



Sheriff's Guide to
**Effective Jail
Operations**

U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Corrections
320 First Street, NW
Washington, DC 20534

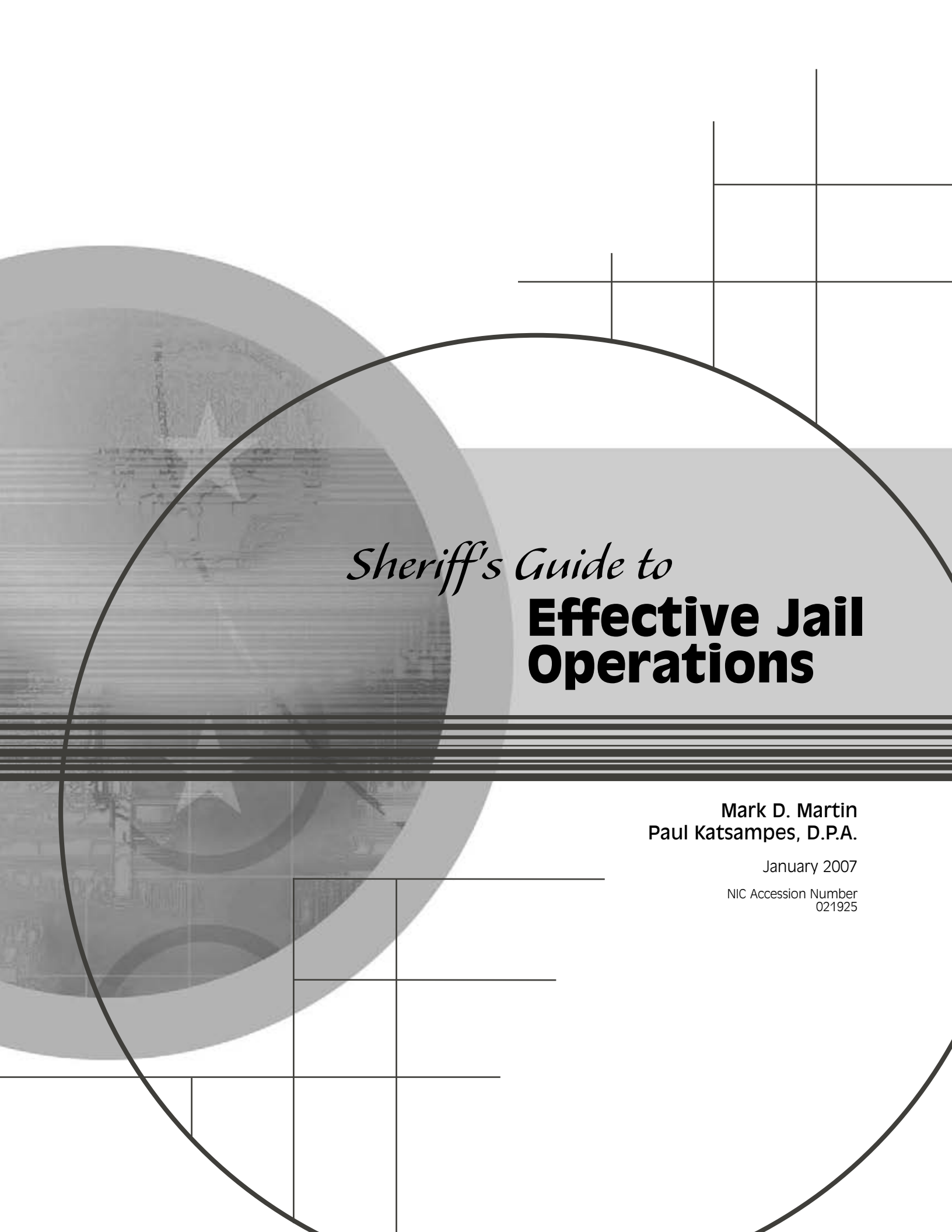
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January 2007

NIC Accession Number
021925

This document is supported by cooperative agreement #06J46GJJ2 from the National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official opinion or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

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Foreword



The National Institute of Corrections (NIC) recognizes that many local jails across the country are the responsibility of the elected county sheriff. With this in mind, NIC developed the *Sheriff's Guide to Effective Jail Operations* to focus on jail issues from the perspective of the sheriff. This guide provides an overview of the sheriff's roles and responsibilities with regard to the jail along with basic information on critical aspects of jail operations and management.

The guide highlights the types of support and leadership the sheriff should provide to enable jail administrators to effectively manage the jail and includes other information to help the sheriff address jail problems, manage liability issues, and improve operations. Review checklists are included throughout the guide to help the reader assess the status or performance of his/her own jail. The guide concludes with a chapter outlining the steps a new sheriff may take during the

first few months in office to learn about his/her jail and identify potential problem areas.

The content of the guide is drawn in part from the NIC publication, *Resource Guide for Jail Administrators* (Martin and Rosazza, 2004), and is organized to serve as a companion document to the larger *Resource Guide*. Readers interested in additional information about specific aspects of jail operations should refer to the *Resource Guide*.

We hope this document will assist new sheriffs who are learning about their responsibilities for the jail for the first time as well as veteran sheriffs seeking to improve the effectiveness of their operations. We invite sheriffs and other readers to take advantage of the other resource documents NIC has developed specifically for jails and to contact the NIC Jails Division for additional assistance, if needed.

Morris L. Thigpen
Director

National Institute of Corrections



Preface

In the United States there are more than 3,000 county jails. In most states, the operation of the county jail is the sheriff's responsibility. Statutes typically identify the sheriff as the "keeper" of the jail and often include language that requires sheriffs to "take charge and custody of the prisoners lawfully committed and keep them until they are discharged by law." Although many sheriffs hire jail administrators to manage day-to-day operations, it is the sheriff who is ultimately responsible for securing resources for the jail and ensuring that the jail is operated in a safe, secure, humane, and legal manner.

The jail is only one of a number of major duties that may be assigned to the sheriff. Other duties may include law enforcement services, civil process, communications, court security, and inmate transport. However, given public safety concerns and the high potential for liability associated with incarceration, the operation of the jail is undoubtedly one of the sheriff's most critical duties.

In being responsible for the county jail, the sheriff faces the challenge of managing a criminal justice agency that is at the bottom of the priority list for public funds. County citizens often view the allocation of money for the jail as benefiting inmates, and they prefer making funds available to other "worthier" causes. In addition, law enforcement personnel, other county agencies, and public programs often view the jail as a competitor for public monies. The result is that political officials and public administrators are not enthusiastic about supporting the needs of

the jail. They often wait until the courts, mobilized by inmate lawsuits, pressure agencies to change. This situation became complicated during the late 1970s and early 1980s, when jails became crowded in response to an increase in the length of sentences (primarily mandatory sentences for offenses such as driving under the influence, or DUI) and in the number of jailable offenses (such as domestic violence and DUIs). Capacity limits on prison populations, which kept prison-sentenced inmates in jail longer, and jail sentences as a condition of probation also contributed to jail crowding.

