

2023 Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Report

The Connecticut Judicial Branch is subject to the standards set forth in the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 (PREA), 34 U.S.C. § 30301, et seq. PREA established federal requirements for the prevention, detection and response to sexual abuse and sexual harassment in confinement facilities. The PREA standards for lockups, juvenile facilities and community confinement facilities are all applicable to the Judicial Branch.

The Connecticut Judicial Branch has lockups in 33 courthouses that are overseen by Judicial Marshal Services.

The Judicial Branch operates two juvenile residential centers located in Bridgeport and Hartford run by the Court Support Services Division (CSSD) Juvenile Residential Services.

The Judicial Branch also contracts with adult and juvenile providers throughout the state to provide residentially-based services for individuals in need of supervision, substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, and housing services.

The Connecticut Judicial Branch is committed to meeting its requirements under the Prison Rape Elimination Act. When individuals are placed in the custody of the Judicial Branch, the Judicial Branch has an obligation to keep them safe and free from all forms of sexual abuse and sexual harassment. The Judicial Branch must be accountable to those individuals. They have the right to be held in an environment where sexual abuse and sexual harassment will not be tolerated; and if it does occur, appropriate remedial steps will be taken to prevent it from happening in the future.

Individuals in the custody of the Judicial Branch are entitled to have access to justice. Their status as a confined individual must not interfere with that. All individuals who utilize the court system must have confidence that they will be treated fairly and with respect. Complying with the PREA standards helps to ensure that.

Judicial Branch Progress in Addressing the PREA Standards

The Connecticut Judicial Branch continued to implement the PREA standards during the course of 2023. In 2023, the following actions took place:

- Conducted on-site PREA audits of juvenile residential centers, courthouse lockups, contracted juvenile and adult community residential programs
- The Hartford and Bridgeport Residential Centers successfully passed their PREA audits conducted by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor
- Two contracted Judicial Branch adult residential programs successfully passed their PREA audits conducted by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor
- Annual Juvenile Residential Services in-service PREA trainings conducted for 227 Juvenile Residential Services staff
- Juvenile Residential Services Health Services staff received the following training: Medical providers – 43 staff completed annual PREA training; Mental Health providers – 34 staff completed annual PREA training and 7 staff completed Specialized PREA training; Dental providers – 9 staff completed annual PREA training
- Twenty (20) annual Juvenile Residential Services trainings and seven (7) in-service PREA trainings were conducted for Juvenile Residential Services staff
- Delivered initial PREA training to 77 new Judicial Marshals
- Provided refresher PREA information to all Judicial Marshals
- Updates were made to Juvenile Residential Services policy 8.501 - Access to Care to address boundaries and chaperone process for staff
- Updates were made to the existing Juvenile PREA staff training curriculum

In the coming year, the Judicial Branch will be focusing on the following tasks:

- Continue conducting on-site PREA audits of juvenile residential centers, courthouse lockups, contracted juvenile and adult community residential programs
- Provide annual refresher training to all Judicial Branch employees

Judicial Marshal Services¹

Judicial Marshal Services is responsible for courthouse security and the transportation and custody of prisoners. Judicial Marshals oversee lockups in 33 courthouses throughout the state. These lockups are subject to the PREA Lockup Standards.²

In 2023, over 67,000 individuals were in the custody of Judicial Marshal Services.

In 2023, there were five unfounded instances of sexual abuse in Judicial Branch lockups. There were no reported incidents of sexual harassment in Judicial Branch lockups.

In 2023, there were ten reports of sexual abuse or sexual harassment that were reported to Judicial Marshals that occurred at confinement facilities not under the control of Judicial Marshal Services. In those cases, the Judicial Marshal Services' PREA Coordinator contacted the agency's PREA Coordinator or the highest-ranking officer at the location where the alleged incident occurred to inform them of the allegation.

In 2023, there was one reported incident of sexual abuse occurring within a Department of Correction facility that was referenced in a habeas petition filed with the Judicial Branch. In addition, the Judicial Branch received three emails regarding conduct that occurred at a Department of Correction facility. In each instance, the Department of Correction's PREA Coordinator was notified.

Since the Judicial Branch began implementing the PREA standards in 2013, there have been very few reported incidents. During that time, there have only been two reported incidents that were substantiated. In one case, the staff member involved was disciplined. In the other case, the staff member resigned before discipline could be imposed.

¹For purposes of this report, the following definitions are applicable:

Substantiated allegation means an allegation that was investigated and determined to have occurred.

Unfounded allegation means an allegation that was investigated and determined not to have occurred.

Unsubstantiated allegation means an allegation that was investigated and the investigation produced insufficient evidence to make a final determination as to whether or not the event occurred.

