

Cherokee County Sheriff's Office- PREA Report

Report for 2022

The Cherokee County Sheriff's Office makes PREA compliance a high priority and has devoted a significant amount of time and resources over the last few years to policy development, training of staff, and education of inmates on all aspect of PREA. When confronted with areas that do not meet standards or require improvements, agency leadership works immediately to implement corrective action plans. These immediate actions reinforce the agency's commitment to ensuring the safety of inmates and staff in the Cherokee County Jail.

In accordance with PREA Standard 115.88:

§ 115.88 Data review for corrective action.

(a) The agency shall review data collected and aggregated pursuant to § 115.87 in order to assess and improve the effectiveness of its sexual abuse prevention, detection, and response policies, practices, and training, including by:

- (1) Identifying problem areas;
- (2) Taking corrective action on an ongoing basis; and
- (3) Preparing an annual report of its findings and corrective actions for each facility, as well as the agency as a whole.

(b) Such report shall include a comparison of the current year's data and corrective actions with those from prior years and shall provide an assessment of the agency's progress in addressing sexual abuse.

(c) The agency's report shall be approved by the agency head and made readily available to the public through its website or, if it does not have one, through other means. 34

(d) The agency may redact specific material from the reports when publication would present a clear and specific threat to the safety and security of a facility, but must indicate the nature of the material redacted.

Comparison

In 2021 there were zero (0) reported incidents of sexual misconduct or sexual harassment by staff and two (2) allegations of inmate on inmate sexual harassment. One (1) of these incidents was investigated and determined to be Unfounded and the other was investigated and determined to be unsubstantiated. Comparatively in 2022, there were 10 incidents were reported and investigated. One (1) case of inmate-on-inmate sexual harassment was determined to be Substantiated. One (1) report of staff on inmate sexual misconduct was

determined to be Unsubstantiated. The remaining eight (8) allegations of inmate on inmate sexual harassment were investigated and determined to be Unfounded.

Identifying Problem Areas

In reviewing problem areas from years 2019-2022, one area which needed improvement pertained to the camera views of pods. In 2020, Cherokee County Sheriff's Office upgraded the camera system to provide an additional view of each of the main housing areas, A pod, B pod, C pod, D pod, E pod. This camera system also allows for viewing remotely by any command staff personnel.

Recently the window coverings on D Pod and Trustee Pod were removed and window tinting applied, allowing officers to be able to view into the pod from the hallways. It had previously been covered to deter male inmates viewing female inmates while traveling throughout the facility.

Also recently, a mirror and gate were installed in the laundry room to prevent inmates from being behind the laundry machines and out of view from the camera system.

Taking Corrective Action on an Ongoing Basis

Privacy blocks on the camera system disallow staff members to view into the bathroom or shower areas in holding cell, Segregation cells, medical segregation cells and the recreation room, in compliance with PREA standard 115.15 (d). Some of these privacy blocks are adjusted whenever necessary to maintain compliance.

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