

New Mexico Counties Legislative Process



2024 Better Informed Public Officials Conference

Lobbying Effectively, Communication, & Coordination

- ✓ Trust and Credibility are Key to Success
- ✓ Get to Know the Capitol Staff – They Can Help in So Many Ways
- ✓ Read the Bill and FIR – Don't Make Assumptions Based on Hearsay
- ✓ Know Your Audience and How Best to Communicate (text, not email)
- ✓ Don't Assume the Legislators Know Anything About Your Bill
- ✓ Be Concise and Focus on the Critical Points
- ✓ Your County Story Carries a Lot of Weight – You Are A Recognized Expert!
- ✓ Work the Issue Before and After Hearings (Committee and Floor)
- ✓ Persistence and Patience Pays Dividends – Rome Wasn't Built In a Day
- ✓ Do Not Make an Enemies List – This Year's Hurdle is Next Year's Champion
- ✓ Don't Leave Home Without Your Sense of Humor – You Will Need It!
- ✓ Always Be Polite and Professional
- ✓ Collectively, We Can Move Mountains

NMC Legislative Process

Year-Round	Policy Committee Meetings
Spring-Fall	Affiliate Meetings
April/May	Advisory Council Meeting w/Affiliate Chairs
June	Annual Conference (Affiliate Legislative Discussions)
July-December	New Mexico Legislature Interim Committees
July	Legislative Committee Meeting Affiliate Presentations/Board Recommendations
August	Board of Directors Initiative Endorsement/Priority Selection
October-November	County Commission Endorsement
November	Joint Meeting with NMML
December	Sponsor Selection and Bill Drafting
January	Bill Introduction & Committee Assignments Legislative Conference (Affiliate Meetings)
January-Feb/Mar	(30-Day or 60-Day Session)
February-April	Action by the Governor
March-April	Legislative Regional Meetings – Post Session

New Mexico Legislative Reports

New Mexico Counties provides a free legislative tracking service for its members through New Mexico Legislative Reports. Each county has an unlimited number of licenses to allow elected officials and professional staff to track legislation.

Subscription Services Include:

Daily News Issues

Refined Searches

Capital Outlay Reports

Bill Text

Committee Schedules

Session Calendars

Comprehensive Bill Histories

Bill Tracking and Reports

Voting Records

Legislator Profiles and Statistics

Amendment & Substitute Text

Bills and Amendments Analyzed

Fiscal Impact Reports

Statutory Conflicts Reported Daily

To acquire a username and password, please contact Beverly Garcia at (505) 424-2222.

