

Vermont Department of Corrections Annual Internal Report - Sexual Victimization

An Analysis of 2014 & 2015 Data



Prepared by: Wendy Yoder, PREA Director – August 23, 2016

The Vermont Department of Corrections has long been committed to preventing sexual victimization, and promoting safety and security for all inmates and staff.

All Vermont Adult Correctional Facilities have been audited and found to be in full compliance with the Final Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Standards for Adult Prisons and Jails.

Introduction

Each year the VT DOC collects accurate and uniform data for every allegation of sexual victimization and completes the Survey of Sexual Victimization Report (SSV). The SSV report provides information on every allegation of sexual victimization and it is posted on the VT DOC's Public Web Page. The following analysis is the VT DOC's annual internal report for substantiated inmate on inmate and staff on inmate sexual victimization incidents. This report provides a comparison of incidents from 2014 and 2015 and is utilized by the VT DOC PREA Director, in conjunction with other department staff, to identify opportunities for corrective measures aimed to prevent future incidents of sexual victimization.

Data

The summary on the last page of this report provides the number of substantiated staff sexual misconduct, staff sexual harassment, inmate on inmate sexual abuse and inmate on inmate sexual harassment incidents.

The number of substantiated staff on inmate sexual misconduct incidents decreased from one in 2014 to zero in 2015. The number of substantiated staff sexual harassment incidents decreased from two in 2014 to zero in 2015. The low number of incidents appears to be directly related to inmate sexual safety policy, procedures and practices, including staff and inmate education.

The number of inmate on inmate substantiated nonconsensual sexual acts decreased from five in 2014 to zero in 2015. The number of inmate on inmate abusive sexual contacts remained consistent with eight in 2014 and 2015. The number of substantiated inmate on inmate sexual harassment incidents increased from five in 2014 to 18 in 2015. The reduction of inmate on inmate sexual abuse is likely attributed to our continued focus on inmate sexual safety education. The increase in substantiated inmate on inmate sexual harassment appears related to an increase in inmate willingness to report.

Problem Area Identification & Corrective Measures

Staff Sexual Misconduct

Location of Incidents: There were no substantiated cases of staff on inmate victimization in 2015.

Classification of Staff Involved: There were no substantiated cases of staff on inmate victimization in 2015.

Corrective Measures: Continue with current staff orientation and training programs.

Inmate Nonconsensual Sexual Acts

Location of Incidents: There were no substantiated inmate on inmate nonconsensual acts in 2015.

Corrective Measures: Continue with informed housing, bed and program assignments with the goal of keeping separate those inmates at high risk of being sexually victimized from those at high risk of being sexually abusive.

Inmate Abusive Sexual Contacts

Location of Incidents: Four of the eight (or 50%) substantiated incidents in 2015 took place in shared cells and the other four (or 50%) took place in common areas in the unit. This is a change when compared to 2014, when 63% of the abusive sexual contact incidents occurred in common areas inside and outside the living units.

Corrective Measures: Continue with comprehensive staff and inmate education efforts that include intake, medical and caseworker PREA Orientations, PREA Newsletters, PREA Posters, and a comprehensive and consistent Sexual Safety and PREA information section for our facility handbooks.

Inmate Sexual Harassment

Location of Incidents: Eight of the 18 substantiated incidents (or 44%) took place in cells shared by the victim and perpetrator. Five incidents (or 27%) occurred in common areas outside the units, four (or 22%) occurred in common areas in the units and one occurred in the victims' cell.

Corrective measures: Continue with comprehensive inmate education efforts that include intake, medical and caseworker PREA Orientations, PREA Newsletters, PREA Posters, and a comprehensive and consistent Sexual Safety and PREA information section for our facility handbooks.

Facility Numbers for Inmate on Inmate Incidents (nonconsensual acts, abusive sexual contact and sexual harassment).

Facility Locations: The numbers that follow are the collective total of incidents over the period of 2014 and 2015, Chittenden Region Correctional Facility (CRCF) reported ten substantiated incidents; Northwest State Correctional Facility (NWSCF) reported nine substantiated incidents. Southern State Correctional Facility (SOSCF) and Northern State Correctional Facility (NOSCF) reported seven substantiated incidents. Marble Valley Regional Correctional Facility (MVRFCF) and North East Correctional Facility (NECC) reported six substantiated incidents and Southeast State Correctional Facility (SESCF) reported one incident

Corrective Measures: Continue with staff training and comprehensive inmate education efforts that include intake, medical and caseworker PREA Orientations, PREA Newsletters, PREA Posters, and a comprehensive and consistent Sexual Safety and PREA information section for our facility handbooks.

Predatory and Vulnerable Classification Strategies

All inmates are assessed during intake and upon transfer to another facility for their risk of being sexually victimized by other inmates or sexually predatory toward other inmates. Inmates identifying as transgender or intersex have housing and program assignments reviewed at minimum twice annually.

Corrective Actions: Continue with current screening and review protocols to make informed bed, housing and program assignments for all inmates.

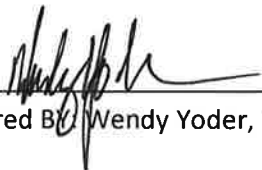
Incident Review and Follow-up


The VT DOC conducts incident reviews for all substantiated and unsubstantiated incidents of sexual abuse. There were no apparent patterns involving the 2015 sexual abuse incidents.

Corrective Measures: Continue with current incident review and a corrective measure practices to include review and sign off by key personnel at both the facility and central office level.


Conclusion

Inmate sexual safety has and continues to be a top priority for the VT DOC. The requirements outlined in the Final PREA Standards for Adult Prisons and Jails provide direction for the department to expand its efforts toward preventing, detecting and responding to sexual victimization. Implementing the corrective measures outlined in this report will ensure that the VT DOC continues taking steps toward achieving inmate sexual safety.


Prepared By: Wendy Yoder, VT DOC Director, PREA


Date


Approved By: Lisa Menard – VT DOC Commissioner


Date

**Vermont Department of Corrections 2014 - 2015
Survey of Sexual Victimization (SSV) - Summary Data**

	NONCONSENSUAL SEXUAL ACTS	SEXUAL ABUSIVE CONTACTS	SEXUAL HARASSMENT	STAFF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT	STAFF SEXUAL HARASSMENT	TOTAL SUBSTANTIATED INCIDENTS
YEAR	Substantiated	Substantiated	Substantiated	Substantiated	Substantiated	
Total 2014	3	8	5	1	2	19
Total 2015	0	8	18	0	0	26
Location						
CRCF						
2014	0	0	1	1	0	2
2015	0	3	5	0	0	8
MVRCF						
2014	0	1	0	0	0	1
2015	0	2	3	0	0	5
NECC						
2014	0	2	0	0	0	2
2015	0	2	2	0	0	4
NSCF						
2014	0	1	1	1	1	4
2015	0	0	3	0	0	3
NWSCF						
2014	1	3	1	0	1	6
2015	0	0	3	0	0	3
SESCF						
2014	0	0	1	0	0	1
2015	0	0	0	0	0	0
SSCF						
2014	2	1	1	0	0	4
2015	0	1	2	0	0	3