



Yakima County, Washington
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

2024 Prison Rape Elimination Annual Report

Background

The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) was passed by Congress and signed into law by President George W. Bush in 2003 to prevent, detect, and respond to sexual abuse in confinement settings. In June 2012, the national standards for reducing prison rape developed by the National Prison Rape Elimination Commission were published by the Department of Justice (DOJ) in the Federal Register. PREA applies to adult prisons and jails, juvenile confinement facilities, lockups, and community confinement facilities.

The Yakima County Department of Corrections (YCDOC) maintains a zero-tolerance policy toward sexual abuse, sexual assault, or sexual misconduct and complies with the applicable standards of PREA.

YCDOC Approach

Our agency approach aligns with the principles of PREA by prioritizing prevention, detection, reporting, and response to sexual abuse.

Efforts in 2024 included:

- Mandatory annual training for all staff on prevention, identification, reporting, and response to sexual misconduct/sexual assault, including indicators of misconduct.
- Revision of YCDOC policies related to sexual abuse and misconduct.
- Implementation and updating of PREA educational signage throughout the facility.
- Maintaining a designated PREA Coordinator and PREA Managers to oversee compliance efforts.
- Operation of a PREA Hotline as an independent reporting outlet, allowing inmates anonymity.

- Contract agreement with Comprehensive Healthcare of Central Washington to provide victim advocate support for incarcerated victims of sexual abuse.

Pursuant to §115.87 of the PREA standards, YCDOC collects, aggregates, and reviews data regarding reports of sexual abuse incidents. These statistics are published in this annual report and made available to the public on the YCDOC website.

Definitions

Once a report of sexual abuse is initiated and investigated, it is assigned a case number in the IA-Pro database and classified as:

- Substantiated – Supported by sufficient evidence to justify a reasonable conclusion of guilt.
- Unsubstantiated – Insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation.

- Unfounded – Allegation is false, or the action did not involve a YCDOC employee.
 - Exonerated – Incident occurred but was lawful and proper.
- YCDOC applies the definitions provided in PREA Standard 115.6 regarding inmate-on-inmate abuse, staff-on-inmate abuse, harassment, and voyeurism.

Sexual Abuse Report Activity

Inmates may confidentially disclose incidents of sexual abuse to any YCDOC employee verbally or in writing, 24/7. Administrative investigations are completed within 90 days of the initial report. Each investigation undergoes an incident review in accordance with PREA Standard §115.86.

Review criteria include:

- Determining whether policy or practice changes are necessary.
- Assessing whether group dynamics or demographics motivated the incident.
- Reviewing the physical location for potential enabling factors.
- Assessing staffing adequacy at the time of the incident.
- Determining if monitoring technology should be added or adjusted.

Findings for 2024: No changes to policy or practice were deemed necessary. No physical barriers were identified, and staffing levels were found adequate. YCDOC will continue to review all incidents to ensure a safe, secure environment.

Data Review for Corrective Actions

PREA Standard §115.88 requires data review to assess and improve sexual abuse prevention, detection, and response efforts.

<u>Category</u>	<u>2024 Reported Allegations</u>		
	<u>Substantiated</u>	<u>Unsubstantiated</u>	<u>Unfounded</u>
Inmate-on-Inmate Abuse	1	0	7
Inmate-on-Inmate Harassment	0	0	2
Staff-on-Inmate Abuse	0	0	1
Staff-on-Inmate Harassment	0	0	1

Analysis

Allegations of sexual abuse and harassment within YCDOC remain rare. One substantiated case of inmate-on-inmate abuse was recorded in 2024. Allegations of harassment and staff misconduct were investigated and determined to be unfounded. No trends or systemic issues were identified.

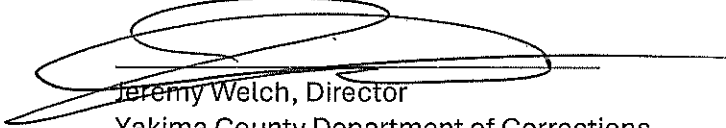
Corrective Action

No corrective actions were identified as necessary in 2024. YCDOC will continue ongoing staff training, inmate education, and monitoring practices to maintain compliance with PREA standards.

Conclusion

The Yakima County Department of Corrections is committed to the principles of PREA and maintains a zero-tolerance policy for sexual abuse, sexual assault, or sexual harassment in its facility. All allegations are thoroughly investigated, reviewed, and addressed in accordance with federal standards.

Approved by:



Jeremy Welch, Director
Yakima County Department of Corrections

Date: 8/18/25