



# Facility Inspection Report Issued By The Minnesota Department of Corrections Pursuant to MN Statute 241.021, Subdivision 1

Inspection and Enforcement Unit, 1450 Energy Park Drive, Suite 200, St.Paul MN 55108  
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## INSPECTION DETAILS FOR:

### Aitkin County Jail

**Address:** 217 Second Street NW, ROOM 185, Aitkin, MN 56431

**MN Governing Rule:** 2911 Local Adult Detention Facilities

**Inspection Type:** Biennial **Inspected By:** Rachel Dotseth – Detention Facility Inspector **Inspected on:** 11/15/2023

**Inspection Method:** Facility tour, staff interviews, employee and inmate file reviews, video footage review and related documentation reviews.

**Officials Present During Inspection:** Assistant Jail Administrator Elizabeth Eddy ; Jail Administrator Karla White; Sheriff Dan Guida

**Officials Present for Exit Interview:** Assistant Jail Administrator Elizabeth Eddy ; Jail Administrator Karla White; Sheriff Dan Guida

**Issued Inspection Report to:** Assistant Jail Administrator Elizabeth Eddy ; Chief Deputy Heidi Lenk; Jail Administrator Karla White; Sheriff Dan Guida; County Administrator Jessica Seibert; Regional Manager Jacob McLellan

## RULE COMPLIANCE SUMMARY

Rule Chapter	Requirement Type	Total Applicable	Total Compliance	Total Non Compliance	Total Compliance With Concerns	Compliance Rating	Substantial Compliance Result/Criteria
2911	Mandatory	121	115	5	1	95.87%	Compliance rating of 100%
2911	Essential	96	93	3	0	96.88%	Compliance rating of 90%

## TERMS OF OPERATION

**Authority to Operate:** approval **Begins On:** 01/01/2024 **Ends On:** 12/31/2025 **Facility Type:** Jail  
**Placed on Biennial Status:** Yes **Biennial Status Annual Compliance Form Due On:** 12/31/2024  
**Delinquent Juvenile Hold Approval:** 24 hrs exclusive of weekends and holidays **Certificate Holder:** Aitkin County Sheriff's Department  
**Special Conditions:** None.

### Approved Capacity Details *\*Operational Capacity is calculated as a percent of Approved Capacity beds.*

Bed Type	Gender	Approved Capacity	%Operating Capacity	Operational Capacity	Bed Details	Conditions
Secure	Coed	89	90	80.10	None.	None.

## RULE COMPLIANCE DETAILS

### Chapter 2911 - Mandatory Rules Not In Compliance

Total: 5

- 2911.1900 POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUALS.

A facility shall have a written policy and procedure manual that is electronically available to staff and relevant regulatory authorities and defines the philosophy and method for operating and maintaining the facility. This manual shall be made available to all employees, reviewed annually, updated as needed, and staff trained accordingly. The manual shall include, at a minimum, the following chapters: A. correctional standards required under this chapter; B. administration and organization; C. fiscal management; D. personnel; E. training; F. inmate records; G. safety and emergency; H. security and control; I. sanitation and hygiene; J. food service; K. medical and health care services; L. inmate rules and discipline; M. communication, mail, and visiting; N. admissions, orientation, classification, property control, and release; O. inmate activities, programs, and services; and P. a written suicide prevention and intervention plan. The facility administrator or designee shall review policy and procedure manuals at least once each year. The review shall be documented in written form sufficient to indicate that policies and procedures have been reviewed and amended as appropriate to facility changes.

**Inspection Findings:**

Policy review was completed prior to the inspection and discovered minor updates that need to be made. These updates were discussed with the Jail Administrator at the time of inspection.

**Corrective Actions:**

**Within 60 days of receipt of this order, submit policy revisions that meet requirements for the following Chapter 2911 Rules: 2911.2525 Subp 1, C. E. J. 5-11. 2911.3100 Subp 1, C, E, and F. 2911.3300 Subp 3 B. 2911.3500 E. 2911.5800 Subp 6 A, 1 and 6. 2911.6200 Subp 6 A and B.**

**Response Needed By: 01/22/2024**

2. 2911.2525 ADMISSIONS. Subpart 3. Orientation to rules and services.

A facility shall develop a written policy and procedure that provides: A. a method for all newly admitted inmates to receive orientation information in a manner the inmates can understand; and B. documentation by a statement that is signed and dated by the inmate that the inmate completed orientation.

