



Winnebago County Juvenile Detention Center

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Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)

2024 Annual Report

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This document details the Winnebago County Juvenile Detention Center annual report for the 2024 calendar year. This document has been prepared in accordance with the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Standard §115.388 “in order to assess and improve the effectiveness of its sexual abuse prevention, detection, and response policies and training” and in accordance to PREA Standard §115.387(a) “The agency shall collect accurate, uniform data for every allegation of sexual abuse at facilities under its direct control using a standardized instrument and set of definitions.” The Winnebago County Juvenile Detention Center makes its best efforts to maintain a strong PREA environment.

Facility

The Winnebago County Juvenile Detention has operated as a Juvenile Detention since the 1950's. In 1992, the present building was opened and now has an Illinois Department of Corrections-rated capacity of 48. Located at 5350 Northrock Drive on the Northern edge of the City of Rockford, the center provides a variety of programming that is designed to meet both the statutory mandates and the County's commitment to helping youth. The facility is staffed continually and is open every day of the year.

Facility Mission Statement

“To provide care, custody, and discipline for minors being held for the Juvenile Court....”

The Winnebago County Juvenile Detention Center is a Division of the Court Services Department and an integral part of the County's Juvenile Justice System. State Statute charges the Detention Center with the responsibility of providing care, custody, and discipline for minors pending disposition on delinquent charges by the Juvenile Court.

Each staff function is undertaken to address the purpose of the facility. In the area of “Care”, the Detention Center is responsible for providing the primary material needs of the minors who are dependent on staff while in custody. In this regard, the Detention Officers serve as house parents of sorts, providing detainees with food, good hygiene practices, and other comforts associated with a home. “Custody” duties require the Detention Officer to act as a correctional officer or guard who must be constantly cognizant of security concerns. The facility is designed to ensure the safety of the community by securely holding those individuals who, at the time they are detained, cannot be trusted to exercise their freedoms appropriately. “Discipline” is both the most abstract and the most rewarding area of work the Detention Officer must undertake. In the detention setting, discipline is interpreted to mean teaching and role modeling for minors in custody. It is also in this area where staff are called upon to exercise their skills as counselors on both a formal and informal basis.

The constantly changing detention population and the differences in the individual staff make it difficult to maintain an equilibrium between “Custody” and “Discipline”. From the management perspective, programs and practices are evaluated bearing in mind the delicate balance between all three statutory components and always with an eye towards consistency and fair treatment of the minors in our care. Detention Officers will bring a variety of approaches to meeting the mandate of “Care, Custody, and Discipline” but each must operate within the constraints of the programs, procedures, and practices set forth in this manual, Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice, and the laws which govern the operation of the facility.

Facility PREA Mission Statement

To achieve compliance with the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) by developing guidelines and policies for preventing, detecting, responding, monitoring and eliminating all sexual abuse and harassment within the Winnebago County Juvenile Detention Center. The Winnebago County Juvenile Detention Center is committed to providing a zero-tolerance atmosphere for sexual abuse and sexual harassment towards residents, either by staff or other residents.

Purpose

The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) is a federal law that prohibits sexual misconduct within correctional settings, including juvenile detention centers. PREA promotes best practice for prevention, detection and response to sexual misconduct within the facility. The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) requires that our facility collects and analyzes data... “in order to assess and improve the effectiveness of its sexual abuse prevention, detection, and response policies, practices and training.” (Standard 115.388)

This report is completed to identify problem areas to take corrective action, compare data with proceeding years, and assess our facility’s progress in addressing sexual misconduct. (Standard 115.388)

This report is intended to provide information for calendar year 2024.

Facility Achievements in 2024

- WCJDC received a Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice (IDJJ) annual inspection in 2024.
- WCJDC received a PREA Facility Audit in 2024.
- WCJDC continues to work with Freedom Behavioral Health to complete risk assessment follow-ups.
- WCJDC continues to contract with Rockford Sexual Assault Counseling to provide residents with outside victim with emotional support services.
- WCJDC continues to contract with UW Swedish American to provide SANE exams as needed.
- WCJDC continues to contract with WCSO to conduct criminal investigations of allegations of sexual abuse.
- WCJDC continues to use Relias online training program that contains several training opportunities. Continued full PREA Comprehensive training.
- WCJDC PREA Investigators receive National Institute of Corrections PREA Investigator Training.
- WCJDC staff began receiving monthly PREA refreshing trainings.
- WCJDC enhanced security measures through adding blind spot mirrors.
- WCJDC added additional reporting boxes for the resident reporting.
- WCJDC ensures all residents complete a Risk assessment at intake, in addition to every 30 days thereafter.
- WCJDC ensures residents receive PREA Orientation information and a book mark during the intake process.
- WCJDC Ensures that the necessary residents receive PREA Education weekly.
- WCJDC ensures that residents receive Monthly PREA Education Refreshers
- WCJDC PREA Coordinator continues to meets with other PREA Coordinators to share resources and increase skills