Law enforcement officials, judges, prosecutors, and other criminal justice agency decisionmakers seldom admit that jail conditions and jail crowding have any significant impact on their policies and day-to-day decisions. In conducting criminal justice system assessments, however, officials often learn that jail conditions do affect how people do their business. The jail, although a low-priority public agency, can significantly influence the policies of the criminal justice system. This systemic effect requires that the jail population be managed and monitored regularly.

Furthermore, criminal justice agency officials must recognize the influence their respective agencies' policies have on other agencies and programs in the system. The sheriff must assume a leadership role to create a positive and professional jail operation and ensure that the jail is recognized as a significant part of the criminal justice system.

As elected officials, sheriffs come from diverse backgrounds and many begin their tenure without substantial knowledge about the jail or what is required for effective jail operations and

management. To assist newly elected sheriffs, this guide provides a basic overview of jail operations and the sheriff's roles and responsibilities in operating and managing the jail.

Acknowledgments



The *Sheriff's Guide to Effective Jail Operations* was written under the direction of the National Institute of Corrections (NIC). Special thanks to Virginia Hutchinson, Alan Richardson, Jim T. Barbee, and Georgette Walsh at NIC for their leadership and assistance in the development of this guide. Thanks also go to Shelley Zavlek, who edited the initial draft, and to Christine Tansey and Janet McNaughton at Lockheed Martin Information Technology, who took the document from the draft stage to final publication.

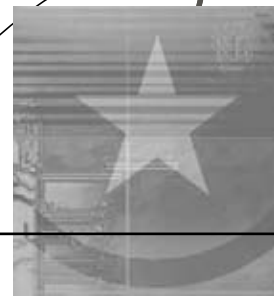
We also wish to express our appreciation to the following individuals who took time out of their busy schedules to review and comment on drafts of the guide:

- Nick Albers, Jail Standards Coordinator, Idaho Sheriffs' Association
- Richard Hodsdon, Legal Counsel, Minnesota Sheriffs' Association
- Sheriff Ken McGovern, Douglas County, Kansas
- Sheriff Glen Meier, Valley County, Montana
- Sheriff Craig Roberts, Clackamas County, Oregon
- Sheriff Matt Strittmatter, Wayne County, Indiana

Their thoughtful reviews helped ensure the relevancy of the guide to the intended audience and enhanced its overall usefulness and readability.

Mark D. Martin
Paul Katsampes, D.P.A.

Role, Purpose, and Characteristics of the Jail



Purpose of the Jail

The jail is integral to local government's public safety function and is an essential element of the local criminal justice system. It serves five basic purposes:

- To receive and process people arrested and taken into custody by law enforcement.
- To hold accused law violators to ensure their appearance at trial.
- To hold offenders convicted of lesser offenses—usually misdemeanors, but also low-level felonies in some jurisdictions—as a court-ordered sanction.
- To hold individuals remanded by the court for civil contempt.
- To hold offenders for other jurisdictions or those awaiting transfer to prison or other facilities.

To meet these objectives, jails are typically organized around two basic functions:

- Booking and intake.
- Custody.

The booking and intake function of the jail serves a vital public safety function by providing a place where individuals taken into custody can be safely processed and assessed to determine the risks they present. Individuals who are not released shortly after intake or following their initial court hearing generally are those charged with serious offenses, who represent a public safety risk; those likely to flee the jurisdiction

before their cases can be adjudicated; and those unable to make bond or otherwise secure pretrial release. Pretrial inmates constitute more than half of the jail's population. The purpose of pretrial incarceration is not to punish, but to protect the public and/or ensure court appearance.

In its custody function, the jail houses this pretrial population along with inmates sentenced to the jail. As a sanctioning option, the jail provides a means of holding convicted offenders accountable for their illegal acts. A central goal of incarceration as punishment in our system of justice is to discourage offenders from committing future criminal acts and to send a message to would-be offenders about the possible consequences of illegal behavior. Rehabilitation and reintegration are sometimes considered secondary goals of incarceration, and within the constraints of available resources, many local jails do make an effort to provide inmates with opportunities for self-help and change to deter future criminal behavior.

The Role of the Jail in the Local Criminal Justice System

The jail is a critical component of the local criminal justice system. It is used to address the need for detention at various points in the criminal justice process. Jails typically serve multiple law enforcement agencies in the community, including local law enforcement, the state police, conservation officers, and federal authorities. Jails also serve prosecutors, the courts, and probation

and parole agencies. The jail serves these entities by holding the following groups in custody:

- New arrestees pending arraignment, trial, conviction, and sentencing.
- Offenders sentenced to jail time.
- Persons accused of probation, parole, or bail-bond violations pending revocation proceedings.
- Offenders sentenced as a sanction for probation or parole violations.
- Convicted offenders awaiting transfer to state or federal institutions.
- Illegal immigrants pending transfer to federal authorities.
- Offenders in the armed services awaiting transfer to military authorities.
- Offenders held for violations of court-ordered conditions such as failure to pay fines, contempt, failure to appear in court, violations of restraining orders, and failure to attend counseling.
- Juveniles charged as adults or pending transfer to juvenile authorities.
- Detainees held under contract for other local, state, or federal jurisdictions.
- Witnesses for court.
- Offenders held for state or federal authorities under a contractual arrangement with the local jurisdiction, or because the state or federal facilities cannot accept new inmates because of overcrowding.

As evidenced by the list above, the jail responds to many needs in the criminal justice system and plays an integral role within that system. These needs are dynamic and influenced by the policies, practices, and philosophies of the various users of the jail. The sheriff must understand these various needs and be cognizant of the policies and practices that significantly affect the composition

of the jail population and the demand for bed-space. The sheriff, along with other criminal justice system officials, should periodically assess how well the jail is meeting the needs of the local criminal justice system. Such assessments help identify the need for additional resources or for changes in system policies and practices affecting the use of the jail.

Characteristics of the Jail Population

The jail serves a tremendously diverse population. Unlike prisons, where inmates generally are of the same gender, legal status, and custody level, jails are expected to manage a broad cross section of people. At any given time, the jail population may include males and females, juveniles and adults, the dangerous and the vulnerable, the minor offender and the serious offender, the physically fragile and the mentally ill, and the chemically addicted.

Inmates come to jail with varying degrees of medical, mental health, substance abuse, family, financial, and literacy issues. While in jail, they may display a wide range of emotions, including fear, anger, and anxiety, as well as violent, anti-social, and suicidal behaviors. The jail has a responsibility to appropriately house inmates and manage the behavior of this diverse population while they are in custody.

The jail has little control over the number or types of inmates it holds or how long they stay. Rather, the various criminal justice agencies the jail serves—law enforcement, prosecutors, courts, probation, etc.—and the efficiency of case processing will largely determine who comes to jail and how long they stay. Laws establishing the role and function of the jail, criminal penalties for law violations, the incidence of crime, and public attitudes about crime also influence the use of the jail.



