

Hernando County Sheriff's Office



Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA):

2024 Annual Report

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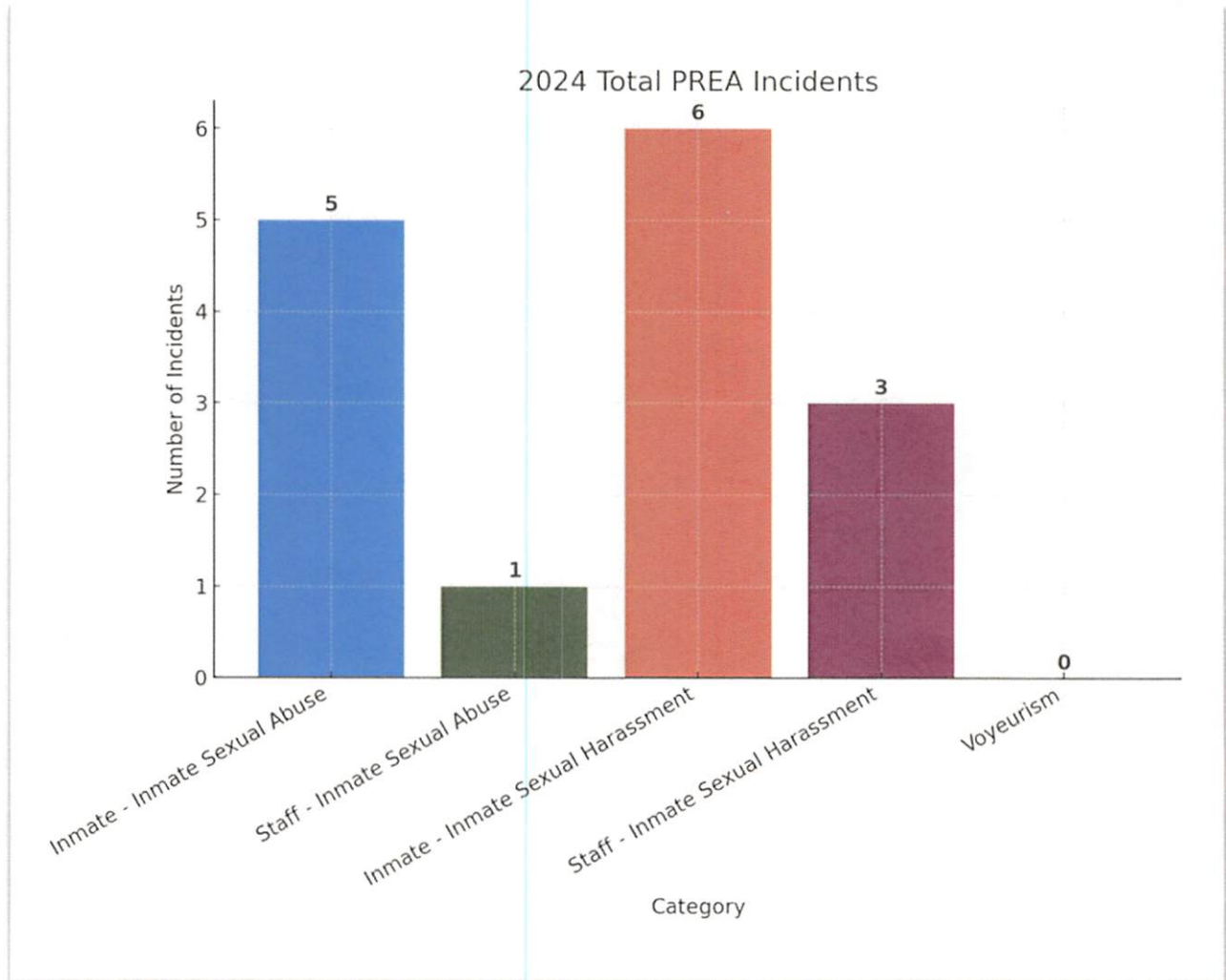
February 2025

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Aggregate Data

The Hernando County Detention Center collects data on reports of sexual abuse, sexual harassment, and voyeurism, including both inmate-on-inmate and staff-on-inmate incidents. All allegations are referred to the PREA Coordinator and Detention Inspector for investigation.

The graph below provides a breakdown of reported sexual abuse, sexual harassment, and voyeurism allegations from January 1, 2024, to December 31, 2024, totaling sixteen (16) incidents.

