

SWIJDC PREA REPORT Jun 30, 2021
Report for 2020

The Southwest Idaho Juvenile Detention Center (SWIJDC) has long embraced the principles recently supported by the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 (PREA) to keep all juveniles safe while in custody.

During the week of September 16, 2013, the SWIJDC became the first juvenile facility in the nation to be audited under the PREA Juvenile Standards. After an abbreviated Corrective Action Period, DOJ-Certified Auditor Wendy Leach declared on February 14, 2014 that the SWIJDC was fully compliant with the PREA Standards, making it the first facility in the nation of any type to be fully PREA compliant. (The final audit report of the Southwest Idaho Juvenile Detention Center was published on the county website.)

During the week of October 17, 2016, DOJ-Certified Juvenile Facilities Auditor Chuck Kehoe conducted the second audit of the SWIJDC for compliance with the law. The facility was found compliant after an abbreviated corrective action period which ended on March 20, 2017. The final report of that audit will be posted on this site after it is received from the auditor.

In September, 2019, Auditor Wayne Liddell performed the third audit of the SWIJDC. At the exit meeting at the end of the audit visit, Mr. Liddell identified several items that needed to be fixed. At the time of this report, staff are still working on a new grievance form to be in compliance with the PREA Standards.

The occurrence of sexual abuse at the SWIJDC is very low due to high levels of security, single occupancy rooms and increased amounts of programming going on throughout the day. However, we realize that we must keep up our efforts to combat this constantly. We will continue to have a strong zero-tolerance policy and environment with regard to all kinds of abuse. Results of investigations are used to determine if anything needs to be changed at the SWIJDC, including, but not limited to, policies, procedures, physical plant characteristics, staffing, shifts, personnel assignments, and supervision.

All allegations of sexual abuse and sexual harassment are taken seriously and investigated. The Caldwell Police Department is the investigating agency, and the staff and administration at the SWIJDC will cooperate at all times with any investigation. In December, 2019, Director Jett and PREA Coordinator Alan Oates met with CPD Lieutenant J. Hoadley and determined that the investigative standards set by PREA were being met by the CPD investigators. Also, Jett and Oates will be meeting with the CPD Command staff in early 2020 to discuss PREA.

As a result of the investigation of an unfounded allegation in 2015, we identified an area where increased video surveillance would enhance our efforts to safeguard the juveniles in our custody.

In October of 2016, a renovated camera system was installed which covered all areas of the facility. Later updated, almost all of the cameras record and maintain video clips for 30+ days. As of the date of this report, video has been downloaded to assist the Canyon County Sheriff's Office in more than one investigation of escapes from the recreation area of Pod 5 of the jail, which happens to be covered by our cameras. Video footage has also been instrumental in other types of investigations inside the juvenile detention center.

In 2017, we received four notifications alleging sexual abuse or sexual harassment. Two were received through the Telmate inmate phone system. Upon investigation, one juvenile stated that he had been simply bored and dialed #9 for fun. The second one was not aware that he had dialed #9, but had been trying to call his mother. The third incident was determined to not be neither sexual abuse nor sexual harassment. The fourth report, an incident alleged to have happened in another detention center in another state, was reported to the proper authorities as required by PREA Standard 115.363.

In 2018, we had no sexual abuse allegations. One juvenile reported a sexual harassment claim, but after investigation, it was determined to be unfounded.

In 2019, we received no allegations of sexual abuse or harassment.

In 2020, we received six notifications alleging sexual abuse or sexual harassment. Upon investigation, one incident allegedly took place in another detention center in another state, and was reported to the proper authorities as required by PREA Standard 115.363. Three incidents were determined to be unfounded. Two incidents in the gym were determined to be unsubstantiated. To prevent further allegations during recreation, added training was provided to staff regarding increased separation between juveniles. One substantiated incident of indecent exposure happened in our outside area. To prevent further incidents, training, policy and supervision practices were changed.

Our facility continues to put great effort into keeping residents safe, not only with regards to sexual abuse and harassment, but in all aspects of safety.