

Bergen County Sheriff's Office PREA Annual Report 2023

The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) is a federal law that was signed in 2003. The law is designed to support the elimination, reduction, and prevention of sexual abuse and sexual harassment within correctional facilities. PREA develops and implements national standards for the detection, prevention, reduction, and punishment of any sexually based incidents.

The Bergen County Sheriff's Office is in full compliance with all the standards of the Prison Rape Elimination Act. An administrative lieutenant is assigned as the PREA coordinator, whose responsibilities include training staff and inmates regarding reporting and documenting incidents, forwarding all allegations to the Office of Professional Standards for investigation, as well as ensuring compliance with PREA standards and department procedures.

All PREA allegations are thoroughly investigated by the Office of Professional Standards. An incident review is conducted after each incident by an administrative captain, the investigating detective, a line supervisor, and a mental health clinician to determine what, if any, policy, and security improvements can be made to prevent future incidents.

Only the aggregate numbers will be reported annually on the website. There will be no reporting by institution, victim's name, or perpetrator's name to ensure the integrity of the process, protect the security of the institution, and to encourage the reporting of all PREA allegations in the future.

ANALYSIS

During the calendar year of 2023 there were a total of seventeen (17) PREA allegations and during the calendar year of 2022 there were a total of seventeen (17) PREA allegations made. The total of substantiated cases in the calendar year of 2023 and 2022 were two (2).

On December 31, 2023 there were 886 males and 1 female in the facility
On December 31, 2022 there were 949 males and 4 females in the facility

CORRECTIVE ACTION

The Department has implemented PREA and adopted rules and regulations for the deterrence, protection, and reporting of prison rapes. These rules include but are not limited to the immediate separation of victim and perpetrator using administrative segregation or suspension pending investigation for employees and if substantiated, the filing of criminal charges against the perpetrator whether staff or offender. All staff in the Bergen County Sheriff's Office receive annual training on all policy and procedures regarding PREA and immediately notified of any updates or changes throughout the year. Further specialized training has been made mandatory for the Prison Rape Elimination Act, BCSO Staff, PREA Investigators, and Medical/Mental Health to understand their role of responding to prison rape.

The Bergen County Sheriff's Office completed a PREA Audit in September of 2023.

Staff-On-Offender Allegations January 1 – December 31, 2023

PREA Incident Categories

Total Staff/Offender Allegations of Sexual Misconduct - 3

Substantiated - 0

Unsubstantiated - 1

Unfounded – 2

Total Staff/Offender Allegations of Sexual Harassment- 4

Substantiated - 0

Unsubstantiated - 2

Unfounded – 1

Investigation Ongoing – 1

Offender-On-Offender Allegations January 1 – December 31, 2023

PREA Incident Categories

Total Offender/Offender Allegations of Sexual Misconduct - 10

Substantiated - 0

Unsubstantiated – 5

Unfounded – 4

Investigation Ongoing - 1

Total Offender/Offender Allegations of Sexual Harassment - 0

Substantiated - 0

Unsubstantiated - 0

Unfounded - 0