Review Checklist: Role, Purpose, and Characteristics of the Jail

- Does your county have a mission statement that describes the purpose of your jail? (See Chapter 3 for more information about jail mission statements.)
- If so, does the actual use of the jail correspond to its intended role and purpose?
- Do you have regular access to accurate data on the jail population, so as to ensure appropriate use of the jail?
- Is your jail currently meeting the needs of the local criminal justice system?
- Are there problems with the jail that adversely affect the functioning of the local criminal justice system?

Sheriff's Roles and Responsibilities



Jails today must be recognized and operated as professional institutions. They can no longer be operated on an ad hoc basis within the sheriff's office. Regardless of their size, jails require the sheriff to be a full-time professional administrator capable of handling multiple roles internal and external to the jail. The sheriff must function effectively as the organization's leader, as the manager of its operations and resources, and as the supervisor of the jail administrator.

As a leader, the sheriff:

- Creates a vision for the organization.
- Helps define the jail's mission and the goals that must be met to achieve that mission.
- Creates a sheriff's office executive management team that includes the jail administrator as an equal member.
- Builds a culture within the jail division that supports the attainment of desired outcomes.
- Serves as liaison to the external environment of the sheriff's office (i.e., the local criminal justice system, special interest groups, stakeholders, the community, and the media).
- Influences and develops public policy supporting the agency mission.
- Creates and maintains a competent and diverse workforce.

As a manager, the sheriff:

- Mentors and coaches the jail administrator and other staff to elicit desired behaviors and develop talent.

- Ensures that policies and procedures that meet professional standards are established to guide the staff and the organization in day-to-day operations.
- Motivates the jail administrator and other staff to align their personal goals with those of the jail.
- Implements the policy of the sheriff's office by providing thorough written directives and training on those directives.
- Monitors activities and assesses results by collecting and analyzing performance data on a regular basis.
- Manages and allocates budgets, staff, and other resources.
- Manages the organization's preparation for and response to crisis situations and emergencies.

As a supervisor, the sheriff:

- Stays informed about day-to-day operations in the jail and is visible and available to assist when necessary.
- Monitors compliance with policies, standards, and legal requirements through the establishment of a systematic internal inspection and review process.
- Supports and facilitates the jail administrator's efforts to redirect underperformers and address misconduct of jail staff.
- Monitors the jail administrator's performance through regular reviews and quality assessment.

Sheriffs need the trust and support of their jail administrator to get this increasingly complex job done. A survey of jail administrators attending a National Institute of Corrections (NIC) training program, “The Jail as a Part of County Government,” in 2005 asked the administrators what types of support they needed from the sheriff to be effective in their job. Their responses included the following recommendations for sheriffs:

- Give the jail administrator full support and backing.
- Be knowledgeable about the jail.
- Participate in problem solving.
- Be involved, but do not micromanage.
- Understand the jail’s budgetary needs.
- Help road patrol and other divisions in the sheriff’s office better understand the jail’s needs and/or issues.
- Foster cooperation and communication with the courts and other key decisionmakers.
- Support adequate staffing, training, and facilities.
- Support equitable salaries and benefits for jail staff.

To support the jail administrator and contribute to the effective functioning of the jail, the sheriff should:

■ **Stay informed.**

- Visit the jail regularly.
- Attend training on jail issues and trends.
- Stay current with applicable jail standards.
- Read jail-related periodicals and resource materials.
- Review reports prepared by jail staff, inspectors, and others.

- Meet regularly with the jail administrator to review accomplishments and address issues.

■ **Be proactive.**

- Work with the jail administrator to solve problems in the early stages.
- Encourage staff to help provide solutions to problems.
- Support the use of nonjail options to help manage the growth of the jail population and ensure that the jail is being used as intended.
- Give risk management a high priority.
- Work with the jail administrator to comply with standards.
- Work with the jail administrator to achieve adequate staffing levels and develop a qualified workforce.
- Support the jail administrator’s efforts to keep the jail current with computer technology and related resources.

■ **Secure adequate resources for the jail.**

- Help secure an adequate operating budget.
- Work with the funding authority for resources to support and maintain an adequate facility.
- Help the jail administrator secure nonfiscal resources available through other county and state agencies.
- Support the jail administrator’s efforts to secure grant funding, subsidies, and other sources of financial support.
- Support cost-sharing efforts through cooperative agreements with other jurisdictions.



- Work with the jail administrator on ways to generate revenue. (However, do not create an overreliance on revenues for essential jail operations.)
- **Provide leadership.**
 - Help facilitate criminal justice system coordination.
 - Support internal strategic planning and goal setting.
 - Support training and professional development opportunities for the jail administrator.
- **Be an advocate and a champion for the jail.**
 - Promote jail-friendly legislation in the state legislature.
 - Work with the jail administrator to develop an effective public education and communication plan for the jail.
 - Advocate for needed resources with the funding authority and in community forums.

Review Checklist: Sheriff's Roles and Responsibilities

- Do you view your leadership role as sheriff as that of a full-time professional administrator?
- Do you have a good understanding of your multiple roles as sheriff, both internal and external to the organization?
- Are your leadership, managerial, and supervisory knowledge and skills where they need to be to lead the sheriff's office and jail effectively? Are there areas where you would like to improve?
- Do you provide the level and types of support needed by your jail administrator for the effective operation of the jail?

Providing Effective Leadership and Support for the Jail



The Leadership Function and Expected Outcomes

There are significant benefits in providing effective leadership and support for the jail, not just for the sheriff, but also for the community. A well-managed, professional operation results in a safe and clean jail environment, which in turn reduces litigation and liability exposure and maintains a positive public image. Efficient jail operation is achieved through compliance with standards and the efforts of a well-trained, motivated workforce.

The sheriff's leadership responsibilities include creating a vision for the organization; defining the jail's mission and goals; implementing the jail's mission through proper planning, budgeting, and monitoring; including the jail administrator in the executive management team; creating and maintaining a competent and diverse jail workforce; building a positive organizational culture within the jail division; influencing the external environment of the sheriff's office and jail; and developing public policy that recognizes the jail as an integral part of the criminal justice system.

Creating a Vision

The vision is the leader's statement of the organization's direction and its near-term goals. Jim Collins, a private researcher in the field of leadership and management, identifies four elements of a successful vision (Collins and Porras, 1991):

- The vision must be clear.
- The vision must be compelling.

- The leader must catalyze commitment to and vigorous pursuit of the vision.
- As a result, the leader stimulates higher performance standards.

The sheriff must use the vision to keep the jail administrator, jail supervisors, and jail staff focused on the direction of jail operations and the boundaries of decisionmaking. In communicating his/her vision, the sheriff should:

- Present ideas so others can understand the reasoning behind the direction.
- Give credit to those who helped make the organization what it is today.
- Be prepared to repeat the ideas over and over again.
- Give everyone a role in helping to refine and implement the direction.
- Be patient. Others have not had as much time as the executive to absorb the ideas.
- Beware of instant success. If everyone agrees immediately with the executive's ideas, it is highly likely that they are not being honest.
- Be prepared for resistance, and do not take it personally. It is natural for people to resist change.

