

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, December 18, 2014

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D.C. JAIL RECEIVES CERTIFICATION OF PRISON RAPE ELIMINATION ACT (PREA) COMPLIANCE

Washington, DC – Tom Faust, Director of the D.C. Department of Corrections (DCDOC) announced today that the D.C. Jail has been officially certified through the U.S. Department of Justice (USDOJ) as compliant with standards of the Federal Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA). The PREA standards, released in June 2012, set forth strict requirements to address sexual abuse in all correctional institutions throughout the country--both public and private institutions that house adult and/or juvenile offenders. “This is a significant accomplishment which demonstrates our total commitment to ensuring that those in our custody are protected from sexual abuse throughout their terms of confinement,” said Director Faust. The District of Columbia and Arlington County are the only two jurisdictions in the Metropolitan Washington region to have achieved PREA certification by USDOJ.

In October 2012, DCDOC, in partnership with the D.C. Office of Justice Grants Administration and Victim, received a federal grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Administration to establish a “zero tolerance” culture for sexual assault. DCDOC collaborated with The Moss Group, Inc. (TMG), a D.C. based PREA national expert in moving forward aggressively with implementation of operational and programmatic reforms focused on staff training, inmate education, policy development, screening methodology, investigative practices, and data collection.

A critical component of the certification process involved a system wide audit of the facility conducted in July 2014 by an auditor (certified by USDOJ) who spent three (3) days at the facility interviewing staff and inmates, and reviewing documents, policies and procedures in order to confirm the alignment of practice with policy. The auditor also spent several days off-site performing in-depth document reviews and telephone

interviews prior to and after the audit to further evaluate PREA related practices. On December 10, 2014, DCDOC was notified of its 100% compliance rating.

According to Director Faust, “this historic milestone resulted from the collective efforts of the agency’s PREA Coordinator, along with the hard work and dedication of our PREA workgroup, which included more than 30 staff, guidance and support from TMG. More important was the willingness of the entire DCDOC staff to embrace this opportunity to enhance sexual safety at all levels and make the jail a national model for PREA compliance. DOC set the bar high and maximized resources to achieve PREA compliance, and we are fully committed to maintaining prevention as a top priority for the Department.”

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