**Inspection Findings:**

The facility has an orientation process that occurs in the housing units. Five inmate files were reviewed and did not contain documentation that the inmates were signing the orientation form to acknowledge they received the training.

**Corrective Actions:**

**Within 30 days of receipt of this report, train all Correctional Officers on the new implementation of the orientation process that shall occur in booking, not the housing unit. This must be submitted to the Department of Corrections along with documentation that all inmates currently being held have received orientation by December 22, 2023.**

**Response Needed By: 12/22/2023**

3. 2911.3700 EMERGENCIES AND UNUSUAL OCCURRENCES. Subpart 1. Emergency plan.

A facility shall have a written disaster plan. The plan shall include policies and procedures designed to protect the public by securely detaining inmates who represent a danger to the community or to themselves when the facility must be evacuated in total. The plan shall also include: A. location of alarms and fire fighting equipment; B. an emergency drill policy as follows: (1) at least annual drills at all facility locations; and (2) drills shall be conducted even when evacuation of extremely dangerous inmates may not be included; C. specific assignments and tasks for personnel; D. persons and emergency departments to be notified; E. procedure for evacuation of inmates; and F. arrangements for temporary confinement of inmates.

**Inspection Findings:**

There was no documentation that fire drills and evacuation drills have been conducted within the last year.

**Corrective Actions:**

**Immediately conduct a fire drill, and an evacuation drill to include all staff. Once completed send to the Department of Corrections for review by December 22, 2023.**

**Response Needed By: 12/22/2023**

4. 2911.5000 POST ORDERS; FORMAL INMATE COUNT; WELL-BEING CHECKS. Subpart 5. Well-being.

A facility shall have a system providing for well-being checks of inmates. A written policy and procedure shall provide that all inmates are personally observed by a custody staff person at least once every 30 minutes. Thirty-minute checks should be staggered. If a well-being check does not occur due to an emergency, it must be documented in the jail log and have supervisory review and approval. More frequent observation is required for those inmates of a special need classification who may be harmful to themselves. Examples of inmates of a special need classification include those classified as potentially suicidal, or as mentally ill, or those experiencing withdrawal from drugs or alcohol.

**Inspection Findings:**

A video review of well-being checks showed well-being checks were within the 30-minute timeframe, except for one check that was started right at the 30-minute timeframe. However, there were checks viewed that were completed too fast to observe the well-being of the inmate on November 01, 2023, at 0223 hours, and November 13, 2023, at 0258, 0324, and 0346 hours.

**Corrective Actions:**

**Immediately, schedule and retrain all staff in well-being checks. Within 30 days of receipt of this order, submit documentation of the completed training to the Department of Corrections by December 22, 2023.**

**Response Needed By: 12/22/2023**

5. 2911.5800 AVAILABILITY OF MEDICAL AND DENTAL RESOURCES. Subpart 3. Health care policy review.

Facility policy shall ensure that each policy, procedure, and program in the health care delivery system is reviewed and documented at least annually under the direction of the health authority and revised as necessary.

**Inspection Findings:**

The facility does not have current health care policy that has been reviewed and signed. The last date they were signed was 02/21/2022.

**Corrective Actions:**

**Immediately, the facility shall ensure that medical policies are reviewed and signed annually by the health authority. Once the health authority has signed the medical policies submit to the Department of Corrections for review by December 22, 2023.**

**Response Needed By: 12/22/2023**

**Chapter 2911 - Essential Rules Not In Compliance****Total: 3**

1. 2911.1300 CUSTODY STAFF TRAINING.

A facility shall have a written policy and procedure that provides that all custody staff receive 120 hours of orientation and training during the first year of employment. Forty of these hours are completed prior to being independently assigned to a particular post. All persons in this category are given an additional 16 hours of training each subsequent year. At a minimum, training completed before independent assignment to a particular post shall include: A. security procedures; B. supervision of inmates; C. signs of suicide risk and suicide precautions; D. vulnerable inmates; E. response to resistance regulations and tactics; F. report writing; G. inmate rules and regulations; H. rights and responsibilities of inmates; I. fire and emergency procedures; J. key control; K. interpersonal relations and communication skills; L. diversity training; M. distribution of medications; N. right to know; and O. blood-borne pathogens and communicable diseases.

**Inspection Findings:**

New Correctional Officers are not receiving interpersonal communication skills training as required by the rule.