2025 Legislative Priorities

Detention Reimbursement Fund

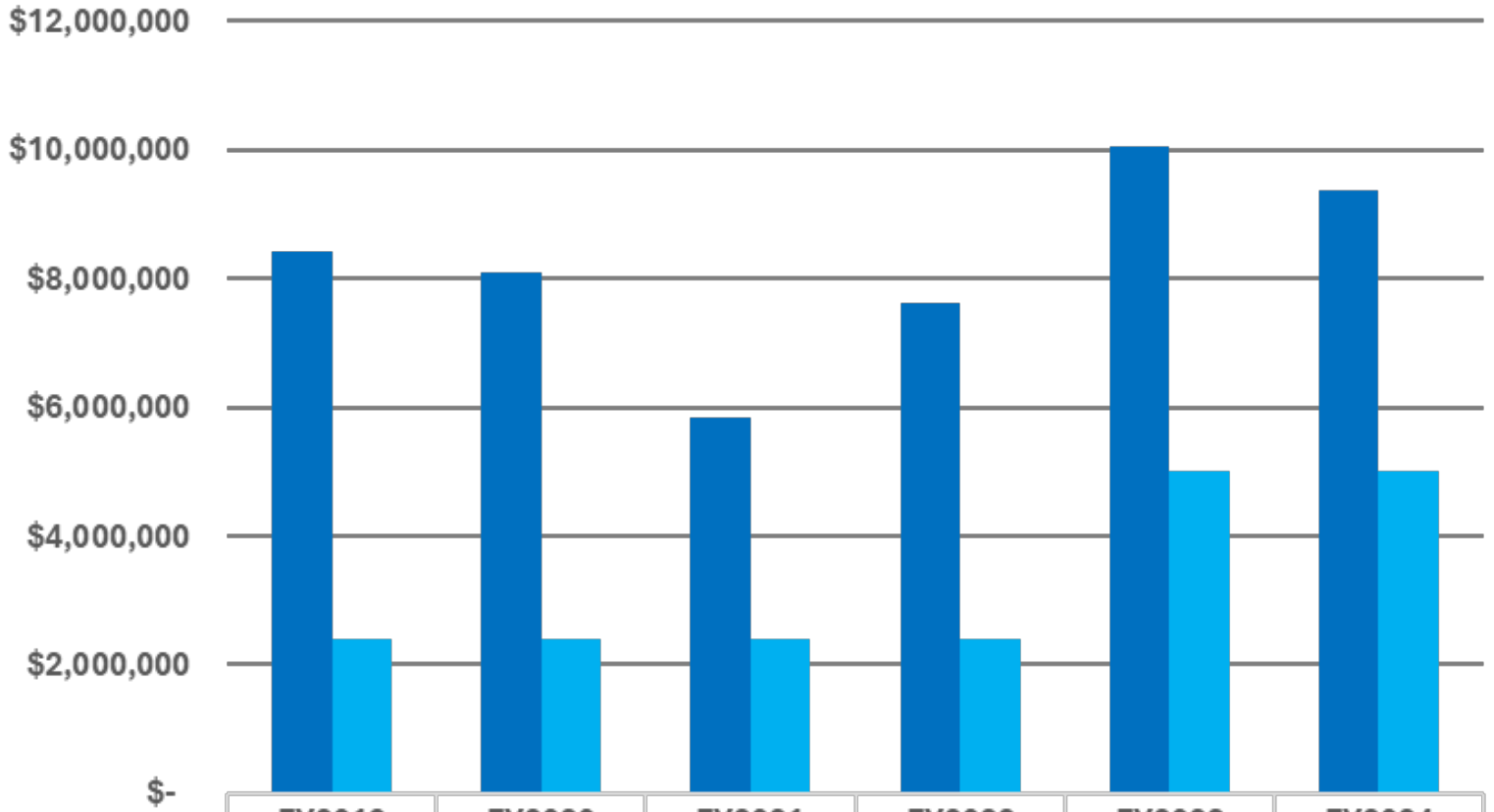
The County Detention Reimbursement Fund was **created in 2007 with a \$5 million** appropriation following litigation between the counties and state. It diminished to less than \$2.5 million over the next decade. The Legislature **restored it to the 2007 amount of \$5 million** in 2022 but the five-year average cost to house New Mexico Corrections Department inmates has been calculated by the New Mexico Sentencing Commission to be \$8.2 million.

New Mexico Counties requests an appropriation of **\$3.2 million** for the County Detention Facility Reimbursement Fund, (NMSA 1978 §33-3B-4), to reimburse counties a percentage of the cost for housing felony offenders who have been sentenced to confinement in state correctional facilities, in county facilities.



Detention Reimbursement Fund

Detention Reimbursement Fund



■ County Cost

■ State Reimbursement

FY2019

FY2020

FY2021

FY2022

FY2023

FY2024

\$8,417,550

\$8,095,776

\$5,853,565

\$7,617,303

\$10,049,246

\$9,382,935

\$2,387,500

\$2,387,500

\$2,396,500

\$2,387,500

\$5,000,000

\$5,000,000

Courthouse Funding

New Mexico Counties requests continued funding to the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) for the construction and renovation of state district courthouse complexes. State district courts no longer reflect a single judge residing at a county facility the way the territorial statute first intended.

State courthouse complexes can reach well over \$50 million in construction costs, and the **addition of a single judge can cost a county \$2-\$3 million** for renovation and increased operational support. Counties maintain that courthouses are a state responsibility and that the rising costs of construction, security, and IT necessitate a shared revenue stream.

JUDICIAL DISTRICT	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
1st	9	9	10	10	10	10	10
2nd	27	27	29	29	30	30	30
3rd	8	8	9	9	9	9	9
4th	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
5th	11	11	11	11	12	12	12
6th	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
7th	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
8th	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
9th	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
10th	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
11th	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
12th	4	4	5	5	5	5	5
13th	8	8	8	8	9	9	9
TOTAL	94	94	99	99	102	102	102

Courthouse Funding

In 2023, the Legislature appropriated \$23 million to AOC to assist with these critical needs. \$15 million was designated to resolve litigation between the 8th Judicial District Court and Otero County. AOC received over **\$22 million in requests for the remaining \$8 million.**

In 2024, the Legislature appropriated \$10,000,000 to AOC to continue this shared revenue stream, contingent upon a county match of at least 50 percent of project costs. The Budget Committee met in May 2024 to consider project proposals and awarded the bulk of this funding. However, \$1,315,000 in matching funds remain and AOC is currently requesting proposals for this balance. A continued appropriation is necessary to meet the ongoing needs of state district court complexes.



