ASSESSMENT
ADDRESSING SEXUAL ABUSE

January 24, 2020
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Pursuant to standard §115.88 of the Prison Rape Elimination Act, (PREA), the Minnesota Department of Corrections (MN DOC) is required to:

1. Aggregate incident based sexual abuse data annually from publicly and privately operated facilities.
2. Use the data to assess and improve the effectiveness of its sexual abuse prevention, detection, and response policies, practices and training by:
   a. Identifying problem areas;
   b. Tracking corrective action on an on-going basis; and
   c. Prepare an annual report of its findings.
3. Compare the current year's data and corrective actions with those from the prior years and provide an assessment of the agency's progress in addressing sexual abuse.
4. Publish the annual report on the MNDOC website of its findings and corrective actions for each facility, as well as the agency as a whole.

1. DEFINITIONS:

Sexual Abuse Definitions:
Sexual Abuse, is categorized into two areas of sexual violence. These reflect the definitions provided on the Survey of Sexual Violence provided by the U.S Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics.

A.) **Offender on Offender Non-Consensual Sexual Acts:**
Contact of any person without his or her consent, or of a person who is unable to consent or refuse:

AND
- Contact between the penis and the vagina or the penis and the anus including penetration, however slight;
  OR
- Contact between the mouth and the penis, vagina, or anus;
  OR
- Penetration of the anal or genital opening of another person by hand, finger or other object.

B) **Offender on Offender Abusive Sexual Contacts:**
Contact of any person without his or her consent, or of a person who is unable to consent or refuse;

AND
- Intentional touching, either directly or through the clothing, of the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh or buttocks of any person;
- Excludes incidents in which the intent of the sexual contact is to harm or debilitate rather than to sexually exploit
C) **Staff Sexual Misconduct:**
This definition is provided by the National Institute of Corrections. Staff Sexual Misconduct includes behaviors or acts of a sexual nature directed toward an offender by an employee, volunteer, contractor, official visitor or other agency representatives, excluding an offender’s family, friends or visitors. Sexual relationships of a romantic nature between an offender and a staff are included in this definition:

Consensual or non-consensual sexual acts include:
- Intentional touching of the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks with the intent to abuse, arouse, gratify sexual desire:
  OR
- Completed, attempted, threatened, or requested sexual acts:
  OR
- Occurrences of indecent exposure, invasion of privacy, or staff voyeurism for sexual gratifications.

**Disposition Definitions:**

A) **Substantiated:** The event was investigated and determined to have occurred.

B) **Unsubstantiated:** Evidence was insufficient to make a final determination that the event occurred.

C) **Unfounded:** The event was determined not to have occurred.

D) **Investigation ongoing:** A final determination has not yet been made as to whether the event occurred.

2. **AGGREGATE DATA:**

During calendar year 2018, the MN DOC collected the referrals for investigations into allegations of offender-on-offender and staff-on-offender sexual abuse from the state run facilities. All allegations are investigated. Comparative data, with dispositions, is broken down as follows:

**2018 Offender on Offender Non-consensual Sexual Acts:**

1) **Number Reported**  
   11

2) **Disposition**
   - Substantiated: 0
   - Unsubstantiated: 11
   - Unfounded: 0
   - Ongoing at reporting: 0
### 2017 data
1) **Number Reported**: 9
2) **Disposition**
   - Substantiated: 1
   - Unsubstantiated: 7
   - Unfounded: 1
   - Ongoing at reporting: 0

### 2016 data:
1) **Number Reported**: 15
2) **Disposition**
   - Substantiated: 2
   - Unsubstantiated: 13
   - Unfounded: 0
   - Ongoing at reporting: 0

### 2015 Data:
1) **Number Reported**: 22
2) **Disposition**
   - Substantiated: 0
   - Unsubstantiated: 13
   - Unfounded: 7
   - Ongoing at reporting: 2

### 2014 Data:
1) **Number Reported**: 30
2) **Disposition**
   - Substantiated: 0
   - Unsubstantiated: 14
   - Unfounded: 16

