished. The Consent Decree is not closed. Our operating budget still sits well below what constitutional operations require. Our facilities need continued capital investment, and our people deserve pay that reflects the weight of the work they carry. What follows is an honest picture of work still in progress.

I am grateful to the people of Orleans Parish for your trust, and to the men and women of this office who have carried this work forward at every hour of every day since I took the oath.



Michelle M. Woodfork
Sheriff of Orleans Parish





Between May 4 and August 12, 2026, the Orleans Parish Sheriff's Office (OPSO) delivered measurable progress across public safety, fiscal management, and federal compliance. The figures below are drawn from OPSO records and, where applicable, filings with the federal court, the Louisiana Legislative Auditor, and the New Orleans City Council.

The First 100 Days at a Glance

-28

Net personnel positions,
*10 non-essential
administrative

3 → 8

**Non-compliant
provisions reduced** in 100
days

3

Executive order
establishing independent
oversight

117

**Shakedowns &
Security Sweeps**
conducted facility-wide

78

Weapons recovered
through security sweeps

33

Drug possession cases
from sweeps

19

In-custody re-bookings
from investigations

200+

**Outside contractor
arrangements** identified
for review

77%

**Grievance backlog
reduced** from prior period

12

**Critical facility repair
projects** identified

-\$720K

Net Personnel Budget

\$1.67M

**Deferred invoices
inherited** and paid down

\$500K

State Capital outlay
secured for facility repairs

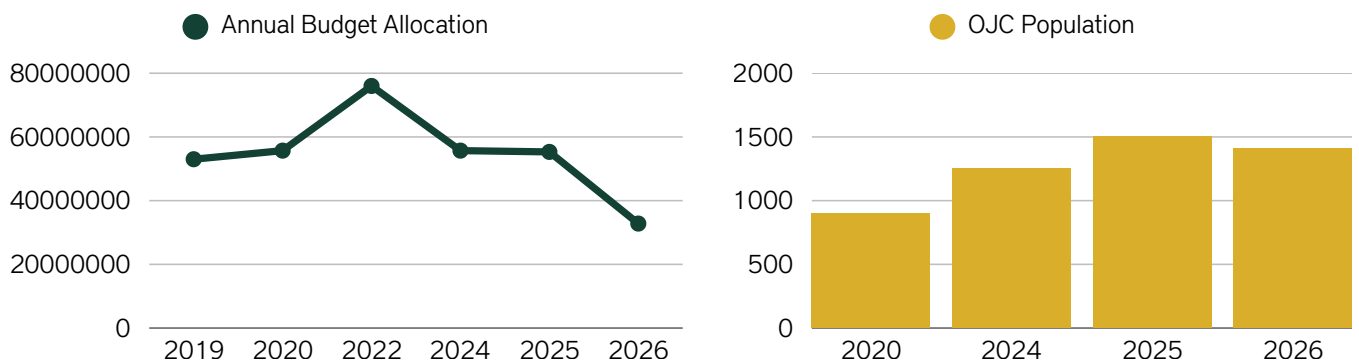
What We Inherited

Every figure in this section comes from OPSO records, federal court filings, published Legislative Auditor materials, or public City of New Orleans budget documents.

FISCAL CONDITIONS

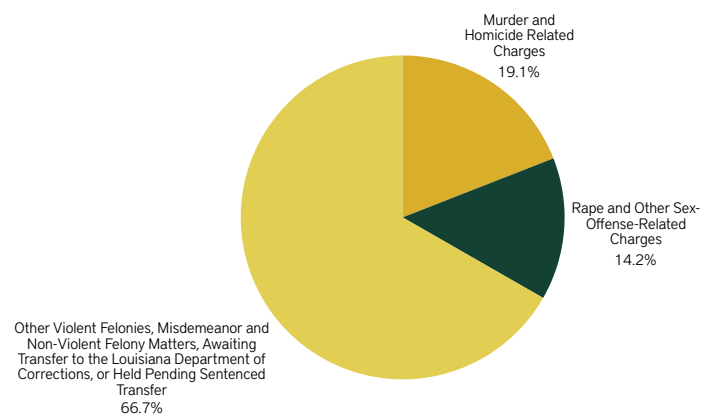
The City of New Orleans funded jail operations for 2026 at \$32.8 million, a **41 percent reduction from the 2024** appropriation of \$55.7 million and a **57 percent reduction from the 2022 appropriation** of \$76 million, the largest annual appropriation in OPSO's history. **Appropriations declined even as the detainee population increased.** Across six budget cycles, funding moved from \$53.0 million (2019, held flat) to \$53.0 million (2020, population near 900) to \$76.0 million (2022, historic high) to \$55.7 million (2024, population above the 1,250 legal cap) to \$55.3 million (2025, population at times exceeding 1,500) to \$32.8 million (2026). The prior administration filed suit against the city in federal court over the 2026 figure, arguing it was insufficient to support constitutional operations.