Detention Recruitment & Retention

New Mexico Counties requests an additional appropriation for the Detention and Corrections Workforce Capacity Building Fund established by the legislature in 2023 (NMSA 1978 §9-6-19). The Fund was created to assist counties with critical detention officer vacancy levels in county facilities notwithstanding significant pay increases, to attract and retain employees.

In 2024, the Legislature appropriated \$25 million to the Department of Finance & Administration (DFA) for grants to bolster public safety. This significant investment is designed to help offset the cost of new detention and correctional officer salaries for three years.



NOW HIRING
DOÑA ANA COUNTY
DETENTION CENTER

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donaanacounty.org/jobs

Starting officer pay
up to \$27.99/hr
based on education
and experience

The poster features two police officers in uniform standing side-by-side. The background is a dark blue gradient with a thin orange border.



JOIN VCDC

APPLY TODAY
START YOUR
CAREER NOW

[f](#) [@JoinVCDC](#)

The poster features a single police officer in uniform standing with his hands clasped. The background is black with yellow diagonal stripes and a Valencia County Detention Center logo. Social media icons for Facebook and Instagram are at the bottom left.

Detention Recruitment & Retention

DFA received requests for over **850** positions. Final awards included **189** new officer positions to provide critical support to 22 local entities and the New Mexico Corrections Department.

It is evident in the number of requests that the need is greater than the funding provided and consideration for an additional appropriation is a priority for New Mexico counties.

Detention & Corrections Workforce Capacity	
Awarded Entities and Departments	# of Officers
Acoma Adult Temporary Holding Facility	4
Bernalillo County Metropolitan Detention Center	23
Bernalillo County Youth Services Center	10
Bernalillo County Youth Services Center (Juvenile)	10
Colfax County - Vigil Maldonado Detention Center	4
Curry County	7
Eddy County Detention	10
Grant County Detention Center	4
Hobbs Detention Facility	3
Luna County	10
New Mexico Corrections Department	46
Otero County Detention Center	4
Quay County Detention Center	3
Rio Arriba County Detention Center	4
Roosevelt County Detention Center	3
San Juan County Adult Detention Center	10
San Miguel County Detention Center	5
Sandoval County Detention Center	6
Santa Fe County	7
Sierra County	2
Socorro County Detention Center	4
Taos Adult Detention Center	5
Valencia County Detention Center	5
TOTAL	189

Firefighter & EMS Recruitment & Retention

New Mexico Counties requests an additional appropriation for the Fire & Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Recruitment Fund. New Mexico's counties rely heavily on volunteer personnel for fire, EMS, and emergency management services.

In many counties, paid staff is limited to one or two individuals. Increasing the number of paid firefighters and EMTs will improve response times, department capacity, and Insurance Services Office (ISO) ratings.



Firefighter & EMS Recruitment & Retention



In 2024, the Legislature appropriated \$25 million to the Department of Finance & Administration (DFA) to help offset the cost of fire and EMT salaries for three years. DFA received 64 requests for over **330** positions. Final awards included **190** new positions to provide critical support to 59 local entities. It is evident in the number of requests that the need is greater than the funding provided and consideration for an additional appropriation is a priority for New Mexico counties.

700 MHz Radios

NMC requests **\$6 million** in continued funding to the Department of Information Technology for use in FY2025 to fund the payment of subscriber fees for the digital trunked radio communications system for municipal, county and tribal public safety agencies that provide law enforcement, fire, medical or other emergency services.



Equitable Disclosure

NMC seeks legislation to treat nonresidential (commercial) property owners the same as residential (homeowners) to ensure that property transfers and sales are handled fairly and equitably. Currently, commercial owners are held to a lesser degree of accountability than homeowners. All **property should be accurately assessed at fair market value** to ensure transparency for the property owner, reduce the risk of sudden and unanticipated increases, as well as provide stability for county revenues and services.



