

BCJS Annual PREA Report: January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015

Sexual abuse and sexual harassment of inmates by other inmates or by staff negatively impacts the mission of the Berks County Jail System to maintain a secure institutional environment that serves to provide protection and safety for the legally incarcerated of Berks County. In accordance with the Prison Rape Elimination Act, the Berks County Jail System has established a zero tolerance policy for substantiated acts or threats of sexual abuse, sexual harassment, or retaliation for the reporting of sexual abuse or harassment

By providing training, education, and reviewing our policy and procedures on a yearly basis we are confident that we are providing the inmates, staff, contractors, and volunteers everything we can so they are confident and comfortable with the PREA mandates. We are also confident that all of our staff, contractors, and volunteers have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the PREA mandates and the Berks County Jail System policies and procedures in order to effectively provide sexual abuse and harassment prevention, detection, and response to those allegations.

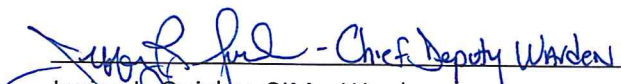
Based upon an annual review of reported incidents, changes are not necessary to the current policies of the Berks County Jail System. However, a post-investigatory sexual abuse incident review of all substantiated and unsubstantiated allegations was not conducted. Effective January 1, 2016, allegations of sexual abuse will be subject to a sexual abuse incident review that will occur within 30 days of the conclusion of any administrative or criminal investigation in all instances in which such allegations were determined to be substantiated or unsubstantiated.

Based upon a comparative analysis of PREA incidents for the year 2014, the number of overall incidents has declined. In the year 2015, there were a total of 18 PREA incidents: 3 of which were substantiated, 6 of which were unsubstantiated, and 9 of which were unfounded. This is a decrease in the total number of incidents from 26 in 2014. In the year 2015, there were 11 incidents that were inmate-on-inmate sexual victimization, 3 of which were substantiated. Of the remaining incidents, 5 were unsubstantiated and 3 were unfounded. In the year 2015, there were 7 incidents that were staff-on-inmate sexual victimization, 1 was unsubstantiated and the remaining 6 were unfounded.

Most reported incidents took place in a cell on a housing unit, without witnesses, physical evidence, or video evidence. Custody and supervisory staff responded to, intervened in, and reported each incident in accordance with policy. If medical, mental health or treatment services were needed, all protocols were followed as well. Only 1 incident was referred to the Pennsylvania State Police for follow up.

The Inmate Classification Committee conducted appropriate and timely reviews of each victim and witness to ensure that no inmates or third party reporting sexual harassment or sexual abuse experienced any adverse treatment or retaliation. The committee consists of a treatment supervisor, a representative from the medical/mental health department, and the PREA compliance manager. There were no findings made that any inmate or third party that reported PREA-related incidents were subject to any retaliation as a result.

Based on the review and findings noted throughout this report, the recommendation for the year 2016 is to conduct a sexual abuse incident review of all substantiated and unsubstantiated allegations of sexual abuse or sexual harassment of inmates. We will also continue to improve upon staff training and inmate education on PREA-related topics.


Janine L. Quigley, CJM – Warden
in Absence of the Warden

6/17/16
Date