

Chairs Sollman and Evans, members of the committee,

Working mandatory overtime twice a week makes me feel exhausted, like I'm living in a mental haze. I'm constantly sick and have to call out, which only makes the problem worse for everyone else.

Everyone in this facility is stressed out all the time. We never know when we are staying or not. I can literally be told that I am staying for *another 8 hours* as I am walking out of the door! Then I am expected to come back and possibly do it again after getting maybe 3 hours of sleep. A lot of us volunteer to work overtime in order to put ourselves at the bottom of the list so we can protect ourselves from the unplanned overtime, but that doesn't always mean that we won't get hit.

I don't get to spend time with my family the way I should. Planning for anything is out the window as I never know when I will get hit with mandatory overtime. For medical reasons, I was exempted from mandatory overtime for a short period and it literally felt like a weight had been lifted off me that I didn't even know was there. I knew I was stressed out but had no idea just how bad it was. My mood improved, my sleep was better, and I was happier at home. My family was so much happier to have me at home more often, and they mentioned how much better I seemed. They could all see how my mental and physical health had been on the decline.

All of us in corrections are very tough. We don't mind helping out, and we have all done our fair share of overtime, both voluntary and mandatory. I have been here for 8 years now. I've worked mandatory overtime an average of twice a week, every week, for 8 years. I wouldn't mind it if it was every once in a while, but right now, there is no end in sight. It just doesn't stop. And nothing is really being done to fix it. I know that at least in the 8 years I've been here, it has not been a priority at all, and it's probably been much longer.

The constant stress of mandatory overtime, knowing that this is our life from now on, is crushing. If we don't get the funding we need to hire more staff and provide some relief to those of us who are struggling week after week, I feel like we have no hope.

Basil Valkanas

Oregon Dept of Corrections