The vision statement is fundamental to effective leadership. It expresses a unique and ideal image of the future for the common good of the jail

and the sheriff's office. The sheriff is responsible for defining the vision. Although certain aspects of the vision generally change with each new sheriff's administration, the vision always should:

- Express the organization's highest standards and values.
- Provide the focus for the organization's efforts and the impetus for significant achievement.
- Inspire the organization to "stretch," grow, and improve.
- Be achievable within a given period of time, such as the sheriff's term of office.
- Be supported by a plan for its achievement.

The following sample vision statement for a county jail reflects these characteristics:¹

The sheriff's office will serve the public by conducting organizational operations that are progressive and ethical. The agency's staff, in all divisions, will be trained in current practices, trained in ethical and professional behavior, and supervised by experienced and professionally educated leaders and managers. The law enforcement and the detention divisions will comply with state and nationally based professional standards. The sheriff's office will interact with the community, work to understand the needs of the community, and collaborate with other agencies to resolve the community's problems.

Developing and Implementing the Mission and Goals

Mission and goals are also essential elements of an effective organization. They give the organization purpose and help keep it on track. They

also give the sheriff and his/her jail administrator a means of measuring current performance and provide a basis for future plans.

A *mission statement* is a short, concise statement describing the purpose of the jail, that is, why it exists. The mission statement normally includes the following information:

- The legal authority and responsibility of the facility within the local justice system.
- The purpose and identity of the organization.
- The values and philosophy of the facility and the community.
- The ways in which the facility will serve those affected by its work.

Goals are statements describing the outcomes resulting from the organization's ability to fulfill its mission. They also establish priorities that focus the organization's work on those activities that are essential to success.

The jail's mission and goals are defined and shaped by a number of factors:

- Statutes that mandate the jail's existence and its general purposes.
- Community and criminal justice system values and expectations.
- The sheriff's vision, knowledge, and experiences.
- The funding authority's values and expectations.
- Court decisions.
- The availability of resources.
- The jail itself.

¹This vision statement is an example developed by the authors using the principles presented in the National Sheriffs' Institute Training Program relating to developing a leadership direction for a sheriff's office.



Working with the jail administrator, the sheriff incorporates these mandates and expectations, along with his/her own philosophical orientation, into succinct mission and goals statements for the jail.

Following is a mission and goals statement from a Colorado sheriff's office:²

The sheriff's office is responsible for maintaining the county jail in a manner that ensures safety and security for the general public, jail staff, visitors to the facility, and jail inmates. The facility is designed to comply with Colorado state laws, the constitutional requirements as defined by the U.S. Supreme Court, and the American Correctional Association Standards for Local Detention Facilities.

The facility serves as a countywide offender intake center and detention center for pretrial and sentenced felons and misdemeanors. To ensure security and safety, the facility operations include a classification system that separates males from females, violence-prone inmates from others, and work-release inmates from other inmates.

The facility has a goal that no inmates shall leave the facility in worse condition, physically or psychologically, than when they entered. Achievement of this goal is enhanced through adherence to life safety codes, the availability of inmate activities, and regular programming. The facility will offer education, mental health counseling, and jail ministry programs for inmates. Appropriate medical care, alternative meals, programs to address drug and alcohol dependency, no-smoking programs, and religious counseling will be made available. Work release and community service will be available to judges for the sentencing of offenders that meet community correctional criteria.

The county sheriff also recognizes that for most offenders, incarceration is punishment in itself and that staff deserve a positive work environment.

Once the facility's mission and goals are established, plans for their implementation must be developed. Planning provides the organization with direction and focus; it determines how the organization will function and what it will accomplish. Planning aligns the facility's goals, activities, and resources to achieve its mission. The planning process provides a systematic way for the sheriff to make decisions regarding the effective allocation and use of available resources for the jail and other functions of the office. Information developed in the planning process becomes a primary resource in the development and justification of the office's budget.

The sheriff obtains and uses the financial resources needed to operate the jail through the jurisdiction's budget process. To provide effective leadership in this area, the sheriff must know the budget process for the jurisdiction and the specific responsibilities of the sheriff's office for budget development and management. Ideally, the sheriff and the jail's management team should play a key role in the process. Those who actually manage and deliver the services are most knowledgeable about what resources are needed and how to allocate resources. Although the jail's budget is typically combined with the sheriff's overall budget, it should be established as a distinct program within the sheriff's office budget so the jail administrator knows what financial resources he/she has to work with and can manage those resources to meet the jail's goals and objectives.

The jail's operations and programs should be monitored regularly through a process of internal inspections and reviews. An internal monitoring system provides timely observation and assessment of critical jail functions and helps the sheriff and jail administrator stay informed about programs, activities, and problems in the jail.

²This example was adapted from the mission statement of the Boulder County Jail in Boulder, Colorado.

It can reveal how well the facility is complying with policies and procedures, standards, and other legal requirements. It also provides a means of determining whether the jail is meeting its goals and helps identify areas in need of improvement.

The jail may also be inspected by a number of external entities having regulatory responsibility over various aspects of jail operations. This may include a jail inspection agency, a health department, a fire inspection agency, building code inspection bureaus, and agencies responsible for monitoring workplace safety. The sheriff should encourage his/her jail administrator to develop good working relationships with representatives from external inspection agencies. In addition to the objective assessment provided by an external inspection, the agency may be a source of technical assistance and support when improvements are needed.

The Jail Administrator as a Member of the Sheriff's Executive Team

The sheriff's office executive team usually consists of the sheriff (the team leader), the undersheriff or chief deputy, the division commanders, and an administrative manager.³ It is critical that the jail administrator be included as a member with status and decisionmaking power equal to that of the other members of the team. The sheriff has the responsibility to set the tone for team interactions, modeling and reinforcing behaviors that encourage trust, open communication, honesty, respect, innovation, team spirit, commitment to vision, and accountability. The sheriff, as a team leader and facilitator, needs to be a role model for the team members.

As the leader, the sheriff should facilitate collaborative working relationships among team members

and enable them to share power. Sheriffs who rule with an iron fist and demonstrate no faith in the ability of the members of their executive team to take on responsibilities will find the team of little help to them. In other words, the sheriff needs to develop team members into strong independent leaders who know the value of protecting their interests and, at the same time, working with others for the good of the organization.

The characteristics of the individuals who make up the executive team contribute to its effectiveness. The sheriff should work to build on individual strengths and compensate for individual weaknesses by acting in a supervisory role as a mentor to individuals in their personal and professional development process. The ability to work well together is a fundamental component of a successful team. Three keys to establishing a collaborative climate are clearly defined roles and responsibilities, strong lines of communication, and positive relationships.

As a member of the executive team, the jail administrator should actively participate in organizational decisions, working with other division commanders to solve problems not just for the jail, but also for the overall organization. If the team is committed to the overall success of the sheriff's office, division commanders will focus on helping other divisions, as well as their own, to succeed.

