

2024  
Piedmont Regional Jail Authority  
Annual PREA Report and Staff Analysis

**Background**

In 2003, Congress enacted the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) mandating that correctional facilities nation-wide implement measures to prevent, detect and respond to sexual abuse and sexual misconduct of persons in custody of United States Correctional System. The Act created national standards applicable to all correctional facilities, public and private, in the United States. In 2012, specific standards required by this legislation were disseminated nationally by the Department of Justice, and a time table for compliance and subsequent federal compliance audits were set. PREA addresses sexual assault by both offender on offender and staff on offender.

Piedmont Regional Jail Authority upholds the guidelines of PREA by the development of a Jail environment which mandates **ZERO-TOLERANCE** for any and all incidents of sexual assault, sexual misconduct and sexual harassment whether consensual or non-consensual.

**Education**

Piedmont Regional Jail Authority implements its **“ZERO-TOLERANCE”** policies through a systematic process that begins when the offenders are initially admitted into the Jail. Piedmont Regional Jail Authority requires each offender observe a video titled, “What You Need to Know”, and made available to all offenders through the Kiosk a copy of the offender handbook that further explains their rights to remain free from sexual abuse and sexual harassment and how it is managed within the jail. As a part of the intake process each offender is screened to assess their risk of victimization or predation using an objective measurement tool based on specific risk factors. This tool is utilized to make individualized determination as to their housing assignment and program participation. During the classification process, they are informed of the Medical and Mental Health services available with the Jail. If PREA issues are discovered during the interview, the Qualified Mental Health Person is contacted and immediate services are available or a follow-up appointment is available.

Throughout the Jail, there are posters, explaining **“ZERO-TOLERANCE”** and the methods to report sexual misconduct in English and Spanish.

All newly hired Jail staff and contractors working within the Jail are required to complete orientation training prior to working in the Jail, which includes PREA training and them viewing several video’s relative to PREA. All correctional staff receives additional PREA training when

attendance at the Basic Jailer's program conducted by the Central Virginia Training Academy or Crater Training Academy. Refresher training is provided to all staff on an annual basis.

To prevent various forms of sexual misconduct, Piedmont Regional Jail Authority has numerous video cameras strategically placed throughout the Jail to eliminate blind spots to adequately protect staff and offenders from sexual abuse and to ensure the continued safety of staff and offenders. A review of the Jail was conducted by the staff and the PREA Coordinator to determine the need for additional video cameras and the review revealed that additional video cameras were needed to ensure the safety of the staff and offenders. The Jail has installed additional video cameras and is working with a contractor to add even more video cameras. Additional facility renovations have been contracted to ensure that the offenders PREA rights are not being violated.

When it comes to sexual activity within the Jail, the policies and procedures are clear; **ALL SEXUAL ACTIVITY IS PROHIBITED.** Forced or coerced sexual activity and behavior by staff or offender is a criminal act that merits criminal prosecution. All substantiated sexual criminal acts are reported to the Virginia State Police for investigation to ensure the perpetrator faces the full consequences of the law and is grounds for employee termination.

Any form of substantiated consensual sexual activity that occurs within the Jail by staff or offender is also prohibited. The offender will be charged administratively by placing internal disciplinary sanctions for consenting sexual acts, and non-consensual acts will be forwarded to the Prince Edward County Commonwealth Attorney for possible prosecution. Any staff involvement in a PREA incident will be investigated and referred for prosecution to the Prince Edward County Commonwealth Attorney and is grounds for termination.

### **Reports**

In accordance with PREA, all investigations are assigned one of three (3) possible determinations:

**Substantiated** – an allegation which was investigated and determined to have occurred.

**Unfounded** – an allegation which was investigated and determined not to have occurred.

**Unsubstantiated** – an allegation which produced insufficient evidence to make a final determination of a substantiated or unfounded.