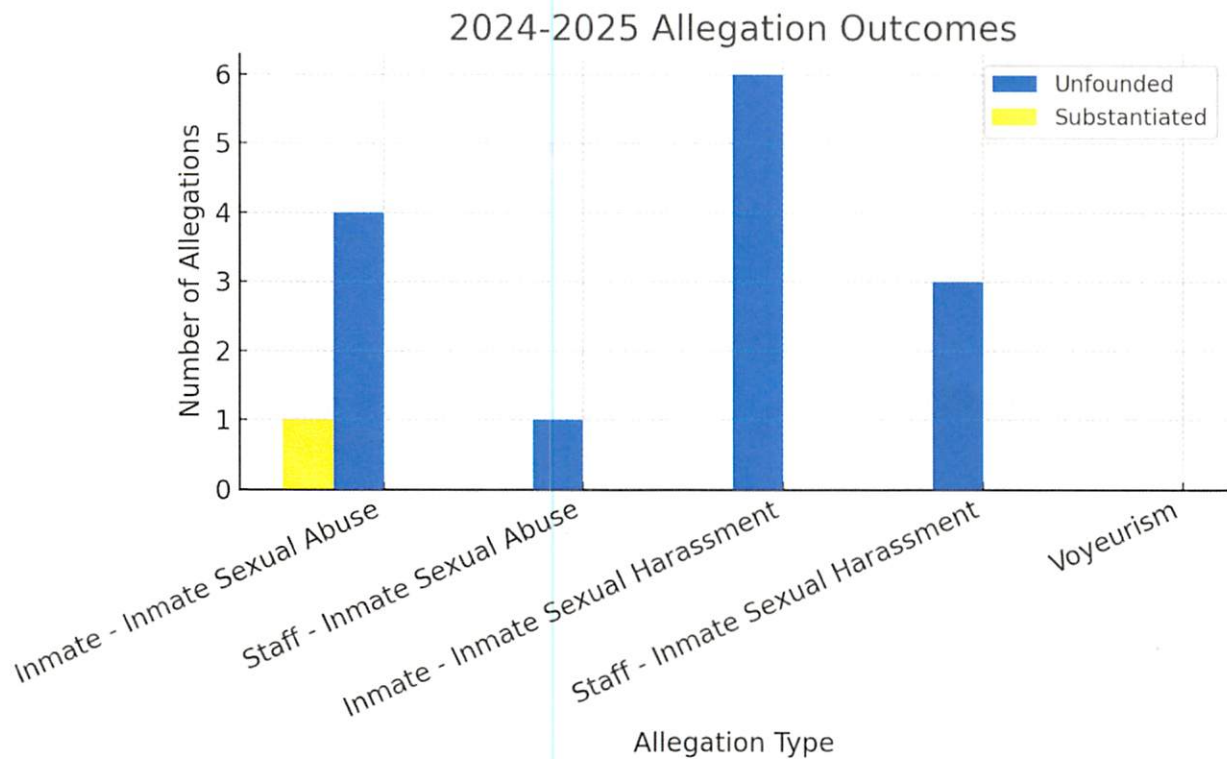


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At the conclusion of an investigation, a determination is made based on the facts of the case. The PREA Standards define the possible findings as follows:

- Substantiated: The allegation was investigated and determined to have occurred.
- Unsubstantiated: The allegation was investigated and the investigation produced insufficient evidence to make a final determination as to whether or not the event occurred.
- Unfounded: The allegation was investigated and determined not to have occurred.

PREA Allegation Outcomes



2024 Assessment

Calendar Year 2024 had a total of sixteen allegations investigated; however, all but one did not meet PREA definitions for sexual abuse or sexual harassment. The one case that was substantiated was an Inmate on Inmate sexual abuse case.

Of the allegations made, it should be noted that the **one substantiated** allegation involved an **inmate-on-inmate sexual abuse** case, which did result in the arrest of the suspect. The one allegation of sexual abuse made against staff was unfounded. All of the allegations made

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against staff were investigated thoroughly and found to be within policy and did not meet PREA Standards for Sexual Abuse/Sexual Harassment.

Sexual Abuse Incident Reviews

The Hernando County Detention Center conducts Incident Reviews on all substantiated and unsubstantiated investigations regarding sexual abuse, sexual harassment, voyeurism allegations as required by PREA Standard 115.86.

These reviews are conducted by a multi-disciplinary team comprised of the PREA Coordinator, upper-level management officials, line supervisors, investigators, medical, and mental health care professions. This review team evaluates the circumstances of each incident and makes recommendations for changes to either policy or practice in order to better prevent, detect, or respond to sexual abuse. The team also evaluates staffing levels at the time of the incident; whether or not the incident was motivated by any group dynamics; reviews the adequacy of monitoring technology; and determines if there were physical barriers in the area that enabled the abuse.

There were six (6) Sexual Abuse Incident Reviews conducted in 2024. There was no indication of patterns or motivations involving abuse. In addition, staffing and monitoring technology were deemed to be both appropriate and adequate.

Training and Education

Training and education are critical components to the prevention of sexual abuse and sexual harassment. A computer-based training on PREA is mandatory for all staff to complete on an annual basis and includes information on the agency's zero tolerance policy and staff's responsibilities regarding the prevention, detection, reporting, and response to sexual abuse and sexual harassment. The computer-based training is also mandatory for new employees to complete during orientation training. Additional training opportunities will continue to be evaluated, as it is imperative for staff to understand the important role they play in ensuring inmates sexual safety within the agency.

Goals and Objectives

The Hernando County Detention Center will continue to identify opportunities to provide additional training and education to ensure staff, volunteers, and contractors understand their role in protecting inmates from sexual abuse and sexual harassment.

Department of Justice PREA Audit

The Hernando County Sheriff's Office successfully completed its second Department of Justice PREA Audit in June 2024. All standards were successfully met.

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Conclusion

In an effort to maintain compliance with the requirements established by the Department of Justice, the Hernando County Sheriff's Office remains firmly committed to adhering to the PREA Standards and making necessary adjustments on a continuous basis.



Sheriff, Al Nienhuis



Date