



Delaware County Jail Oversight Board

Report and Findings of Unannounced Inspection

On October 23, 2019, Delaware County Council, acting pursuant to 61 Pa.C.S. § 1721, *et seq.*, adopted resolution 2019-12 establishing the Delaware County Jail Oversight Board. Pursuant to state and local law, the Board is required to ensure that the George W. Hill correctional facility is being operated in accordance with its regulations and within state and federal law. Consistent with these powers and duties the Board is mandated to conduct at least two unannounced inspections of the jail's physical plant and to privately interview inmates, to determine the conditions within the jail. On Thursday, December 8, 2022, members of the Delaware County Jail Oversight Board conducted an unannounced tour of the George W. Hill Correctional Facility pursuant to their statutory authority. Teams of Board members visited the Intake area, the Medical area, the Kitchen, General Population housing area, Intake housing, Medication Assisted Treatment Housing, the Juvenile and Female units. The Board Chair toured the training area and conducted a review of documents, policies, and directives with the facility compliance officer. The tour commenced at approximately 3:00 and concluded at approximately 5:30. The warden, deputy wardens and ranking correctional staff were on site to facilitate the tour but were not involved in conversations with inmates or staff. What follows is a record of the Boards findings which will be made publicly available.

- George W. Hill has a current approved Organizational chart in place. There are current policies related to Recruitment and Promotion for all job classifications and all job classifications have detailed specifications and qualifications. The jail maintains a Code of Conduct and Ethics, which contains an anti-discrimination policy. The jail also maintains a sexual harassment/sexual misconduct policy. As management and labor are currently involved in collective bargaining, the jail does not currently maintain a process for conducting employee evaluations, staff discipline, or an employee grievance and appeals process. An informal process is in place until a collective bargaining agreement is ratified. The jail maintains an annually approved and updated Personnel policy manual. There are written policies mandating a smoke free and drug-free workplace for all staff. The jail maintains written policies and procedures that direct staff in the event of emergencies. All staff on duty received mandated pre-service training, which has been documented, and prior

to COVID received annual in-service training. In-Service training was suspended during the pandemic and has not been reinstated, partly due to staffing shortages. This is something facility administration needs to reimplement as soon as practical, as critical ongoing instruction, especially in areas such as use of force, are not occurring. The jail maintains a Sanitation and Housekeeping plan that addresses all areas of the facility and provide for daily housekeeping and regular maintenance, and the control of vermin and pests. This is verified through weekly inspections by the Fire Safety Manager; monthly facility-wide inspections, and quarterly inspections by the Safety Committee. Also, sanitation inspections are conducted of all areas of the jail each month and the results of these inspections are documented and maintained on file. Each year the facility implements an approved post plan detailing the number of staff required to maintain care, custody, and control of the inmate population on a 24-hour basis. The facility maintains documented proof that the Warden and Deputies visit each of the jail's living and activity areas, cycling through the entire facility, at least monthly, to encourage contact with staff and inmates and observe living and working conditions. The jail maintains a secured storage area for all security equipment and weapons. Written records are maintained as to the distribution of these items. A documented inventory of these items is also conducted monthly to determine accountability and condition. This area was toured and appeared well-secured with proper security protocols in-place. The jail maintains documented procedures for conducting searches of the facility as well as personal searches of inmates, vendors, volunteers, visitors, and staff. Formal, physical inmate headcounts are conducted according to policy and documented.

- The common areas of the facility appeared to be in good housekeeping order. Lobbies, corridors, day rooms, and the medical area were generally clean and free of any sign or vermin. There were, however, areas that need increased maintenance and repair. Board members observed a housing unit where the shower area had peeling paint on the walls, broken shower heads and the upper tier shower area leaked into the lower tier. Warden Williams did advise that they are working on a plan to address the showers comprehensively. In another housing area an inmate reported a faulty electrical socket in his cell. He told Board members that the condition had existed for a week. The Sergeant on the block said he put a work order in to have the condition repaired. In the housing areas visited, the cells appeared to be in fair condition. Several cells had graffiti on the walls as well as what appeared to be an excess of commissary items. A few cells had homemade "clothes lines" strung up to dry towels and clothing that was apparently being washed in the cell. Inmates in these cells stated that laundry service was inconsistent and unreliable. A complaint voiced by several inmates is that they are not provided supplies or materials to clean their cells. Inmates discussed the reduced access to contraband such as drugs. Inmates did disclose they are still available, but they do see an improvement from prior incarcerations at George W. Hill. To ensure the safety and sobriety of inmates at the jail, the administration is committed to reducing access to contraband. To reduce the introduction of contraband into the facility, Warden Williams advised that all personal mail has been transitioned to digital mail. Legal mail will still be accepted on-site and provided to the incarcerated person, abiding by all regulations specific to attorney/client privilege. Legal mail must follow new procedures to include, registering to send legal documents to incarcerated persons.