In the year beginning January 1, 2023 and ending December 31, 2023 there were three (22) PREA allegations reported. Ten (9) allegations were determined unfounded, (5) were determined unsubstantiated, (3) were determined to be substantiated, and (2) were determined to be consensual sexual acts between offender and offender. There was a total of (3) allegations that involved staff. One (1) allegation was determined unsubstantiated, (2) allegations determined unfounded and (0) allegation determined substantiated. All allegations for this year were reviewed by the "Sexual Assault Response Team" (SART). The team determined that additional

training was needed for staff so they will become more familiar with their role as first responders, and properly initiate operational procedures in the facility. The team members indicated that staff need to reinforce rules and regulations. The classification supervisor and security staff moving offenders from one housing unit to another are aware of sexual predators and those who may be vulnerable in the housing units.

### **Third-Party Reporting**

Piedmont Regional Jail Authority initiated PREA in late 2013 and during the 2014 the “Third Party Reporting” procedures was implemented: a third-party reporter is someone who reports sexual abuse and sexual harassment but is neither the victim nor the abuser. This person may have been told by victim about abuse or harassment, or witnessed it first-hand. Third-party includes other offender, members of staff, family members, lawyers, contract employees, service providers, community or religious volunteers, etc.

A third-party can report any form of sexual assault, sexual misconduct or sexual harassment in person or anonymously in a variety of ways. Under PREA Standards, Piedmont Regional Jail Authority will accept all third-party reports received through:

**Verbal Reports** – Made in person or by telephone to a Jail Official, caller’s identity is not a prerequisite.

**Written Communication** – By letter or email the Jail.

**Contact the PREA Investigator** – (434) 392-1601, Ext. 241

**Contact the PREA Manager** – (434)-392-1601, Ext. 316

**You may leave a message at:** (434) 392-3819

**Contact YWCA:** 1-888-947-7273

Offenders may make third-party reports by using the housing area telephones and dialing one (1) English, two (2) Spanish then \* 99999, toll free to report incidents of sexual misconduct. They may also reach out for support services at YWCA, in Lynchburg, VA, by dialing one (1) for English, two (2) for Spanish \*88888, toll free.

A third-party can submit a report verbally or in writing without disclosing his/her name or that of the alleged victim or abuser. A report may be submitted in a language other than English. Also, a third-party has the right to assist an offender with completing and filing his/her own report of abuse or harassment. In 2023, there were three (3) third party reports received.

## **History**

Piedmont Regional Jail was opened in 1988 to serve the counties of Amelia, Buckingham, Cumberland, Lunenburg, Nottoway and Prince Edward. It was originally opened with a rate capacity of 103 offenders and in 2010 raised to a rated capacity of 274. At this time Piedmont Regional Jail Authority holds state, local and federal offenders with an average daily population not to exceed 500 with a capacity of 600.

## **Divisions of the Facility**

The facility is currently comprised of five divisions:

Administrative Services

Security Operations

Compliance & Training

Offender Services & Support

Operations

## **Placement of Supervisory Staff**

Supervision at the jail facility is consistent with all applicable Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC), National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC) and Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Standards. Video monitoring is utilized throughout the jail facility to enhance security and surveillance, but not used as a substitution for direct staff supervision.

## **Organizational Restructuring**

The Piedmont Regional Jail Authority evaluated their staffing patterns in order to be in compliance with the Prison Rape Elimination Act. The Superintendent, in conjunction with the Jail's management team, will evaluate the jail's staffing, organizational structure, and facility budget on an annual basis to ensure adequate levels of staffing are continuously present.

## **Staffing Plan**

Piedmont Regional Jail Authority is a linear/direct supervision facility and has drafting procedures in place to prevent having a post unattended. The facility utilizes the draft schedule to ensure minimum maintenance of posts at all times. Therefore, there is never an instance where a post is unattended. Piedmont Regional Jail Authority uses the following Staffing and Post Deployment:

Piedmont Regional Jail Authority staffing and post deployment is designed to cover all of the post designated in the facility. Piedmont Regional Jail Authority security staff currently work twelve-hour shifts, with rotating schedule of two (2) days on, two (2) days off, three (3) days on, two (2)

days off, two (2) days on, three (3) days off. Each day shift is staffed with sixteen (16) officers, two (2) Sergeants and one (1) Lieutenant totaling nineteen (19) officers. Each night shift is staffed with fourteen (14) officers, two (2) Sergeants and one (1) Lieutenant totaling seventeen (17) officers. There are four (4) shift breaks on each shift depending on personnel. There is a Captain (Chief of Security) who directly supervises the security Lieutenants; there is a Major (Director of Security and Operations) that supervises the Captain. There are also contingency plans in place to ensure that the mandatory minimum coverage is always adhered to. The following is a chart of the posts that are present at the facility and the number of staff assigned to the post per twelve (12) hour shift.

