

Bergen County Sheriff's Office PREA Annual Report 2020

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 sergeant is assigned as the PREA coordinator, whose responsibilities include training staff and inmates in regards to 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 2020 there were a total of six (6) PREA allegations and during the calendar year of 2019 there were a total of seven (7) PREA allegations made. The total of substantiated cases in the calendar year of 2020 and 2019 were three (3).

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 through the use of 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 receives 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.

Staff-On-Offender Allegations January 1 – December 31, 2020

PREA Incident Categories

Total Staff/Offender Allegations of Sexual Misconduct - 2

Substantiated - 0

Unsubstantiated - 1

Unfounded – 1

Total Staff/Offender Allegations of Sexual Harassment- 2

Substantiated - 0

Unsubstantiated - 2

Investigation Ongoing - 0

Offender-On-Offender Allegations January 1 – December 31, 2020

PREA Incident Categories

Total Offender/Offender Allegations of Sexual Misconduct -2

Substantiated - 1

Unsubstantiated - 1

Total Offender/Offender Allegations of Sexual Harassment - 0