General Information

During 2024, there was an Average Daily Population of 30.9 residents.

2024 WCJDC Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment Data

YEAR: 2024	Substantiated	Unsubstantiated	Unfounded	Ongoing	Investigated But not PREA Related
Incident Type					
Resident on Resident Abusive Sexual Abuse	0	0	0	0	0
Resident on Resident Sexual Harassment	3	4	0	0	4
Staff on Resident Sexual Abuse	0	0	1	0	0
Staff on Resident Sexual Harassment	0	3	1	0	4
Total	3	7	2	0	8

WCJDC Overview for 2023 for Comparison

YEAR: 2023	Substantiated	Unsubstantiated	Unfounded	Ongoing	Investigated But not PREA Related
Incident Type					
Resident on Resident Abusive Sexual Abuse	0	0	0	0	0
Resident on Resident Sexual Harassment	3	16	2	0	1
Staff on Resident Sexual Abuse	0	0	0	0	0
Staff on Resident Sexual Harassment	1	4	1	0	3
Total	4	20	3	0	4

PREA Sexual Abuse Incident Reviews

The PREA Sexual Abuse Incident Review team is tasked with reviewing substantiated or unsubstantiated allegations of sexual abuse. The review team consists of the Superintendent, PREA Coordinator, Assistant Superintendent, Medical and Mental Health personnel. [115.386(c)] During SAIR meetings, the team shall consider the following for each incident: [115.386(d)]

- a. Whether the allegation or investigation indicates a need to change policy or practice to better detect, prevent or respond to sexual abuse.

- b. Whether the incident or allegation was motivated by race, ethnicity, gender identity, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or intersex identification, status, or perceived status; or gang affiliation, or was motivated or otherwise caused by other group dynamics at the facility.
- c. Examine the area in which the incident allegedly occurred to assess whether physical barriers in the area may enable abuse.
- d. Assess the adequacy of staffing levels in that area during different shifts.
- e. Prepare a report of its findings, including section (B) (1) -(B) (5) of this section, and any recommendations for improvement.

Event though there were no reports of sexual abuse within the facility that were substantiated or unsubstantiated the SAIR meeting reviewed material via email and conducted a check-in meeting in 2024.

2024 PREA Corrective Actions

WCJDC saw a decrease from the 31 PREA allegations in 2023 to 20 PREA allegations in 2024. While the reason for the decrease in the allegations cannot be certain, some contributing factors may be the facilities daily headcount decreased from 36.9 in 2023 to 30.9 in 2024 and an increase in PREA compliance efforts throughout the building.

Through the facility's 2024 PREA Audit process, the facility increased contractors, staff and residents' exposure to and understanding of PREA. WCJDC began conducting monthly PREA refreshers for both residents and staff. The refreshers were developed to provide additional information on the fundamentals of PREA, how to report an allegation and how to respond to allegations.

There were zero substantiated or unsubstantiated sexual abuse incidents and zero criminal investigations that occurred at WCJDC. It should be noted that WCJDC received 4 reports of sexual abuse or harassment that were alleged to have occurred at facilities that residents were confined in prior to their admissions at WCJDC, and all of those reports were processed according to PREA Standard [115.363].

PREA Training is continuous throughout the year to ensure that all who enter the Winnebago County Juvenile Detention center understand that the facility has a zero tolerance towards any form of sexual abuse or sexual harassment.

To maintain compliance with the PREA standards, WCJDC put in place the following preventative actions:

Preventative Actions:

- Additional security mirrors were installed to eliminate blind spots.
- Continuous PREA training of all staff, residents, visitors, volunteers, and contractors.
- Updated PREA Reporting access and signage throughout the facility. (ie. Grievance boxes, confidential phones, 3rd party reporting boxes on site and online and developed PREA email for reporting.)
- Continued contact with Freedom Behavioral Health to provide crisis intervention counsel with residents.