Managing Human Resources and Creating a Positive Organizational Culture

Effectively managing human resources is one of the sheriff's most challenging and important responsibilities. There are myriad laws and regulations addressing all aspects of human resource management. In addition, collective bargaining

³This section draws on the National Institute of Corrections, National Sheriff's Institute Training Program (89th session) *Lesson Plan, Module 5: Developing Your Executive Team*.



agreements often spell out additional employment conditions and rights. As manager of the jail's workforce, the sheriff should be aware of these requirements.

The sheriff can support the jail administrator's efforts to deal with human resource issues by taking these positive steps (Katsampes, 2004):

- Developing written personnel policies and procedures.
- Developing written job descriptions.
- Properly classifying employees.
- Evaluating employee performance.
- Applying policies and procedures consistently.
- Following the rules carefully in disciplining staff.
- Maintaining adequate documentation.
- Supervising direct reports and modeling supervision best practices.
- Ensuring that meaningful performance reviews are conducted regularly.
- Ensuring that timely and fair processes for mediation of staff problems, complaints, grievances, and labor relations issues are in place.
- Encouraging the development and realization of opportunities for employee development and being sure employees understand how to access them.
- Determining the division/institution's staffing needs and ensuring that appropriate steps are taken to meet these needs.
- Ensuring the establishment of fair and equitable human resource policies.
- Establishing a positive working environment by creating a progressive vision, mission, and set of goals for the organization and a positive organizational culture.

Organizational Culture—What Is It?

Organizational culture may be described as a set of assumptions, values, and beliefs shared by members of an organization (Stojkovic, Kalinich, and Klofas, 1998).⁴ It may be derived, in part, from the culture and values of the community. These assumptions, values, and beliefs often influence the behaviors of the jail staff, especially in response to work-related problems. Such behaviors may be positive—supporting the sheriff's office vision and mission—or negative—undermining the vision and mission. In any case, the norms and values of various groups influence the operation of the jail (Katsampes, 1998; Katsampes and Nees, 2002). Therefore, it is important for the sheriff to establish policies and procedures that contribute to a strong, positive organizational culture.

Organizational Culture—How It Develops

Organizational culture is developed and maintained through a process that includes three distinct stages—anticipatory, formal, and informal (Stojkovic, Kalinich, and Klofas, 1998).

The anticipatory stage occurs before an individual enters an occupation. In this stage, the job applicant's perceptions about the jail operation are being shaped even before they are hired. The applicant's perceptions are influenced by others who have varying degrees of familiarity with jail operations—including family members, neighbors, teachers, and the media. Perceptions also are influenced by the information applicants receive through the recruiting process or other direct contact with the sheriff's office.

The formal stage consists of the preservice and on-the-job training conducted by the sheriff's office for the purpose of teaching the new jail

⁴The organization of this and the following sections is derived from Katsampes (2004).

employee the “right way,” or the organization’s way, of performing jail duties.

The informal stage occurs as various veteran jail staff tell the new jail officer “how we really do things here” and express views of right and wrong as they have been developed by the staff’s informal culture. Often feeling a need to be accepted by their colleagues, new employees may be easily influenced by peers and supervisors. This need to belong to the group is even stronger in criminal justice occupations because of safety concerns—concerns that are especially evident in jail operations. When the learning that occurs in the informal stage is in line with the

sheriff’s vision and mission, it reinforces the commitment of the new employee to an overall positive organizational culture. When it diverges from that vision, the learning serves only to perpetuate a negative culture.

Developing or changing the culture of a jail staff is a challenging and long-term goal. Values that have become ingrained over the years are not easily changed. The sidebar “Developing the Organization’s Culture” presents strategies that should result in the selection and retention of workers who are committed to the direction of the sheriff’s office and the jail organization.

Developing the Organization's Culture

Anticipatory Stage

1. Use agency advertising: the media, including news articles; and high school and college job fairs.
2. Use model jail officers in recruiting efforts.
3. Clearly state the organization’s vision, mission, goals, and policies and procedures during the recruiting and selection process and explain the consequences of violations.
4. Develop selection requirements that emphasize professionalism and education.
5. Use psychological, social, and value-based instruments and interviewing in the selection process.

Formal Stage

1. Increase the amount of preservice training.
2. Increase the training emphasis on ethics and professionalism.
3. Develop or reorganize the Field Training Officer (FTO) program.
4. Implement a first-line supervisor training program that emphasizes problem solving and accountability.
5. Clarify the organization’s vision, mission, goals, and policies and procedures. Clearly state the consequences of violations.
6. Implement a progressive disciplinary process for officer infractions.
7. Terminate repeat or serious offenders.
8. Terminate new officers who are not professional during the FTO and probationary stage.
9. Promote and reward officers who are productive, professional, and opinion leaders.
10. Reward officers who recruit professional applicants.

Informal Stage

1. Identify jail staff opinion leaders and include them in training programs.
2. Identify officer safety and security issues and needs.
3. Reduce low staffing and inmate crowding.
4. Involve middle managers and first-line supervisors in problem solving and strategy meetings.
5. Terminate or demote staff who do not support or implement solutions.
6. Initiate a collaborative conflict resolution process using small groups of officers to identify the safety and security needs of officers and the needs of the administration.
7. Create officer problem-solving teams to identify solutions to inmate control problems.

Source: P. Katsampes, 2004, “The Tail that Wags the Dog,” Norwich University, Masters of Justice Administration Homepage, <http://grad.norwich.edu/>.



Managing the External Environment and Developing Public Policy

Managing the external environment is defined as interacting with citizens and interest groups, collaborating with other agencies, acquiring necessary resources, maintaining a productive place in the criminal justice system, and applying effective techniques and strategies to building public and media relations.⁵ Effective sheriffs recognize that their organizations are part of a larger whole, and external conditions may influence day-to-day operations and long-term goals.

Developing Public Policy

The sheriff's leadership role includes responding to new laws, court decisions, and legislation; presenting needs and requirements to the county commissioners; developing relationships with community and special interest groups; implementing new technology; and recognizing social conditions. Sheriffs must learn to effectively carry out all these tasks. The sheriff must understand that he/she is part of a system in which all parts have an influence on the other parts. The external factors fluctuate continually, as does their impact on agencies of the criminal justice system. The sheriff must be aware that the sheriff's office (particularly the jail) is dependent on others. It is important that the sheriff's office be capable of performing environmental assessments, identifying trends, and developing strategies to respond to the changing environment.

The sheriff differs from other managers in that he/she should not only respond to environmental influences, but also should actively shape or guide policy and budgetary directions affecting jail operations. Knowing the community enables the sheriff to make sound decisions and build viable partnerships. The sheriff must be able to

discern which partnerships should be established, refreshed, or abandoned. The sheriff's office is part of a larger system; what others do affects the office, and what the office does affects them.

Special interest groups, stakeholders, and other agencies have either overt (obvious) interests or covert interests (hidden agendas, unidentified issues, politically incorrect issues, etc.). To identify these interests and uncover hidden agendas, the sheriff should:

- Conduct meetings with these groups and ask about their concerns.
- Read/observe how they act.
- Attend public meetings and hearings.
- Follow press coverage and develop positive relationships with the media.
- Develop and maintain working relationships with legislative/political staff and officials to ensure implementation of the agency vision and mission.
- Assist staff in understanding how the agency agenda fits into the context of other public policy issues.
- Create opportunities for staff to participate in understanding, developing, and implementing public policy.
- Create opportunities for external stakeholders to participate in the development of public policy.