### 2013 Data:
1) **Reported**: 25
2) **Dispositions**:
   - Substantiated: 1
   - Unsubstantiated: 19
   - Unfounded: 5
   - Ongoing at reporting: 0

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### 2018 Offender on Offender Abusive Sexual Contacts:
1) **Number Reported**: 7
2) **Disposition**
   - Substantiated: 0
   - Unsubstantiated: 7
   - Unfounded: 0
   - Ongoing at reporting: 0

### 2017 data
1) **Number Reported**: 3
2) **Disposition**
   - Substantiated: 0
   - Unsubstantiated: 3
   - Unfounded: 0
   - Ongoing at reporting: 0

### 2016 Data:
1) **Number Reported**: 5
2) **Disposition**
   - Substantiated: 0
   - Unsubstantiated: 5
   - Unfounded: 0
   - Ongoing at reporting: 0

### 2015 Data:
1) **Number Reported**: 6
2) **Disposition**
   - Substantiated: 0
   - Unsubstantiated: 5
   - Unfounded: 1
   - Ongoing at reporting: 0
### 2014 Data:

1) Number Reported: 6  
2) Disposition:  
   - Substantiated: 0  
   - Unsubstantiated: 6  
   - Unfounded: 0

### 2013 Data

1) Number Reported: 5  
2) Disposition:  
   - Substantiated:  
   - Unsubstantiated: 4  
   - Unfounded: 1

### 2018 Staff Sexual Misconduct

1) Number Reported: 6  
2) Disposition:  
   - Substantiated: 1  
   - Unsubstantiated: 1  
   - Unfounded: 3  
   - Ongoing at reporting: 1

### 2017 Data:

1) Number Reported: 7  
2) Disposition:  
   - Substantiated: 0  
   - Unsubstantiated: 4  
   - Unfounded: 3  
   - Ongoing at reporting: 0

### 2016 Data:

1) Number Reported: 10  
2) Disposition:  
   - Substantiated: 1  
   - Unsubstantiated: 7  
   - Unfounded: 2  
   - Ongoing at reporting: 0

### 2015 Data:

1) Number Reported: 23  
2) Disposition:  
   - Substantiated: 1  
   - Unsubstantiated: 10  
   - Unfounded: 12  
   - Ongoing at reporting: 0

### 2014 Data

1) Number Reported: 12  
2) Disposition:  
   - Substantiated: 1  
   - Unsubstantiated: 9  
   - Unfounded: 2

### 2013 Data

1) Number Reported: 11  
2) Disposition:  
   - Substantiated: 2  
   - Unsubstantiated: 2  
   - Unfounded: 7

Where the act violated Minnesota Criminal Statute, the investigation was referred for prosecution. There may have been administrative sanctions imposed where a case was substantiated. Unfounded cases would carry administrative sanctions only if the investigation revealed someone knowingly falsified a written or oral statement with the intent to mislead, or misrepresent a fact, or if it was made with malicious intent.
3. ANALYSIS:

The reported data for Offender on Offender non-consensual sexual act allegations increased slightly from the previous year, but is still lower than previous years. Offender on Offender abusive sexual contact increased from the previous year, yet are still relatively low. There was a change in the educational materials provided to offenders, and additional posters were placed in common areas. This could, in part, account for some increase in reporting. The unsubstantiated allegations continue to be a problem area. Those allegations are often a result of late reporting. Training on facilitating a reporting culture has been released and is mandatory for all offender contact positions. The intent it to continue moving toward reducing unsubstantiated allegations by having more timely reports. The agency continues to work toward zero tolerance though readily available education, policy and training.

The incidents of Offender on Offender allegations remain comparable to the previous years, yet continue to remain low. Although the agency remains attentive to fostering a positive reporting environment, the totality of the summary data continues to be a small percentage of the total offender population.