Discretionary spending had expanded without a formal approval process, and the office's contract inventory was incomplete.



DETAINEE POPULATION PROFILE

The population at the Orleans Justice Center stands at approximately 1,450, up from an average of 885 in 2021, **an increase of more than 55 percent**. The population included 268 individuals held on murder and homicide-related charges and more than 200 held on rape and other sex-offense-related charges, with the remainder held on other violent felonies, misdemeanor and non-violent felony matters, awaiting transfer to the Louisiana Department of Corrections, or held pending sentenced transfer.



▼ **41%**

41% REDUCTION IN BUDGET ALLOCATIONS FROM THE CITY

▲ **55%**

55+% INCREASE OF THE POPULATION AT THE ORLEANS JUSTICE CENTER

Baseline Conditions



FACILITY CONDITIONS

Site inspections conducted in the administration's first weeks documented the effects of prolonged deferred maintenance, including failing doors, locks, and lighting across housing units, and metal stripped from doors and repurposed as weapons and tools. OPSO's Chief of Facilities identified twelve critical repair projects requiring capital investment.



CONSENT DECREE POSTURE

The federal Consent Judgment, entered in 2013, encompasses 174 provisions and additional Court orders, covering requirements for protection from harm, mental and medical health care, sanitation and environmental conditions, fire and life safety, language assistance, and youthful prisoners. On May 4, nine of those provisions remained out of compliance. Regular collaboration among the federal Monitors, Plaintiffs' counsel, the United States Department of Justice, and OPSO had lapsed. Monthly compliance status conferences had not been maintained. Internal policy review against American Correctional Association accredited standards or best practices was not institutionalized across the office. Phase III construction, the court-ordered mental health component of the Orleans Justice Center, remained under active oversight.