Following is one sheriff's description of developing public policy and public partnerships for a county jail using some of the strategies just listed:

In 2005, I attended the 89th National Sheriffs' Institute (NSI)—sponsored by the NIC and the National Sheriffs' Association—in Longmont,

⁵ A portion of this section was adapted from Katsampes (2005).

Colorado. I had previously attended the 2-week class for newly elected sheriffs required by the state of Kansas; the class had provided a basic overview of the responsibilities and requirements of the sheriff's job.

When I enrolled in the NSI administration class, I was thinking I would be learning the same information as the Kansas class, but I was looking forward to the networking opportunity. During the NSI class, I realized that the back-home issues I was faced with were not unusual and there were some ways to deal with them.

After I returned home, I worked with my management team on things I learned in the program. First we began with our mission and our vision, and we developed those that seemed to work for us. We continued to build from there, and although days seemed to drag in the beginning, as the work went on, it began to fall into place. We identified our issues and then worked on problem solving with each other.

We began a plan for an addition to our jail facility. We began a conversation with the county commissioners to test the waters. Our programs director met with NIC consultants at a conference and began inquiries for assistance. NIC came and began a jail study for a reentry program.

We contacted one of the county commissioners and relayed what we were trying to do with our reentry program. Our commissioners seemed impressed with our plan and forethought. We then contacted about 20 to 25 stakeholders with community organizations for a scheduled meeting and gave a little information about the plan. Everyone came or sent someone to give input into our jail reentry program. On the final day we invited the media, and on the next day it hit the media. We received positive comments concerning the staff's efforts. I continue to attend civic functions, and I continue to receive positive comments.

I think back to the days in Longmont, when I was not sure these ideas would work when I got back home. But now I look forward to the next challenge and to

working with the stakeholders' help. I feel they will join us to solve problems and achieve our goals.

—*Kenneth McGovern, Sheriff
Douglas County, Kansas*

Establishing Positive Media Relationships

One goal of the sheriff is to build a long-term, professional relationship with the media. The sheriff should develop media policies and protocols that assure that all agency staff are aware of *who* should respond to *what* issues, what information may be released, and the agency's philosophy of openness to the media. Media representatives value straightforward, timely, and reliable information. The sheriff should develop an agencywide expectation that openness and truthfulness are the norm.

In addition to responding to requests for information about an event or incident, the sheriff should develop a media plan with a variety of proactive approaches, including the following:

- The distribution of educational materials that provide background and factual information (not necessarily for immediate use).
- Regular press releases. Policies should be developed to determine when press releases should be used, what subjects they should cover, and who should authorize their release.
- Press conferences. Press conferences are useful in helping attract coverage of topics the sheriff is interested in sharing with the public and provide a venue for getting many journalists' questions about an issue answered at one time.
- Regular visits to editorial boards (print and broadcast media).

Monitoring the media for stories that affect the jail is important to keep the agency up-to-date on media needs and trends. Jail staff members



should be assigned (or a clipping agency contracted) to read and clip stories that directly affect the jail and to record items of general

correctional interest. This information should be shared widely throughout the organization.

Review Checklist: Providing Effective Leadership and Support for the Jail

- Is your vision clear and compelling and do you use it to enhance commitment?
- Do your jail policies and procedures support the mission and goals?
- Have you developed an executive team, and is the jail administrator an equal member of the group?
- Do you have a strategy for managing the jail budget that includes development by the jail administrator and feedback from the jail staff?
- Do you have a strategy that increases the competency of your jail staff and that influences the staff culture?
- Do you have a role as a leader within the local community? If so, what form(s) does that leadership role take?
- Can you identify the public interest groups and stakeholders in your community who have an interest in and influence with the jail?
- Do you have a plan for dealing with the media as it affects the jail and jail-related issues?

Liability and Standards



The jail clearly carries the greatest risk of liability of all the functions in the sheriff's office. The sheriff should be familiar with the legal requirements for operating a jail and the standards that are applicable to his/her jail.

Jail Liability

Prior to the 1960s, the public and courts largely ignored conditions and practices in jails. The courts adopted a "hands-off" policy toward inmate complaints and lawsuits that challenged institutional conditions and practices. This policy was based on the belief that corrections administrators knew best how to control inmates and should be deferred to concerning jail operations and management.

During the 1960s and 1970s, there was a significant movement in the United States to recognize and increase the civil rights of many groups of people. In that climate, prisoners' rights became a more important issue. Federal courts began to recognize prisoner lawsuits challenging conditions of confinement as legitimate legal claims.

The legal basis for the intervention of the federal court in jail matters is Title 42, Section 1983 of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1871. The law provides that "Any person acting under the color of law who deprives anyone of a right secured

by the Constitution or laws of the United States shall be liable to the injured party." Sheriffs can be sued under Section 1983 because they are operating under the "color of law."⁶

The courts recognized that inmates—although restricted for purposes of safety, order, security, control, and/or rehabilitation—do not lose their constitutional rights. To address inmate rights, the courts began to hear the petitions of inmates who claimed to have been subjected to physical abuse, inhumane conditions, corporal punishment, or other constitutional deprivations.

During the 1970s and 1980s, there were several significant court decisions addressing the rights of inmates. These court decisions were mainly based on the 1st, 6th, 8th, and 14th amendments to the United States Constitution. Cases touched on almost every area of jail operations, including staffing; access to courts, counsel, mail, telephone, reading materials and libraries; religious practice; personal, professional, and media visits; medical care; recreation and exercise; food services; classification, disciplinary segregation, and due process; living conditions; and the use of force.

As a result of this unprecedented judicial intervention, longstanding problems were broadly revealed and confronted. There is now a body of

⁶See Collins (1998). When a person acts or purports to act in the performance of official duties under any law, ordinance, or regulation, he or she is acting under the "color of law." Virtually anything that government officials do in the jail may be considered under the "color of law."

clearly established law, with associated liability, that addresses nearly every aspect of jail operations and the conditions of inmate confinement. The courts continue to review and refine legal requirements as inmate rights cases are adjudicated.

The sheriff has certain “affirmative duties” regarding the safety and well-being of the community and inmates in his/her custody. Deliberate indifference to the discharge of these duties is typically the basis of liability when conditions and/or practices are successfully challenged in court.⁷ These duties include:

- Protecting the community from harm.
- Protecting the incarcerated from harm.
- Providing “due care” to protect the incarcerated from conditions that could result in harm, such as:
 - Medical conditions.
 - Mental health conditions.
 - Self-harming behaviors.
 - Inadequate confinement, security, or supervision.
 - Environmental hazards.