**Corrective Actions:**

**The facility shall train all new Correctional Officers in interpersonal communication skills. Documentation must be submitted to the Department of Corrections by January 22, 2024.**

**Response Needed By: 01/22/2024**

2. 2911.3500 VOLUNTEERS.

When volunteers are used in facility programs, a written policy and procedure shall provide that a staff member is responsible for coordinating the volunteer service program. The policy includes the following elements: A. lines of authority, responsibility, and accountability for the volunteer services; B. a procedure for the screening and selection of volunteers; C. an orientation training program appropriate to the nature of the assignment; D. a requirement that volunteers agree in writing to abide by all facility rules and policies, with emphasis on security and confidentiality of information; and E. a statement that the administrator may discontinue a volunteer activity at any time by written notice.

**Inspection Findings:**

Volunteer agreements do not have a signed statement saying they agree to abide by facility rules, and policies.

**Corrective Actions:**

**The Jail Administrator shall ensure that all volunteers sign statements agreeing to abide by all rules and policies. Send signed volunteer agreements to the Department of Corrections by December 22, 2023.**

**Response Needed By: 12/22/2023**

3. 2911.4950 RESPONSE TO RESISTANCE. Subpart 4. Equipment.

The issue, storage, inspection, and use of chemical agents, impact devices, electronic control devices, and other security devices shall be governed by written policy and procedure. All unissued security devices and equipment shall be stored in a secure, readily accessible depository located outside inmate housing and activity areas, and inventoried at least monthly to determine condition and expiration dates of the devices and equipment.

**Inspection Findings:**

The facility failed to maintain monthly restraint inventory.

**Corrective Actions:**

**Immediately and on an ongoing basis the facility must document monthly restraint inventory. Submit the restraint inventory sheet to the Department of Corrections by December 22, 2023.**

**Response Needed By: 12/22/2023**

**Chapter 2911 - Mandatory Rules In Compliance With Concerns****Total: 1**

1. 2911.6500 STORAGE. Subpart 2. Refrigeration.

Medication requiring refrigeration shall be refrigerated and secured and the temperature checked daily. There must be separate refrigeration for medications only.

**Inspection Findings:**

The facility is conducting daily temperature checks but is missing some dates within the year.

**Corrective Actions:**

**The facility shall assign a staff member to complete the daily temperature checks to ensure compliance with the rule.**

**Response Needed By:**

## INSPECTION COMMENTS

The Aitkin County Jail will go to biennial inspections cycle.

The Aitkin County Jail was constructed in 1984 with an addition and partial remodel in 2001. According to the National Institute of Corrections, the average life expectancy of a jail facility operated 24 hours per day, seven days per week, is approximately 30 years, depending on usage. Given the physical plant issues identified, and the age of the facility infrastructure including plumbing, electrical and HVAC, the County's elected officials are encouraged to begin discussions on a course of action to address long-term public safety needs.

The Aitkin County Jail has the right to request reconsideration of this correction order. Under Minnesota Statutes Section 241.021 subdivision 1e, any request for reconsideration does not stay any provision of this order. A request for reconsideration must:

- Be in writing;
- Be sent by certified mail to the Commissioner and postmarked no later than 30 calendar days after receipt of this order;
- Specify the parts of the order that are alleged to be in error;
- Explain why the violation is in error; and
- Include any supporting documentation to show why the order is in error.

Failure to follow these requirements will result in the loss of the right to request reconsideration. The timeline to seek reconsideration begins upon receipt of this order.

Please send any request for reconsideration to:  
Commissioner, Department of Corrections  
ATTN: Inspection and Enforcement Unit  
1450 Energy Park Drive, Suite 200  
St. Paul, MN 55108

## JJDPA Compliance

On November 15, 2023, a Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act audit was conducted. The Aitkin County Jail has received a "Rural Exception" to the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP). This allows the facility to hold a delinquent juvenile up to 24 hours, excluding weekends and holiday. The three core requirements that are looked at during the facility audit are, Deinstitutionalization of Status Offenders (DSO), Removal of Juveniles for Adult Jail and Adult Lockups (Jail Removal), and Sight and Sound separation.

The Aitkin County Jail did not hold or process any juveniles from October 1, 2023, to the day of inspection.

The facility does not participate in any "Scared straight" programs for any youth that are under public authority.

No violations of the JJDP act during were found during the Aitkin County Jail inspection.

**Report completed By:** Rachel Dotseth – Detention Facility Inspector

**Signature:**

