



# Sonoma County Sheriff's Office

*MARK ESSICK*  
Sheriff-Coroner

*JAMES NAUGLE*  
Assistant Sheriff  
Law Enforcement Division

*ALAN VERNON*  
Assistant Sheriff  
Detention Division

Date: January 16, 2020  
To: Sheriff Mark Essick, via Chain of Command *ME*  
From: Lieutenant Mike Merchen  
Subject: Prison Rape Elimination Act Annual Report 2019

The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) requires all law enforcement agencies with detention facilities of any kind to create an annual report of all sexual assaults and sexual harassment committed within its facilities. This report must be completed, submitted to the agency head, and made public via the agency's internet website.

Each agency shall review data collected in order to assess and improve the effectiveness of its sexual abuse prevention, detection, and response policies, practices, and training. This will include identifying problem areas and taking corrective action on an ongoing basis. This report must include a comparison of the current year's data and corrective actions along with those from prior years.

A toll free "hot line" has been provided enabling inmates at both facilities to confidentially report sexual assault or harassment, as well as seek outside advocacy and counseling. This outside agency is Verity Sonoma County Rape Crisis Center. Procedures are in place to effectively forward inmate reports and ensure a quick response

In 2016, our PREA policy and applicable procedures were audited and found in compliance with the standards. In addition booking intake forms were revised and the inmate handbook was completed. Educational material is provided to inmates during the booking process to include notification of our zero tolerance policy and information on how to report any incidents or suspicions of sexual abuse or sexual harassment. Our mental health and medical staff have also updated their processes to comply with the PREA standards. Information is accessible to all inmates in a variety of different ways to ensure all inmates understand what resources are available to them. Posters are located throughout the facilities and brochures are included in the inmate orientation handbook.

An independent PREA audit was conducted in 2019 and we were found to be in full compliance with all PREA standards.

In 2019, we worked with the National Institute of Corrections to implement Strategic Inmate Management (SIM) as an organizational philosophy. The most fundamental goal of every jail and prison is to maintain a safe and secure environment for staff, inmates, and visitors. Effectively

managing inmate behavior is critical to this goal. The purpose of SIM is to promote safe and secure environments by employing the best practices of direct supervision and inmate behavior management.

In 2019, we installed additional monitoring technology in areas of the Main Adult Detention Facility including the booking area, the infirmary and clinic area, R-Module, Mental Health Module and Male Special Module which will enhance our ability to respond to PREA allegations and reported incidents. We also equipped Correctional staff with body worn cameras.

Training for all staff continues agency wide. This training includes instructing staff on proper documentation to enable effective reviews of incidents. Our agency will provide each employee with refresher training every two years to ensure that all employees know the agency's current sexual abuse and sexual harassment policies and procedures. In addition, in the years in which an employee does not receive refresher training, our agency shall provide refresher information on current sexual abuse and sexual harassment policies. The Sonoma County Sheriff's Office maintains a zero tolerance policy and is dedicated to evaluating and improving as needed our agency's policies, practices and training about sexual abuse prevention, detection and response.

#### Annual Statistics

Sexual Harassment, Non-Consensual Sexual Acts and Abusive Sexual Contact are all defined as PREA related incidents involving inmates. Staff Sexual Harassment and Staff Sexual Misconduct are defined as PREA related incidents involving staff. During the period of January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019, there were 37 PREA related incidents reported in our detention facilities. Of the 37 reports, 22 reports were inmate vs inmate. 9 reports listed the inmate as the victim and staff as the suspect. 5 reports documented the victim was unable to identify the suspect as staff or inmate. One report was an allegation against staff from another agency. A review of all reports determined all cases were investigated properly and in accordance with the S.C.S.O. policy and PREA. A breakdown of those incidents is listed below:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Incident type</b>	<b>Victim</b>	<b>Suspect</b>	<b>Disposition</b>
1/7/2019	Nonconsensual	Inmate	Inmate	Unfounded
1/9/2019	Nonconsensual	Inmate	Inmate	Unfounded
1/29/2019	Sexual misconduct	Inmate	Staff	Unfounded
2/10/2019	Sexual Harassment	Inmate	Staff	Unfounded
2/11/2019	Abusive contact	Inmate	Inmate	Unsubstantiated
2/26/2019	Sexual misconduct	Inmate	Staff	Unfounded
3/1/2019	Nonconsensual	Inmate	Unknown	Unsubstantiated
3/31/2019	Sexual Harassment	Inmate	Inmate	Unsubstantiated