The sheriff has a duty to protect the community from harm by preventing escapes and properly supervising inmates when they are outside the secure perimeter of the jail. The sheriff also has a duty to protect the incarcerated from harm resulting from institutional or staff violence. This includes taking steps to properly classify and house inmates; maintain appropriate levels of supervision; and provide a safe, contraband-free environment. Beyond the duty to meet the

basic needs of inmates and protect them from harm, the sheriff has a duty to exercise “due care” to address conditions in the jail that could potentially result in harm to the inmates.

Jail Standards

The escalating number of court cases alleging unconstitutional jail conditions and practices has pointed to the need for a more standardized, uniform, and predictable way of addressing jail issues. In response, many states and professional organizations have developed comprehensive jail standards. By providing jail administrators with clear guidelines concerning jail operations and the treatment of inmates, these standards may decrease the likelihood of court intervention in jails.

Standards typically outline the requirements for both the construction and operation of local jails. Compliance with standards demonstrates a sheriff’s commitment to professionalism and can significantly reduce the local government’s exposure to liability.

The American Correctional Association (ACA)’s Standards for Adult Local Detention Facilities are perhaps the most widely recognized professional standards. Many states and other professional organizations have modeled their standards after those developed by ACA. Most states administer standards programs that include inspections, compliance monitoring, and sanctions for noncompliance. To facilitate compliance, some state programs offer technical or funding assistance. Some professional organizations, such as ACA, maintain an accreditation program as a means of recognizing jails that comply with and implement their standards.

⁷ *Estelle v. Gamble*, 429 U.S. 97 (1976). The “deliberate indifference” test is applied in areas other than just medical care, including safety and other general living conditions. It has effectively been expanded to mean “deliberate indifference to the basic human needs” of the inmate.



The sheriff should keep up with the latest information about the standards applicable to his/her jail and be aware of the status of the jail's compliance with those standards. Sheriffs should also stay informed about issues, trends, and legislation that may have an impact on existing standards or create new standards affecting the jail.⁸ If the state has a standards and inspection

program, the sheriff should get to know the inspection personnel and take advantage of resources they might have available to assist the jail's compliance with standards. When deficiencies are identified, the sheriff must develop and implement plans for corrective action to bring the jail into compliance with the standards.

Review Checklist: Liability and Standards

- Do the conditions and practices in your facility meet current legal requirements?
- Is there a history of litigation in any particular area of the jail (e.g., issues regarding medical care, the use of force, or suicide)?
- Have you developed and implemented a comprehensive risk management plan to eliminate or reduce hazards in the jail?
- Do you have a means of keeping up with issues, trends, case law, and "best practice"?
- Is the jail in compliance with applicable jail standards?
- Does the jail have a designated legal counsel?
- Is the jail adequately insured?
- Do you keep comprehensive documentation covering all areas of jail operations?

⁸For example, a major provision of the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA), a federal law passed in 2003, provides for the development of standards for the detection, prevention, reduction, and punishment of prison rape. Although the law refers to prisons, it applies to all federal, state, and local prisons, jails, police lockups, private facilities, and community settings such as residential facilities. PREA seeks to ensure that jails and other correctional settings protect inmates from sexual assault, sexual harassment, "consensual" sex with employees, and inmate-inmate sexual assault.

Jail Physical Plant



Characteristics of Facilities That Support Effective Jail Operations

An adequate facility is essential to effective jail operations. Features and characteristics of facilities that support safe, secure, and efficient operations include the following (Kimme, 1998):

- Adequate capacity with flexible housing arrangements that allow for proper classification of inmates and management of peaks in population levels.
- The availability of appropriate types of housing (i.e., single-occupancy cells, multiple-occupancy cells, dormitories) for the types of inmates held.
- Clear visibility into housing areas from fixed posts that facilitate constant, rather than intermittent, surveillance or supervision of inmates. Officers should have a clear line of sight into housing-unit day areas and cell fronts.
- Adequate living and working environment (lighting, temperature, air quality, sound levels, cleanliness, plumbing, etc.).
- Adequate space for intake, support services (including medical, food, laundry, and maintenance), inmate programs (including counseling, education, visitation, library, and exercise), administration, and storage.
- An efficient layout of rooms and spaces that support staff and accommodate the flow of activities and services.

- A clean and well-maintained space with appropriate fixtures, finishes, furnishings, and equipment.
- Space that is in compliance with life safety codes, health codes, workplace safety standards, and jail standards.

Capacity and Jail Crowding

Many jails across the country are experiencing crowding. The most common definition of crowding is when the jail population consistently exceeds design, or *rated*, capacity. However, symptoms of crowding may be apparent much earlier—once the jail reaches approximately 80 percent of rated capacity. At that level, properly housing and managing the diverse jail population begins to become much more difficult because compromises in the jail’s classification system occur. Compromising the jail’s classification capabilities is likely to lead to increases in violence, tension, and the availability of contraband. Basic functions (security, maintenance, sanitation, programs, recreation, etc.) begin to break down when they are stretched to their limit for extended periods of time due to crowding. These conditions increase the jail’s liability exposure and jeopardize the safety and well-being of both inmates and staff.

Ultimately, jail crowding is a community issue that requires an external response. The sheriff and jail administrator must make key decision-makers aware of the issue and work closely with

them to develop and implement strategies to manage the jail population. Rated capacities may be established for the jail by a state inspection program or other regulatory agency. If not, the sheriff should work with local officials to establish capacity limits for the jail and to keep the jail within these limits. Both internal and external population management strategies should be developed to deal with bedspace demands that exceed available capacity. Knowing the characteristics of the inmate population is key to population management because it enables the sheriff to identify target groups for whom alternatives may be appropriate.

Environmental Conditions, Sanitation, and Maintenance

The quality of the jail environment not only affects the health and well-being of those who occupy and work in the facility, but also influences their behavior. Poor conditions often lead to low morale of both inmates and staff, increased inmate health care costs, more disciplinary problems, higher levels of staff absenteeism and turnover, and an overall negative atmosphere. Attention to light and noise levels, temperature, air quality, plumbing, and sanitation can improve the overall quality of the jail environment as both a residential setting and worksite.

Unsanitary living and working conditions not only make for an unhealthy environment, but also communicate a lack of concern about the quality of the jail environment. The message conveyed is that sloppy work will be tolerated. Sheriffs are advised to make a clean jail a high priority. After getting an outside assessment of

the current level of sanitation and correcting any identified deficiencies, the sheriff should develop a comprehensive sanitation plan for the facility and provide the resources necessary for its implementation. The sheriff's office should then monitor the level of sanitation on an ongoing basis through a system of inspections.

Due to constant and hard use, jail facilities and equipment age almost 4 years operationally for every chronological year they are in service. Sheriffs should develop an effective preventive maintenance program for the jail and gain support from the funding authority by communicating the benefits of such a program.

Preventive maintenance will:

- Maximize the useful life of all building systems in the jail.
- Help the jail operate at peak efficiency.
- Prevent breakdowns of critical building systems.
- Maintain a safe and healthy environment for staff and inmates.
- Avoid costly repairs resulting from neglect or deferral of maintenance.