<b><u>Post</u></b>	<b><u>Areas Covered</u></b>	<b><u>Officers</u></b>
Back	A, B, C, D, M & O4 Housing Units	1 (Male)
Middle	Offender Escort	1 (Male or Female)
Front	O1, F, & W Housing Units	1 (Male or Female)
Post 12	Main Central Control	1 (Male or Female)
I-Floor	I-1, I-2	1 (Male or Female)
I-Central	I-Building Central Control	1 (Male or Female)
L-Floor	L1, L2, L3	1 (Male or Female)
L-Central	L-Building Central Control	1 (Male or Female)
Post 9	G, H & O3 Housing Units	1 (Female)
Release	J- Cells (All cells in area)	1 (Male or Female)
Intake	Intake Cells (All cells in area)	1 (Male or Female)
Shift Supervisor	Supervise the entire Jail	2 (Male or Female)
Shift Commander	Oversee the entire Jail	1 (Male or Female)

Piedmont Regional Jail Authority mandates that the above staffing deployment is adhered to at the beginning of each and every shift. This deployment is maintained by the use of a daily draft schedule that is posted each week. Certified officers from each shift are assigned draft days to ensure coverage of each shift, if needed. A minimum of two (2) Supervisors and ten (8) Officers are required to begin a shift. If two (2) officers are required to be utilized for emergency reasons, the officer working the Middle Post and the officer working Release will be utilized for the emergency. The officers working the Front and Back Post will assume the duties of the Middle Officers Post, the officer working Post Nine (9) will assume the duties of Release along with the assistance of the Shift Commander. If the mandatory minimum is in effect, draft personnel will be called in resulting in being at mandatory minimum only for the time it takes for the drafted

officer to report to the jail. If the emergency involves a medical transport, the on-call transportation officer is called in for additional coverage. If the facility staffing drops below two (2) Supervisors and ten (8) Officers, the reason why is documented on the Daily Report Log (DR log), and shall get approval from the Captain or above. Two (2) Major, one (1) Captain and eight (8) Lieutenants are on call twenty-four (24) hours a day for facility emergencies.

### **Consideration of Sexual Abuse and Harassment**

Piedmont Regional Jail Authority has had minimum allegations of abuse. However, the jail is proactive in allegations of abuse and has identified areas that needed additional monitoring. Additional staff have been placed in those areas to minimize abuse. Cameras are used to monitor each housing unit; however, the cameras are placed at specific viewing angles in an effort to minimize blind spots and positioned to specifically to avoid shower and toilet areas to provide offenders privacy while performing personal hygiene functions. Designated staff are required to make daily unannounced rounds to show presence and enforce the safety of offenders.

### **Video Monitoring**

Video monitoring inside and outside is utilized through the jail to enhance security and surveillance. The Piedmont Regional Jail Maintenance Department along the I.T. Charles Westerlund review and inspect the cameras daily for proper operations.

### **Audit**

In October 2023 a PREA audit was conducted. It was determined that Piedmont Regional Jail have meet all standard requirements, and will be accredited for another three years.

### **Conclusion**

The information presented in this report indicates that Piedmont Regional Jail Authority have properly investigated and documented all allegations of sexual abuse or harassment. Staff will continue to receive PREA education. Offenders, volunteers, and contractors will be a continued point of importance, by fashioning an atmosphere that is free from sexual abuse or harassment. Piedmont Regional Jail remains committed to adhering to the requirement of PREA and will continue to thoroughly investigate all allegations of sexual abuse or sexual harassment of offenders in the custody of the jail.

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Jerry R. Townsend, Superintendent

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Date