

Fiscal Estimate Narratives

DHS 4/27/2011

LRB Number	11-1608/1	Introduction Number	AB-0077	Estimate Type	Original
Description Providing meals to inmates of prisons and jails					

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

Currently, the Wisconsin Resource Center (WRC) is a state prison run by the Department of Health Services. It houses approximately 333 Department of Corrections' (DOC) inmates with mental illness and 78 civilly committed Sexually Violent Persons (SVP). WRC does not have a kitchen within its facility. All meals are prepared by state employees at the Winnebago Mental Health Institute (WMHI) which shares the campus with WRC. Prepared food is transported from WMHI to WRC, plated by inmates, and served to the inmates and SVPs using state food service staff. Three meals per day are provided to both populations. If this bill is passed, this legislation would apply to only the inmate population at WRC as the SVPs are patients.

Nearly all of the inmate population is on medication which must be taken with meals. This bill allows for a physician to notify a warden or superintendent that an inmate has a medical need for more than two meals daily. It is anticipated, that most of the DOC inmates at WRC would qualify for this exemption. SVPs would continue to receive three meals a day.

DHS follows the federal nutrition guidelines when planning meals for persons in its facilities. Food costs would remain the same since total daily calories would be divided between two meals a day as opposed to three meals a day. No salary savings would occur since inmates serve the food and staff would still need to prepare three meals a day for the SVPs, for most of the WRC inmates, and for the patients at the WMHI facility. In summary, the bill will not result in any savings to the Department.

Summary of Local Fiscal Impact:

This bill would also affect meals at county jails. It would be expected that inmates in the jail who need to take medications with food would request an exemption to receive three meals a day rather than two. The Department does not have any data to calculate additional cost or savings, if any.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications