

Vermont Department of Corrections Annual Internal Report - Sexual Victimization

An Analysis of 2016 & 2017 Data



Prepared by: Wendy Yoder, PREA Director – October 25, 2018

The Vermont Department of Corrections is 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 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 2016 and 2017 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 two in 2016 to zero in 2017. The number of substantiated staff sexual harassment incidents remained the same with one in 2016 and one in 2017. VT DOC continues to see low numbers of staff involved incidents. This 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 increased from zero in 2016 to one in 2017. The number of substantiated inmate on inmate abusive sexual contacts decreased from six in 2016 to two in 2017. The number of substantiated inmate on inmate sexual harassment incidents increased from eight in 2016 to 11 in 2017. The overall reduction in the total number of inmate on inmate sexual abuse and sexual harassment is attributed to continued focus on inmate and staff sexual safety education.

Problem Area Identification & Corrective Measures

Staff Sexual Misconduct/Sexual Harassment

Location of Incidents: There was one substantiated cases of staff on inmate victimization in 2016. This case occurred in a support services area.

Classification of Staff Involved: The case involved a full time security staff member.

Corrective Measures: Continue with current staff orientation and training programs. Use incident by specific location data to identify areas for changes to supervision practices, increased camera coverage and/or other corrective measures.

Inmate Nonconsensual Sexual Acts

Location of Incidents: There was one substantiated inmate on inmate nonconsensual act in 2017. This incident occurred when inmates in the unit day room entered another cell.

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. Use incident by specific location data to identify areas for changes to supervision practices, increased camera coverage and/or other corrective measures.

Inmate Abusive Sexual Contacts

Location of Incidents: Both substantiated incidents in 2017 took place in common areas inside the living units. This is an increase when compared to 2016, when 83% 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 resident handbooks. Use incident by specific location data to identify areas for increased supervision and/or increased camera coverage.

Inmate Sexual Harassment

Location of Incidents: Nine of the eleven substantiated incidents (or 82%) took place in common areas (day room 5, Recreation yard 3, Unit bathroom 1). One incident occurred when the perpetrator entered the victim's cell and one incident occurred in a shared 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 in facility handbooks. Use incident by specific location data to identify areas for changes to supervision practices, increased camera coverage and/or other corrective measures.

Incidents by Facility

Facility Locations: The numbers that follow are the collective total of substantiated incidents over the period of 2016 and 2017, Northwest State Correctional Facility (NWSCF) reported 11 substantiated incidents. Southern State Correctional Facility (SOSCF) reported eight substantiated incidents. Chittenden Region Correctional Facility (CRCF) reported three substantiated incidents. Marble Valley Regional Correctional Facility (MVRCF) reported three substantiated incidents and Northeast Correctional Facility (NECC) and Southeast State correctional facilities each reported one substantiated 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. Use incident by specific location data to identify areas for changes to supervision practices, increased camera coverage and/or other corrective measures.

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 work and program assignments for all inmates.

Incident Review and Follow-up

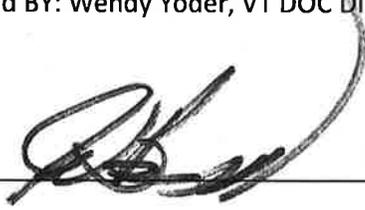
The VT DOC conducts incident reviews for all substantiated and unsubstantiated incidents of sexual abuse. Each of the three inmate on inmate substantiated sexual abuse incidents occurred in or when inmates had access to unit common areas.

Corrective Measures: Continue with individual incident review and corrective measure practices to include review and sign off by key personnel at both the facility and central office level. Use aggregated incident by specific location data to identify areas for changes to supervision practices, increased camera coverage and/or other corrective measures.

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



Approved By: James Baker – VT DOC Commissioner



Date

**Vermont Department of Corrections 2015 – 2016
Survey of Sexual Victimization (SSV) - Summary Data**

YEAR	NONCONSENSUAL SEXUAL ACTS	SEXUAL ABUSIVE CONTACTS	SEXUAL HARASSMENT	STAFF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT	STAFF SEXUAL HARASSMENT	TOTAL SUBSTANTIATED INCIDENTS
	Substantiated	Substantiated	Substantiated	Substantiated	Substantiated	
Total 2016	0	6	8	2	1	17
Total 2017	1	2	11	0	1	15
TOTAL	1	8	19	2	2	32
Location						
CRCF						
2016	0	4	0	1	0	5
2017	0	0	0	0	1	1
CRCF TOTAL	0	4	0	1	1	6
MVRCF						
2016	0	0	1	0	0	1
2017	0	0	1	0	0	1
MVRCF TOTAL	0	0	2	0	0	2
NECC						
2016	0	0	1	0	0	1
2017	0	0	0	0	0	0
NECC TOTAL	0	0	1	0	0	1
NOSCF						
2016	0	0	2	0	0	2
2017	0	1	0	0	0	1
NOSCF TOTAL	0	1	2	0	0	3
NWSCF						
2016	0	1	2	0	0	3
2017	1	0	7	0	0	8
NWSCF TOTAL	1	1	9	0	0	11
SESCF						
2016	0	0	0	0	0	0
2017	0	0	1	0	0	1
SESCF TOTAL	0	0	1	0	0	1
SOSCF						
2016	0	1	2	1	1	5
2017	0	1	2	0	0	3
SOSCF TOTAL	0	2	4	1	1	8