



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 Wednesday, August 9, 2023, 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 Criminal Justice Program Manager conducted a review of documents, policies, and directives with the facility Compliance Officer and the facility Training Director. The tour commenced at approximately 4:00 and concluded at approximately 7:00. The warden, deputy wardens and ranking correctional staff were on site at the time of the tour. Security supervisors provided escorts but were not involved in conversations with inmates or staff. What follows are the Boards findings, which will be made publicly available.

- A review of compliance and training documents, policies and directives reveal the following: 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. The jail has a detailed policy covering the Prison Rape Elimination Act. 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. This policy has not been updated yet but is scheduled for review prior to year-end. 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. The Fire Marshal annually reviews the jail's emergency plans. This review is scheduled for December 2023. All staff on duty received mandated pre-service training, which has been documented. In-Service training was reinstated in January 2023 after it had been suspended during the pandemic. According to the Training Director, the jail is on track to complete In-Service training for all security staff who will need it, by the end of the calendar year. The Training Director implemented a Field Training Officer program to support officers newly graduated from the training academy. Training plans and course curricula exist for each academy class and are up to date. The jail maintains a Sanitation and Housekeeping plan that addresses all areas of the facility and provides 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. The jail maintains an electronic maintenance log and tracking system – Maintenance Connection. All maintenance issues are entered and tracked. The status of all logged maintenance issues can be monitored. 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. Access to this area is limited to authorized staff. 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. 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 new body scanner was operational and being utilized. A body scanner policy has been approved and implemented, and the search policy has been updated to include this new equipment. Except for July 2023, the jail has conducted Block Rep. meetings each month with all division heads and inmate representatives.

All 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. Notable issues or concerns include the following:

Intake

- Since the transition to county control, Intake staff have been instructed to accept all inmates, regardless of medical status. If medical status is compromised, Intake staff will refer to the medical team. The medical team reports denying approximately 2 inmates a

month from admittance into GWH due to critical medical issues. These inmates are sent to hospital for treatment.

- Inmate workers were present in the Intake area to clean throughout the day.
- The Physician Assistant is called out of Intake once or twice a week consistently to cover medical vacancies on the 7pm-7am shift. This causes a major back up in processing intakes since intakes must be evaluated by medical before being processed to the block. This also results in delays in inmates receiving medications for both mental and physical ailments.
- Medical staff reported that an inmate admitted with a critical condition is referred to medical and normally receive prescribed medication within 24 hours, or sooner.
- The medical provider, WellPath, reported hiring 4 overnight RN's. This should resolve the issue of having the PA cover overnight shifts and expedite the intake process.
- WellPath has reported they were experiencing a high turnover rate.
- Intake staff reported average processing time being 24 hours with the longest being 2-3 days. When visiting the new admit block almost every inmate interviewed reported a 3-day processing time from Intake to housing on the new admit block.
- The new Body Scanner has been installed and is operational. Board members were able to see it in use. Contraband was found on the first day of use. Time to scan each inmate is approximately one minute so this should not increase time for intake process.
- All inmates on intake block that were interviewed reported arriving the date of the tour and interview or the previous night.
- Inmates reported the temperature on the intake pod was very hot. The Body Scanner room was also hot. The issue with the heat is due to problems with HVAC system.

Medical

- 4 overnight RN's have been hired. The overnight shift is now fully staffed.
- Currently, there were no inmates being treating in outside facilities. One inmate was pending transfer to an outside facility for treatment.
- Medical reported no issues or concerns and expressed enthusiasm for the extended MAT services within the jail.

New Commit Block

- Average intake process appeared to be 3 days from inmates' responses.
- Multiple Inmates reported not receiving shower shoes upon intake even though they reported it is indicated on their property list. Inmates reported showering without them is unsanitary.

MAT Block

- It was reported by all MAT inmates who spoke to members of the Board, on both the male and female blocks, that everyone receives 8mg of suboxone even if they came into the jail on higher doses. Inmates reported experiencing withdrawal symptoms due to receiving a lower dose than what they had been prescribed to them previously. Inmates complained it did not seem like individualized care but a blanket approach. This was reported by multiple inmates on each MAT block.
- One inmate reported that the suboxone medication can make them nauseous and asked if it was possible for those on the MAT block to receive a snack bag to assist in combating this side effect.
- There appears to be a major discrepancy with the amount of therapy the MAT inmates are receiving on the male block. One male reported one, 1-hour group session a week. Another reported three, 1-hour group sessions per week. Another male stated there was one group session daily. Each stated that they do not receive direct individual counseling sessions with a counselor other than the counselor stopping by on the block to check in and chat. The males all reported satisfaction with the quality of therapeutic resources but there seems to be confusion or misunderstanding regarding what they are receiving.
- Overall, other than the suboxone dose, the attitude and assessment of the MAT program by the men was positive.
- The female MAT block was different. They unanimously stated they receive one ½ hour group session weekly on Thursday from 12:00 to 12:30. All of the female inmates who spoke to Board members said this was ineffective and meaningless since by the time they sit down and introduce themselves, the session is over. The females stated that they receive no individual counseling or case management services other than what is provided to the entire jail.
- Females stated that they are not given the opportunity to attend outside AA meetings like the men. Some females reported that they had only been given one opportunity to attend an AA meeting in the past 3 months due to the men not wanting to attend.
- A female stated that she came into the jail with a prescription for MAT and it took 6 days before she received her suboxone in jail.
- Females also reiterated the issues with the 8mg doses.
- Overall attitude and assessment of MAT program by female residents was poor and it appears there is an opportunity and need to increase the treatment component within the MAT program.

Restrictive Housing Unit

- Board members found the unit to be quiet and orderly, but the showers were filthy. Inmates on the unit complained about not being transferred or not getting their property. Also, they were complaining about grievances not being delivered.

Unit 5

- Inmates on all blocks of Unit 5 complained that there was no cold water or ice, as well as complaints concerning inoperable call buttons.

Unit 6

- 6A day room and showers needed to be cleaned. There were complaints about the phones and call buttons not working and officers not responding to residents' concerns.
- 6B day room and showers needed to be cleaned. The main concern was the hot temperature.
- 6C showers needed to be cleaned. There were complains about the hot temperature, no ice, Officers were disrespectful, phones and call buttons not working.
- 6D complaints concerning the hot temperature and that the call buttons were not working, and a lack of timely response for sick call.

Unit 7

- Inmates on all blocks expressed similar concerns. On Blocks A, B, C and D, Board members heard complains concerning the hot temperature, inoperable call buttons, showers needed to be cleaned and were not covered so that people could see in the showers, and officers did not respond to requests for assistance.