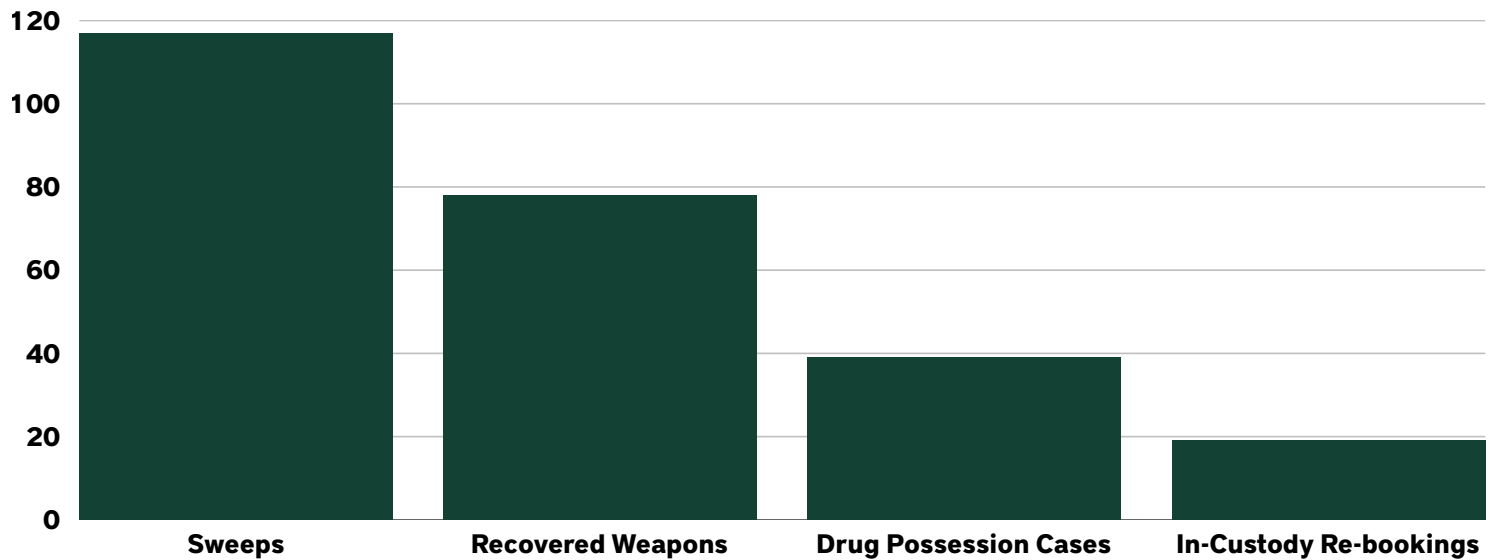
WORKFORCE CONDITIONS

Sworn workforce vacancy rates approached 21 percent as of the preliminary assessment. The organizational chart was not current. Onboarding and disciplinary processes were inconsistent. Command-level personnel assigned to compliance were operating without a permanent director. Deputy compensation lagged the regional market and the national average. Records collected during the transition period indicated employee morale challenges that required immediate attention.



ACTIVE MATTERS

Investigations inherited from the prior period remained open at both the state and federal levels. Financial recordkeeping deficiencies had been noted by the Louisiana Legislative Auditor. Grievance backlog exceeded 3,300 unresolved matters. Contracts with outside vendors and law firms lacked documentation and cost controls.



Safety and Public Safety

Sheriff Woodfork established the Security and Accountability Council by executive order within her first weeks in office, tasked with identifying safety deficiencies and directing corrective action.

OPSO conducted eight facility-wide protective sweeps, recovering 78 weapons, opening 29 drug possession cases, and producing 19 in-custody re-bookings tied to active investigations.

Facility security investments are underway in parallel. Cell door replacement is in progress, lock control upgrades have entered Phase II, and camera and perimeter security reviews are complete. The office reactivated a preventive maintenance program that had lapsed in prior years.

FACILITY UPGRADES	STATUS
Cell Doors	In-Progress
Lock Control	Phase II
Cameras	Complete
Preventive Maintenance	Reactivated

Fiscal Discipline

Sheriff Woodfork issued a budget accountability memorandum to all division heads within her first month, establishing new standards for spending review and contract oversight

OPSO is cooperating fully with the Louisiana Legislative Auditor and has completed a comprehensive contract inventory, flagging more than 200 outside contractor arrangements for review. Overlapping C-suite positions were consolidated, and the resulting savings were redirected to operational needs.

The office has also expanded voluntary financial disclosure beyond regulatory requirements, as part of a broader effort to rebuild public trust in OPSO's financial practices.

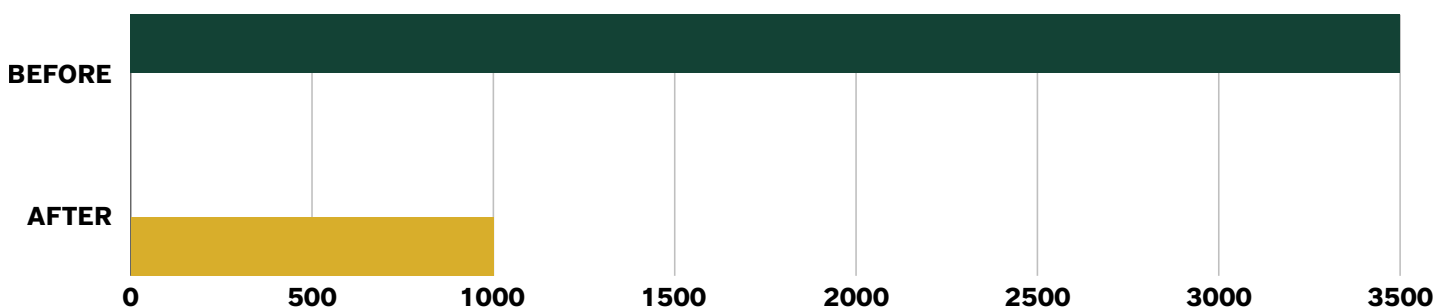
Consent Decree Progress

The federal Consent Decree remains the standard against which OPSO's operations are measured.