Independent bar codes will be issued to the attorney for legal mail to be sent to the facility. This legal mail will then be tracked from time of receipt to delivery to the incarcerated person. A new body scanner has been approved and will be installed to reduce diversion from newly admitted inmates and inmates returning to the facility from court. On the Juvenile block the residents were engaged in mindfulness and wellness therapy provided by an outside resource, Mrs. Stacey Mandell. On tour of the Mental health block, we did not see anything out of the ordinary. During the tour, some Board members found it difficult to speak confidentially to every inmate as correctional staff were in close proximity. Board members also had the opportunity to visit the Female housing unit and all inmates said they were okay when asked. In conversations Board members had with inmates, most said they were being treated well, except for a few.

- Each housing unit visited was staffed according to the facility post plan. Officers on housing units knew their unit census. Supervisors acknowledged officers review post orders prior to their shift.
- Inmates participating in the Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) program are housed together. Board members had the opportunity to visit each cell in this area and speak to several inmates at length. Every inmate appeared in good spirits and said they were pleased with the treatment they were receiving. The Inmates on the unit, unanimously, provided positive feedback regarding the newly expanded MAT services, and none of them expressed any problems or difficulties. Inmates discussed the benefits of receiving MAT and how it has dramatically reduced withdrawals and cravings. Inmates, however, are not receiving the corresponding treatment in the form of group and individual therapy due to Crozer-Prospect no longer fulfilling the treatment aspect of the grant and medical provider Wellpath being unable to appropriately staff the treatment program. The warden and her staff are aware of the issues and continue to work with Wellpath and hold them accountable to fill these positions, so inmates are receiving the designated treatment in addition to the opioid medication in this program.
- Board members toured the Medical area. Corridors, treatment rooms and nurses' stations appeared clean and orderly. Several inmate housing areas appeared crowded and contained excess property and commissary items. It was clear that certain inmates were being held in the medical area for what seemed to be other than immediate health conditions. There was one individual who claimed he had been waiting for a medical appointment to be rescheduled since October. There was an elderly man who was suffering from dementia and mental illness who was held there as a protective measure for an extended basis as there was no other place for him to be sent. This necessitates correctional staff to be dedicated to watching and assisting him on a 24/7 basis. At the time of the tour both a sergeant and an officer were assigned. To better assist inmates with special needs and older inmates who need more services than provided on a general population block or may be vulnerable in general population, but do not need to be housed in the infirmary, the jail needs to create a designated block for these inmates to reside. Warden Williams advised Board members that she plans to transition Block 4B to a geriatric/veteran's block for older inmates and high-risk inmates that need more attention but do not need to reside in the infirmary.

- Board members toured the Kitchen during meal preparation. Inmate workers and ARAMARK staff were working in the kitchen at the time of the tour. According to the ARAMARK supervisor, there were no correctional staff assigned to the kitchen at the time of the tour. All inmate workers were properly attired and wore hair and beard nets. According to ARAMARK staff on location, all inmate workers had received medical clearances to work in the kitchen and had received training in safe food handling. Board members observed ARAMARK staff actively tracking and inventorying kitchen tools. There are several pieces of kitchen equipment that were not working and in need of repair. This is included in a capital improvement project that is being advertised for bid. Food preparation areas appeared clean. However, the storage practices for both dry and frozen foods need to be reviewed as Board members observed improperly stored food and open containers. Freezers and refrigerators were at appropriate temperatures, and these were documented. The quality of the inmate dinner meal being delivered appeared to be acceptable. Warden Williams pointed out improvements that were made in the Correctional Officer's dining area.
- Board members toured the Intake area and observed the Intake Process. Policy dictates that inmates should not be held in the intake area beyond 24 hours before being moved to intake housing. According to Warden Williams, the impediment to housing newly admitted inmates within 24 hours is a lack of medical staff to conduct medical screenings on newly admitted inmates. Since Wellpath is short staffed, the medical screenings are not being performed consistently on time. This delays the intake process and extends the time inmates stay on the intake area. According to Warden Williams, Wellpath has posted a position to hire another Nurse Practitioner/Physicians' Assistant which will double their current staffing pattern from 1 to 2 per shift and should alleviate any intake backlog. Board members observed inmates in the intake area laying on the floor with blankets while they awaited their medical screening. When there are too many inmates awaiting an intake medical screening, the overflowing inmates are held in the court production areas. This creates problems for the facility when inmates need to be processed for court. Also, there is no way for inmates being held in this area to communicate their needs to correctional staff until staff make a scheduled tour of the area. Warden Williams advised the communications system is included in a forthcoming project to upgrade security in the intake area. Inmates awaiting housing in the intake area expressed concerns about not having access to showers.
- Prior to the tour, a Board member had discussed that he had received recurring complaints about the lack of responsiveness to calls to the prison, especially as it related to checking on the wellbeing of family members and establishing visitation. Warden Williams and Deputy Warden Mastroddi both stated that they have approval to hire a receptionist/administrative assistant to take and respond to calls in the upcoming budget year. The position is being advertised.