28 C.F.R. §115.5.

²The courthouse lockups overseen by Judicial Marshal Services do not hold individuals overnight. Accordingly, they are not audited by DOJ-certified PREA auditors. PREA Lockup standard 28 C.F.R. §115.193.

Juvenile Residential Services³

Juvenile Residential Services oversees two juvenile residential centers that are American Correctional Association (ACA) and National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC) accredited. These centers are subject to the PREA Juvenile Facility Standards.

Both juvenile residential centers were audited in 2014 by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor and were certified as compliant with the PREA Juvenile Facility Standards. Both juvenile residential centers were recertified by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor as compliant with the PREA Juvenile Facility Standards in 2017, 2021, and 2023.

In 2023, approximately 1,000 juveniles were admitted into the two juvenile residential centers.

In 2023, there was one substantiated report of sexual harassment by a juvenile against a juvenile. There were also five reports of sexual assault by a juvenile against a juvenile. One was substantiated, two were unsubstantiated, and two were unfounded. There was also one report of sexual harassment by a staff member against a juvenile which is under investigation at the time of this report.

In 2023, there was one unfounded report of sexual abuse by a staff member against a juvenile. There was also one unsubstantiated report of sexual abuse by a contractor against a juvenile.

Since the Judicial Branch began implementing the PREA standards in 2013, there have been very few reported incidents. During that time, there have only been three reported incidents that were substantiated involving staff members. In each case, the staff member involved was either disciplined or terminated.

³For purposes of this report, the following definitions are applicable:

Substantiated allegation means an allegation that was investigated and determined to have occurred.

Unfounded allegation means an allegation that was investigated and determined not to have occurred.

Unsubstantiated allegation means an allegation that was investigated and the investigation produced insufficient evidence to make a final determination as to whether or not the event occurred.

28 C.F.R. §115.5.

Juvenile Contracted Providers

The Connecticut Judicial Branch contracts with community providers for eight community residential programs for juveniles within its care and custody. These facilities are subject to the PREA Juvenile Facility Standards.

Community Solutions, Inc., LISA's House, Plainville

LISA's House is a female intermediate residential program.

In 2023, there were no reported incidents of sexual abuse or sexual harassment in this program.

Connecticut Junior Republic (CJR), Therapeutic Respite and Assessment Center (TRAC), Litchfield

TRAC is an intermediate community residential program for boys. TRAC was certified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor in 2015. It was recertified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor in 2018, and again in 2021.

In 2023, there was one substantiated report of sexual harassment by a juvenile against a juvenile.

In 2023, there were no reported incidents of sexual abuse in this program.

Connecticut Junior Republic (CJR), Re-entry, Goal-oriented, Individualized, Opportunity to Nurture Success (REGIONS), Waterbury

REGIONS is a staff-secure residential treatment program for boys. REGIONS was certified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor in 2021.

In 2023, there were no reported incidents of sexual abuse or sexual harassment in this program.

Connecticut Junior Republic (CJR), Therapeutic Respite and Assessment Center (TRAC) Expansion for Adolescent Males (TEAM), Litchfield

TEAM is a community residential program for boys. TEAM was certified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor in 2015. It was recertified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor in 2018, and again in 2021.

In 2023, there was one substantiated report of sexual harassment by a juvenile against a juvenile.

In 2023, there were no reported incidents of sexual abuse in this program.

Hamden Re-entry, Goal-oriented, Individualized, Opportunity to Nurture Success (REGIONS), Hamden

REGIONS is a staff-secure residential treatment program for boys. REGIONS was certified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor in 2022.

In 2023, there was one unsubstantiated report of sexual abuse by a juvenile against a juvenile.

In 2023, there were no reported incidents of sexual harassment in this program.

Hartford Re-entry, Goal-oriented, Individualized, Opportunity to Nurture Success (REGIONS), Hartford

REGIONS is a staff-secure residential treatment program for boys. REGIONS was certified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor in 2022.

In 2023, there were no reported incidents of sexual abuse or sexual harassment in this program.

Journey House Residential Treatment Program, Mansfield

Journey House is a limited secure residential treatment program for girls. Journey House was certified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified auditor in 2019. It was recertified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor in 2022.

In 2023, there were no reported incidents of sexual abuse or sexual harassment in this program.

North American Family Institute (NAFI), Adolescent Female Intermediate Residential Program (AFIR), Litchfield

AFIR is an intermediate community residential program for girls. AFIR was certified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor in 2015. It was recertified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor in 2018, and again in 2022. This program closed on December 31, 2022.