Equitable Disclosure

NMC and the Assessors' Affiliate hosted statewide public meetings to garner input from business owners, realtors, builders, and other associations. This is a particularly important discussion this year with the passing of the following ballot initiatives:

Amendment #1 - Provides veterans with a disability of 10% or greater with a property tax exemption equivalent to the percentage of disability

Amendment #2 - Increases veteran property tax exemption from \$4,000 to \$10,000

Considerations:

- ✓ Other residential property owners will see an increase in property taxes, including seniors and other disabled individuals
- ✓ Yield control is unlikely to make up the difference
- ✓ 22 counties are currently at their mill rate caps
- ✓ Special assessments do not have yield control to adjust for the loss of property valuation (hospitals, schools, etc.)

Inspection of Public Records

NMC seeks to amend the Inspection of Public Records Act (IPRA) to exempt from disclosing specific information and **prohibit certain requests used to compromise and obstruct critical local government services**. IPRA was intended to provide government accountability and transparency.

Instead, overwhelmingly burdensome and often frivolous requests have been submitted solely for the purpose of interfering with vital services such as elections and public safety.



Inspection of Public Records

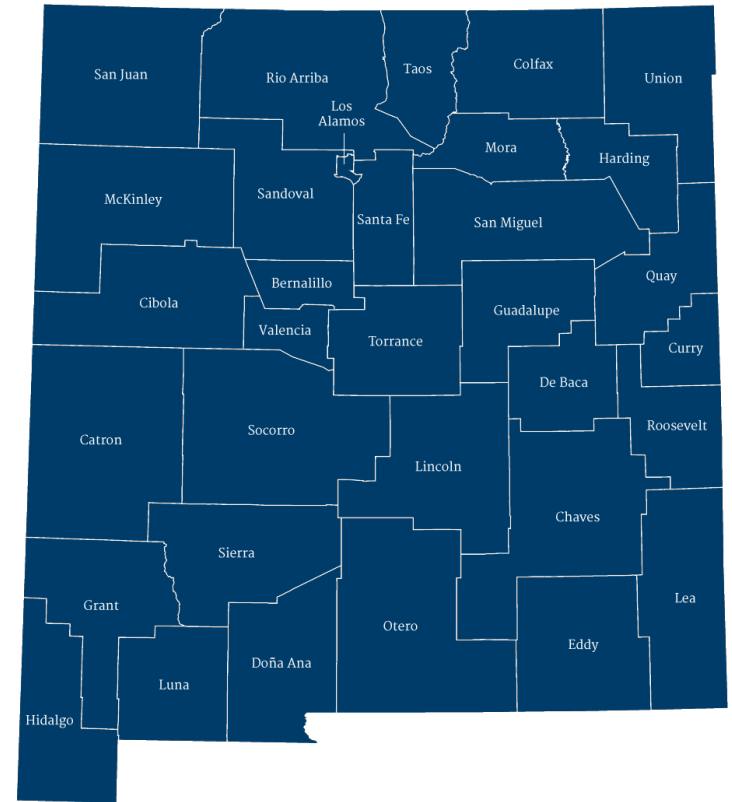


During the interim, NMC is working with multiple stakeholders to refine this proposal and identify solutions that do not interfere with the original intent of the Act.

In 2023, HB232: Disclosure of Certain Information amended IPRA by enacting changes for the protection of critical IT systems, undercover law enforcement, and restricting certain proprietary technical and business information. It was the first time that IPRA had been amended since its enactment.

Resources for Border-Related Humanitarian & Crime Efforts

NMC requests an appropriation of **\$5 million** to counties for services provided to state and federal agencies to support border humanitarian and crime efforts. This funding will be used to combat drug and human trafficking networks; to assist counties with public safety services requested by Border Patrol, coordinate with community services that provide food, transportation, shelter, and family location; and to coordinate with state and federal agencies on information sharing and coordination of state law enforcement activities.



Additional Appropriations

EMS Funding

In 2024, SB151: Premium Tax for Emergency Services, as amended by Senate Tax, redistributes a portion of the Premium Tax from health insurance business to the Emergency Medical Services Fund at the New Mexico Department of Health.

The amendment also added an **\$11 million** non-reverting, General Fund appropriation to the Emergency Medical Services Fund for use in FY2025 and beyond to carry out the purposes of the Fund. These changes provide a critically needed reoccurring revenue stream for EMS statewide.

Repeal of TRD Administrative Fees

SB 148: Repealing Taxation & Revenue Administrative Fees passed on the final evening of the session. This bill abolishes the Taxation and Revenue Departments' authority to impose an administrative fee for the collection and distribution of local option gross receipts and compensating tax. The fee elimination will provide an additional **\$26M** to counties after a delayed implementation period.