4/15/2019	Sexual Harassment	Inmate	Inmate	Unsubstantiated
4/29/2019	Sexual Harassment	Inmate	Inmate	Unsubstantiated
5/17/2019	Nonconsensual	Inmate	Unknown	Unsubstantiated
5/19/2019	Sexual Harassment	Inmate	Inmate	Unfounded
5/26/2019	Sexual Harassment	Inmate	Inmate	Unsubstantiated
6/9/2019	Sexual acts	Inmate	Inmate	Unfounded
6/18/2019	Sexual Harassment	Inmate	Inmate	Unsubstantiated
6/20/2019	Abusive contact	Inmate	Unknown	Unfounded
6/22/2019	Sexual Harassment	Inmate	Inmate	Unsubstantiated
7/4/2019	Sexual Harassment	Inmate	Inmate	Substantiated
7/13/2019	Sexual Harassment	Inmate	Inmate	Unfounded
7/23/2019	Abusive contact	Inmate	Unknown	Unfounded
8/3/2019	Sexual Harassment	Inmate	Inmate	Unsubstantiated
8/11/2019	Sexual Harassment	Inmate	Inmate	Unsubstantiated
9/2/2019	Sexual Harassment	Inmate	Inmate	Unsubstantiated
9/11/2019	Sexual Harassment	Inmate	Staff	Unfounded
9/13/2019	Sexual Harassment	Inmate	Inmate	Substantiated
9/21/2019	Abusive contact	Inmate	Unknown	Unfounded
10/15/2019	Abusive contact	Inmate	Inmate	Substantiated
10/16/2019	Misconduct	Inmate	Other county	Unfounded
11/5/2019	Abusive contact	Inmate	Inmate	Unsubstantiated
11/8/2019	Misconduct	Inmate	Staff	Unfounded
11/13/2019	Sexual Harassment	Inmate	Inmate	Unsubstantiated
11/14/2019	Nonconsensual	Inmate	Inmate	Unsubstantiated
11/14/2019	Misconduct	Inmate	Medical Staff	Unfounded
11/16/2019	Misconduct	Inmate	Staff	Unfounded
11/29/2019	Abusive contact	Inmate	Inmate	Unfounded
12/1/2019	Sexual Harassment	Inmate	Staff	Unsubstantiated
12/2/2019	Sexual misconduct	Inmate	Staff	Unfounded

The Department of Justice defines the dispositions of the above cases as the following:

- Unfounded – The investigation determined that the event did NOT occur
- Unsubstantiated – The investigation concluded that evidence was insufficient to determine whether or not the event occurred
- Substantiated – The event was investigated and determined to have occurred, based on a preponderance of the evidence

Of the 37 reported incidents in 2018, three incidents were substantiated (outlined in the chart below). A comparison of substantiated incidents over the last 3 years is listed below:

Comparison Chart of Substantiated Incidents:

<b>2019</b>	<b>Nonconsensual Sexual Acts</b>	<b>Abusive Sexual Contact</b>	<b>Sexual Harassment</b>	<b>Staff Sexual Misconduct</b>	<b>Staff Sexual Harassment</b>
<b>Dorm</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Cell</b>	0	1	1	0	0
<b>Common Area</b>	0	0	1	0	0
<b>Booking</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Kitchen</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Other</b>	0	0	0	0	0

<b>2018</b>	<b>Nonconsensual Sexual Acts</b>	<b>Abusive Sexual Contact</b>	<b>Sexual Harassment</b>	<b>Staff Sexual Misconduct</b>	<b>Staff Sexual Harassment</b>
<b>Dorm</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Cell</b>	0	1	0	0	0
<b>Common Area</b>	0	0	4	1	0
<b>Booking</b>	1	0	0	0	0
<b>Kitchen</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Other</b>	0	1	0	0	0

<b>2017</b>	<b>Nonconsensual Sexual Acts</b>	<b>Abusive Sexual Contact</b>	<b>Sexual Harassment</b>	<b>Staff Sexual Misconduct</b>	<b>Staff Sexual Harassment</b>
<b>Dorm</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Cell</b>	1	0	3	1	0
<b>Common Area</b>	0	0	1	0	0
<b>Booking</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Kitchen</b>	0	0	1	0	0
<b>Other</b>	0	0	0	0	0

In reviewing all of the reports, inmates are generally victimized by other inmates and these incidents primarily take place inside the inmate housing areas. The Sonoma County Sheriff's Office conducts

at a minimum two rounds per hour on all inmates. Rounds are documented on paper or recorded into the Rounds Automated System. Our staff is committed to providing a secure, safe, and humane environment for inmates and staff. In accordance with PREA and its standards, we mandate zero tolerance and commit to maintaining a program of education, prevention, detection, investigation, criminal and administrative sanctions against perpetrators, data collection, treatment and support for any inmate who is a victim of sexual abuse.

Our two facilities do not house juveniles. Should a juvenile be transported to court via our Main Adult Detention court tunnels, a designated area of the facility is placed on lockdown during the juvenile's escort ensuring the juvenile has no contact with any adult inmate. The juvenile is not out of the sight of transporting Deputies at any time throughout the escort.

We continue to evaluate best practices in supervising/monitoring the inmate population in an effort to further reduce incidents of sexual victimization within our facilities.

This report has been redacted to exclude all personal identifying information.