Three new provisions reached substantial compliance within the administration's first 100 days, reducing the number of provisions out of compliance from nine to six. The office re-engaged the federal Monitors, plaintiff counsel, and the U.S. Department of Justice as active partners in that progress.

OPSO also modernized policy, pursued accreditation on multiple fronts, and cleared more than 2,500 grievances from a backlog that had exceeded 3,300. Phase III construction of the court-ordered mental health wing continues to advance under active oversight.

Full compliance has not been achieved, but the trend across the administration's first 100 days is measurably positive.



CHRO HIRED | FACILITIES CHIEF HIRED ORG CHART FINALIZED | 52 APPLICANTS

Workforce, Culture, and Facility Investment

OPSO hired a Chief Human Resources Officer to lead human resources and internal communications, and a Chief of Facilities to lead facilities strategy, capital planning, and physical upgrades. The organizational chart was finalized to clarify roles and reporting relationships across the agency.

STRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS

The office is decentralizing commissioned employees into Orleans Justice Center operations.

Senior leadership completed training in leadership development and emotional intelligence, and onboarding and disciplinary processes were standardized.

RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, AND COMPENSATION

OPSO is restructuring its detail system, through which deputies earn supplemental income for approved off-duty assignments, to raise deputy compensation.

A regional recruitment campaign has generated 52 applicants to date. C-suite staffing was reduced through consolidation of overlapping positions, with savings redirected to operations.

FACILITY INVESTMENT

Twelve critical repair projects were identified and prioritized against available resources. Cell door replacement is 50 percent complete, lock control upgrades have entered Phase II, and camera and perimeter security reviews are complete. The office reactivated a preventive maintenance program that had lapsed in prior years

Partnerships and Community



STATE AND FEDERAL

OPSO rebuilt its working relationship with the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections and reopened communication with the U.S. Marshals Service and federal partners on transport, classification, and reentry coordination. The office is pursuing state capital outlay funding for facility repairs and secured \$500,000 toward that effort in the current budget cycle.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND THE COURTS

OPSO meets regularly with the Criminal District Court, the City Council, and the Mayor's Office on population management, court scheduling, and facility conditions, and has restored a working relationship with the City's Chief Administrative Office on budget and capital planning.



REGIONAL COORDINATION

The office coordinates with sheriffs' offices across the region on transport, mutual aid, and shared training resources, and participates in statewide corrections leadership discussions on staffing and facility standards.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

OPSO has opened its operations to outside review, including the Independent Jail Monitors, the Consent Decree Monitor, and advocacy organizations with a stake in facility conditions.



The Road Ahead

OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES

Over the next 100 days, OPSO will continue pursuing substantial compliance on the remaining Consent Decree provisions, complete facility security investments already underway, and close out the critical repair projects identified in its facility assessment. The office will finalize its restructured detail system, expand its regional recruitment campaign, and continue standardizing disciplinary and grievance processes.

WHAT SUSTAINED PARTNERSHIP REQUIRES

Full and lasting resolution of the Consent Decree will require continued state capital investment in facility repairs beyond the \$500,000 already secured; a city operating budget for jail operations that reflects the actual cost of constitutional compliance; sustained cooperation between OPSO, the courts, and the Legislative Auditor on financial oversight; deputy compensation sufficient to recruit and retain the workforce the role requires; and continued public engagement and independent oversight.

THE STANDARD OPSO SETS

OPSO is accountable to the people of Orleans Parish, to the federal court overseeing its Consent Decree, and to the deputies and staff who carry out its mission daily. The office intends to sustain this standard of transparency going forward.

IN CLOSING

To the people of Orleans Parish: the Sheriff's Office is stable. The direction is set. Every commitment made when this administration took the oath, we remain committed to. Every hard truth reflected in this report is one we will continue to communicate with the same directness for as long as we serve.

We inherited a difficult agency. We have delivered a difficult 100 days of work. What comes next will require the continued partnership of the City, the sustained investment of the taxpayers, and the trust that we are earning through the results we produce. We are grateful. The work continues.



SHERIFF MICHELLE WOODFORK