Definitions

The Prison Rape Elimination Act (28 C.F.R. Part 115):

In 2003, the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) was signed into law with unanimous support. After the law's passage, the Department of Justice (DOJ) began the steps to create a set of national Standards, with input from the National Prison Rape Elimination Commission created by the Act, the public, and federal, state, and local correctional organizations, and private organizations. The purpose of these Standards was to provide comprehensive guidelines for 1) preventing, 2) detecting, and 3) responding to sexual abuse and sexual harassment involving both youth and adults in federal, state, and local institutions, including state and community correctional facilities, juvenile detention centers, and jail systems. The DOJ published the resulting Final PREA Standards on August 20, 2012. The Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) began implementation activities of the PREA Standards in early 2014. DCFS has since fully implemented the Standards at the agency and facility levels.

Resident-on-Resident Sexual Abuse:

Sexual abuse of an inmate, detainee, or resident by another inmate, detainee, or resident includes any of the following acts, if the victim does not consent, is coerced into such act by overt or implied threats of violence, or is unable to consent or refuse:

- (1) Contact between the penis and the vulva or the penis and the anus, including penetration, however slight;
- (2) Contact between the mouth and the penis, vulva, or anus;
- (3) Penetration of the anal or genital opening of another person, however slight, by a hand, finger, object, or other instrument; and
- (4) Any other intentional touching, either directly or through the clothing, of the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or the buttocks of another person, excluding contact incidental to a physical altercation

Staff-on-Resident Sexual Abuse:

Sexual abuse of a resident by a staff member, contractor, or volunteer includes any of the following acts, with or without consent of the inmate, detainee, or resident:

- (1) contact between the penis and the vulva or the penis and the anus, including penetration, however slight;
- (2) Contact between the mouth and the penis, vulva, or anus;
- (3) contact between the mouth and any body part where the staff member, contractor, or volunteer has the intent to abuse, arouse, or gratify sexual desire;
- (4) Penetration of the anal or genital opening, however slight, by a hand, finger, object, or other instrument, that is unrelated to official duties or where the staff member, contractor, or volunteer has the intent to abuse, arouse, or gratify sexual desire;
- (5) Any other intentional contact, either directly or through the clothing, of or with the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or the buttocks, that is unrelated to official duties or where the staff member, contractor, or volunteer has the intent to abuse, arouse, or gratify sexual desire;
- (6) Any attempt, threat, or request by a staff member, contractor, or volunteer to engage in the activities described in paragraphs (5) of this section;
- (7) Any display by a staff member, contractor, or volunteer of his or her uncovered genitalia, buttocks, or breast in the presence of an inmate, detainee, or resident, and

(8) Voyeurism by a staff member, contractor, or volunteer.

Voyeurism:

An invasion of privacy of a resident unrelated to official duties, such as peering at a resident using a toilet or requiring a resident to expose their genitals.

Sexual Harassment:

- (1) Repeated and unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal comments, gestures, or actions of a derogatory or offensive sexual nature by one inmate, detainee, or resident directed toward another; and
- (2) Repeated verbal comments or gestures of a sexual nature to an inmate, detainee, or resident by a staff member, contractor, or volunteer, including demeaning references to gender, sexually suggestive or derogatory comments about body or clothing, or obscene language or gestures.

Possible Outcomes of Investigation: The agency shall impose no standard higher than a preponderance of the evidence in determining whether allegations of sexual abuse or sexual harassment are substantiated. (115.372)

Substantiated:

When an investigation is found to have a substantiated allegation, it means the allegation was investigated and determined to have occurred, based on preponderance of evidence (50.1% or higher).

Unsubstantiated:

When an investigation is found to have an unsubstantiated allegation, it means the allegation was investigated and the investigation produced insufficient evidence to make a determination as to whether or not the event occurred (49.9 % or lower)

Unfounded:

When an investigation is found to have an Unfounded allegation, it means the allegation was investigated and determined that the allegation did not occur.

Investigated but not PREA Related:

When an investigation is found to have an allegation that was investigated but not PREA Related, it means the allegation was investigated but found to not be PREA Related.

Julie McCreary - Gatto
Superintendent

2/27/25
Date

[Signature]
Assistant Superintendent

2.27.2025
Date

Rachael Carmack
PREA Coordinator

3/4/25
Date