The incidents of reported staff sexual misconduct continue to fall. Pat search allegations continue to remain low. Consistent application, supervision and training all contribute to reduce situations which produce these allegations. Unsubstantiated allegations, declined significantly where unfounded allegation increased. A reduction in allegations as a whole is significant in the movement toward zero tolerance.

If allegations are unfounded, and the investigation indicates a malicious intent, the complainant would be held accountable. Education continues to assure the information remains available. Last year’s goal was to reduce unfounded allegations due to confusion or misinterpretation.

Staff culture training is being delivered. It incorporates video activity into the classroom. The intent of this training is to enhance and support a positive reporting environment. Additional videos have been created in to support this effort.

The MN DOC is, in good faith, reporting the data and making available the agency’s efforts toward compliance with the PREA Standards. Although there has not been specific corrective action, per allegation, each facility reviews all allegations for areas of improvement. The PREA Coordinator will continue to monitor these reviews for improvement suggestions. The end result is to move the MN DOC toward a safer place to live and work.
Continued Pro-Active/Corrective action:

A) The MN DOC continues a number of training and education tools. Upon intake and transfer, all offenders are receiving information on their rights to be free from Sexual Abuse while incarcerated. Included is information on how/where to report, the availability of assistance, advocacy services, and the agency’s behavioral health and medical staff. An agency staff currently supports the PREA advocacy efforts. Work with the community advocacy is currently underway. A renewed effort to bring them on board is being done. Offender video and information used in the offender’s Reception and Orientation is suggested by the PREA resource center. Information and telephone numbers are posted in the facilities for reminders. Additional informational posters have been added.

B) The agency conducts intake screenings on all offender intakes, transfers, and those returning from court appearances. The screenings allow for a private conversation with competent medical staff for reporting any past abuse. The screening provides information to other staff, on a need to know basis, as to an offender’s risk factors for vulnerability or likely abusiveness. Timely, private follow-ups are conducted to assist in having a safe and secure environment.

C) All staff have training to understand the PREA Standards and their responsibilities in prevention, detection and response to sexual abuse and harassment. All staff, volunteers and contractors receive training. A specific PREA training component has been implemented in the pre-service academy. The agency has developed victim response training for staff. The agency continues initiatives to foster a safe and secure environment, while working toward transition from confinement.

D) Policies and Discipline regulations reflect the PREA requirements. Both offenders and staff accountability for sexual abuse and harassment are outlined.

F) The agency’s database system has provided for tracking the care of victims and the management of abusers. The information is available for the designated Sexual Abuse Response Team members. This provides an efficient way for management to monitor progress on and response to an allegation.

G) All new Investigators, Health Services/Behavioral Health staff continue to receive specialized training in working with victims of sexual abuse.

Ongoing, proactive efforts are being done to reduce the number of unsubstantiated allegations and facilitate timelier reporting. The new staff training is aimed at ongoing efforts to create an environment of reporting. Refresher training is conducted with PREA information. Currently, the agency is using the refresher training supported by the PREA Resource Center.
An element of reporting culture enhancement has been implemented in staff training. Offender education materials are intended to facilitate the acceptance of reporting in a confinement environment.

Audits conducted by a Department of Justice certified auditor have found all the facilities under the Department of Corrections in full compliance with the PREA Standards. Efforts continue to assure continued compliance.

4. SUMMARY:

The MN DOC continues taking steps toward improving its efforts in complying with PREA and preventing prison sexual abuse, as well as effectively responding to the reports of abuse. Some increases in allegations could be due, in part, to new training, educations material, and posters. A decrease in allegations against staff has been due, in part, to a better application and supervision of contact/pat searches. The continual delivery of education and training is in place to assure an understanding of security procedures necessary for a secure living and working environment. Efforts to reduce unsubstantiated allegations continue.

The MN DOC has been found in full compliance with all PREA requirements outlining conditions of confinement. The agency maintains a commitment of professional development opportunities for all employees, contractors and volunteers. The agency’s commitment to offenders and staff will continue to be a driving force as we move forward in addressing prison sexual abuse.