Adult Contracted Providers⁴

The Connecticut Judicial Branch contracts with community-based providers and/or has entered into Memoranda of Agreement with other state agencies for 13 programs for adults within its care and custody. These facilities are subject to the PREA Community Confinement Standards.

APT Foundation, Amethyst House and Residential Services, New Haven

The APT Foundation is a substance abuse treatment program. APT Foundation was certified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified auditor in 2017. APT Foundation was recertified by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor as compliant with the PREA Standards in 2019, and again in 2022.

In 2023, there were no reported incidents of sexual abuse or sexual harassment in this facility.

Community Health Resources, Milestone Program, Putnam

Milestone is an intensive short-term substance abuse treatment program. Milestone was certified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor in 2015. It was recertified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified auditor in 2020, and again in 2023.

In 2023, there were no reported incidents of sexual abuse or sexual harassment in this facility.

Connecticut Renaissance West, Waterbury

Connecticut Renaissance West is a substance abuse treatment program. Renaissance West was certified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor in 2016. Connecticut Renaissance West was recertified by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor as compliant with the PREA Standards in 2019, and again in 2022.

In 2023, there was one substantiated incident of sexual abuse by a staff member against a client in this facility.

⁴For purposes of this report, the following definitions are applicable:

Substantiated allegation means an allegation that was investigated and determined to have occurred.

Unfounded allegation means an allegation that was investigated and determined not to have occurred.

Unsubstantiated allegation means an allegation that was investigated and the investigation produced insufficient evidence to make a final determination as to whether or not the event occurred.

28 C.F.R. §115.5.

In 2023, there were no reported incidents of sexual harassment in this facility.

Hartford Transitional Housing, Hartford

Hartford Transitional Housing is a transitional housing program. Hartford Transitional Housing was certified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor in 2015. It was recertified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor in 2018, and again in 2021.

In 2023, there were no reported incidents of sexual abuse or sexual harassment in this facility.

The January Center, Uncasville

The January Center is a sex offender treatment program. The January Center was certified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified auditor in 2015. It was recertified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor in 2018, and again in 2021.

In 2023, there was one unsubstantiated report of sexual harassment by a staff member against a client in this facility.

In 2023, there were no reported incidents of sexual abuse in this facility.

Lebanon Pines, Lebanon

Lebanon Pines is a long-term substance abuse treatment and rehabilitation program. Lebanon Pines was certified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified auditor in 2017. It was recertified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor in 2022.

In 2023, there were no reported incidents of sexual abuse or sexual harassment in this facility.

Liberation House, Stamford

Liberation House is a substance abuse treatment program. Liberation House was certified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor in 2016. It was recertified as PREA complaint by a DOJ-certified auditor in 2023.

In 2023, there was one unsubstantiated report of sexual harassment by a staff member against a client in this facility.

In 2023, there were no reported incidents of sexual abuse in this facility.

McCall Center for Behavioral Health, Hotchkiss House and Dempsey Center, Torrington

McCall Foundation is a substance abuse treatment program. McCall Foundation was certified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor in 2015. It was recertified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor in 2018, and again in 2021.

In 2023, there were no reported incidents of sexual abuse or sexual harassment in this facility.

Perception House, Willimantic

Perception House is a substance abuse and mental health treatment program. Perception House was certified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor in 2015. It was recertified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor in 2018, and again in 2021.

In 2023, there was one unsubstantiated report of sexual abuse by a resident against a resident in this facility.

In 2023, there were no reported incidents of sexual harassment in this facility.

Sierra Center, New Haven

The Sierra Center is a long-term mental health and substance abuse counseling, employment readiness, community service program. The Sierra Center was certified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified auditor in 2015. It was recertified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor in 2018, and again in 2021.

In 2023, there were no reported incidents of sexual abuse or sexual harassment in this facility.

Virginia Wells Women's Transitional Housing, New Haven

Virginia Wells is a transitional housing program. Virginia Wells was certified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor in 2015. It was recertified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor in 2018, and again in 2021.

In 2023, there were no reported incidents of sexual abuse or sexual harassment in this facility.

Waterbury Transitional House, Waterbury

Waterbury Transitional House is a transitional housing program. Waterbury Transitional House was certified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor in 2016. It was recertified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified auditor in 2019, and again in 2022.

In 2023, there were no reported incidents of sexual abuse or sexual harassment in this facility.

Wellmore Therapeutic Shelter, Waterbury

Wellmore Therapeutic Shelter is a short-term case management program with treatment services. Wellmore Therapeutic Shelter was certified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified auditor in 2014, when it was known as the Morris Shelter. It was recertified as PREA compliant by a DOJ-certified PREA auditor in 2018.

In 2023, there were no reported incidents of sexual abuse or sexual harassment in this facility.