



## **Decision to Suspend Housing Operations at MCI-Cedar Junction (Walpole)**

### ***Frequently Asked Questions***

**Q: What is MCI-Cedar Junction (sometimes referred to as “Walpole”)?**

**A:** MCI-Cedar Junction is a maximum-security correctional facility located in Walpole and operated by the Massachusetts Department of Correction (DOC). Opened in the 1955, the facility serves as the Department’s reception and diagnostic center where newly incarcerated men are evaluated for security classification and await transfer to the appropriate facility. Cedar Junction also houses a small operational workforce of less than 50 men in a medium security setting and maintains the Department Disciplinary Unit (DDU) and Behavioral Management Unit (BMU) for the most serious security concerns.

**Q: Why has the Department of Correction decided to suspend housing operations at the facility?**

**A:** As part of its commitment to provide the highest level of care, DOC performed an extensive department-wide review to explore opportunities to improve efficiency. Corrections and capital planning experts concluded that:

1. Cedar Junction’s core functions can be performed more efficiently at other DOC facilities.
2. The aging facility would require costly maintenance, including nearly \$30M in necessary infrastructure repairs with the electrical upgrades estimated at a cost of \$22M.
3. Consolidating resources across a smaller number of facilities provides new opportunities for investment in services, staffing, and programming.

**Q: How will this decision impact the functions currently performed at Cedar Junction?**

**A:** This decision, and the subsequent consolidation of resources across fewer locations, allows DOC to eliminate redundancies and deepen our investments in programming, staffing, and services. The decision to suspend operations at Cedar Junction aligns with [the Department’s previously announced 3-year process to reform its approach to discipline, which includes dissolving the DDU at Cedar Junction.](#)

**Q: When will the facility suspend operations?**

**A:** DOC has developed a three-phased approach to be carried out over two years.

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Expected Completion</b>
I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Transition the Men’s Reception Center to SBCC</li><li>• Continue normal classification process to identify new facility for men currently housed at Cedar Junction</li></ul>	60-90 days
II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relocation of the BMU inmates</li></ul>	Before the end of 2024
III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dissolution of the DDU</li></ul>	Before the end of 2024

**Q: What will happen to Cedar Junction's physical buildings?**

**A:** Although Cedar Junction will not house general population inmates, limited functions will continue on-site. As previously mentioned, DDU and BMU will continue to operate while the Department identifies a suitable alternative for those populations' very specific programming, services, and security needs.

No interruption in operations is expected for the manufacturing of the Commonwealth's license plates at Cedar Junction during this relocation.

DOC will continue to maintain and inspect MCI-Cedar Junction regularly.

**Q: What does this decision mean for my loved one who lives at Cedar Junction?**

**A:** In the next 2-3 months, every individual within the general population will complete the normal classification process for placement in a facility appropriate for their security, service, and programming needs. The Department takes great care with every placement to ensure it aligns with the goal of rehabilitation.

Members of the workforce who live within the medium security setting will remain in place temporarily to support the limited operations described below.

For those living within the DDU and BMU, DOC will identify the behavioral and clinical criminogenic needs and place them in other facilities with personalized plans to deliver appropriate programming and treatment. This plan aligns with the [DOC's June 2021 announcement to eliminate restrictive housing across its agency and dissolve the DDU](#) with the goal of addressing disruptive behavior in a more meaningful way.

**Q: What does this mean for newly incarcerated men who will enter the DOC?**

**A:** In the next 60-90 days, the reception and diagnostic center will relocate to Souza-Baranowski Correctional Center (SBCC) in Lancaster. After this change, all newly incarcerated men will enter DOC custody at SBCC for a period of 60-90 days. During that time, they will acclimate to the environment and complete the Department's classification process and then be transferred to the appropriate facility.

Classification informs the decision about what facility to place them in for the duration of their sentence. Approximately 80% of men earn classification for placement in a medium or minimum-security setting.

**Q: After suspending housing operations at Cedar Junction, will DOC have adequate space to maintain compliance with COVID protocols for congregate care settings?**

**A:** Yes, DOC remains deeply committed to preventing the entry and spread of COVID-19 within its facilities. Currently, the Department is operating at 56% capacity across all facilities. This shift will not affect the availability of quarantine and medical isolation areas, which have been designated at all DOC facilities, or the universal, targeted, and strategic COVID-19 testing strategies in place for DOC for inmates and staff.

[You can read more information on the Department's Coronavirus Information Guide here.](#)