The sheriff should work with the jail administrator and funding authority to plan and implement a program of inspection, testing, servicing, repair, and/or replacement of building systems and components to achieve these goals. The availability of qualified and trained maintenance staff is an important consideration when considering the staffing needs of the jail. Inmate labor may also play a significant role in maintaining adequate levels of sanitation in the jail.

***Review Checklist: Jail Physical Plant***

- Does the population of your jail regularly exceed its design, or rated, capacity?
- Are there compromises in classification due to lack of bedspace for certain types of inmates?
- Can your jail maintain adequate separation of the various categories of inmates that must be housed separately?
- Is there agreement among key decisionmakers on the capacity of the jail?
- Does crowding in your jail affect sentencing decisions by the courts or decisions to detain by arresting authorities?
- Do key decisionmakers work collaboratively to keep the jail population within agreed-upon limits?
- Does your county have a long-range plan that identifies and addresses future detention needs for the community?
- Does the community perceive the jail to be a decent and safe environment for staff to work, inmates to live, and visitors to conduct business?
- Is the jail kept clean and in good repair?
- Does your jail have written sanitation and preventive maintenance plans?
- Is there a system of internal inspections to monitor the level of sanitation and maintenance in the jail on an ongoing basis?

Critical Aspects of Jail Operations



Adequate Jail Staffing

Adequate staffing is essential to effectively managed, safe, and secure jails. Jails with staffing deficits are more vulnerable to litigation, compromise community safety, and place both inmates and staff at higher risk of harm. Facilities in this situation also have a more difficult time providing programs and services to their inmates.

Adequate staffing means more than having the right number of staff members to run a detention or correctional facility. It also means placing well-trained staff into positions that are appropriately matched to their skills. Appropriate placement ensures that the staff can provide effective supervision and oversee the day-to-day operations of the facility.

Following are factors influencing the staffing needs of jails:

- **Population characteristics.** The number and type of inmates in a jail are significant factors. The security risks presented by inmates, their behavior while in custody, and any special needs (medical, mental health, etc.) all determine the level of supervision and staff involvement required. Inmates' age, gender, and length of stay have implications for staffing as well.
- **Jail mission.** The jail's operational philosophy is generally reflected in its mission statement. The mission expresses not only the facility's legal authority and responsibilities, but also community values and beliefs. The emphasis placed on community values,

along with the jurisdiction's legal responsibilities, affects the level and type of programs and services offered in the facility.

- **Functions and activities.** Sufficient staff must be available to perform essential security functions in the jail, provide basic services to the resident population, and oversee the various programs and activities that are part of the daily routine.
- **Physical layout of the jail.** The physical layout of the jail affects where staff will be stationed, the number of staff required to supervise each area, and the number of staff needed to effect movement of inmates to services.
- **Method of inmate supervision.** Effective supervision requires that staff stationed in close proximity to housing areas regularly interact with inmates.
- **Standards and court decisions.** Standards and court decisions influence staffing requirements by establishing minimum levels of service or specifying particular operational practices and activities. Many state and professional standards address staffing directly.

Understanding these factors early in the process of planning new jails can lead to better, more efficient design decisions. In existing jails, careful analysis may open the door to other solutions that result in a better use of staff resources.

A *staffing analysis* is a process used to determine staffing needs in detention settings. It includes consideration of the factors listed above along with the identification of posts, coverage requirements, and staff availability (Liebert and Miller, 2001). The process results in a staffing plan and report that provide recommended staffing levels and estimated costs. Sheriffs are advised to find out whether the jail has had a recent staffing analysis and, if not, to have an analysis completed. The jail staffing plan should be updated at least annually and when any major changes occur in the primary factors that affect staffing.

Recruitment, Selection, and Retention

The turnover rate for jail staff across the country increased during the past decade. At the same time, the pool of potential new hires has dwindled. The cost of staff turnover is tremendous. Therefore, it is imperative that sheriffs develop practical strategies to recruit the best possible applicants, to select staff who are a good fit for the agency, and then to retain these staff.

Recruitment, selection, and retention are intertwined. Sheriffs who select and retain the right staff will find that their need to recruit will lessen. Recruiting the right staff improves selection and retention considerably.

Recruitment

The goal of the recruitment process is to locate and attract a diverse pool of qualified candidates. To increase the effectiveness of the recruiting process, a recruiting plan that includes the following elements may be helpful:

- **Recruiting committee** to assist and advise the jail administrator in the development of the recruitment plan.
- **Recruiting materials** such as brochures, posters, recruitment videos, and Internet Web sites. Obtaining assistance from

marketing or public relations specialists within the jurisdiction will ensure that a consistent, effective message is conveyed through the various types of media.

- **Recruiting team.** Recruiting activities may be assigned to existing staff. Recruiters should reflect the desired diversity of the organization and be selected for their enthusiasm, job knowledge, professionalism, advocacy skills, public speaking skills, and public relations skills. They should be knowledgeable about personnel matters, the agency's personnel needs, the selection process, training requirements, compensation and benefit plans, and career opportunities.
- **Recruiting strategies.** Effective recruiting strategies vary according to the types of positions being filled, the available labor pool, and a variety of other factors unique to each jurisdiction. The most effective plans use multiple strategies to develop the largest possible pool of qualified candidates.

There are a number of ways to attract media attention to the jail's recruiting efforts at little or no cost. Examples include press conferences, feature stories, talk/news shows, public service announcements, and public appearances. Paid advertising is often a popular and effective means of recruiting. Content, timing, and placement are key ingredients to generating a large response through paid advertising venues. Some of the more traditional approaches include classified newspaper ads, television and radio ads, and brochures and posters placed at strategic locations in the community. Special events provide excellent opportunities to recruit. Some examples include job fairs, open houses, college career days, or local fairs or festivals.

Selection

The purpose of *screening* during the selection process is to assess an applicant's suitability for



working in a jail environment and to determine whether the applicant's skill sets match the requirements of the position being filled. Screening should serve to funnel applicants using job-relevant and legally defensible screening, interviewing, and assessment methods and tools. Screening out unqualified and unsuitable candidates early in the selection process allows more time and attention to be focused on the most qualified candidates. Assessment tools should be based on actual job requirements and administered in a consistent manner by trained individuals.

Many states have established minimum qualifications for jail officers. Sheriffs should be aware of minimum qualifications established by the state or jurisdiction and periodically review jail officer job descriptions to see that they are consistent with these requirements.

Screening and selection processes vary from one jurisdiction to another, but generally include some combination of the following elements:

- Written testing.
- Oral interviews.
- Background investigations.
- Physical testing.
- Selection.
- Psychological evaluations.
- Medical examinations.

Prospective jail staff should be subject to more than criminal-history checks. Complete background investigations—such as those conducted for law enforcement officers—should be conducted on every prospective employee.

Retention

Retention of quality employees is critical to effective jail operations. Turnover is tremendously

costly to the organization in terms of lost productivity, employee replacement expenses, lost expertise, lower employee morale, and diminished quality of services.

To retain quality employees, sheriffs may need to develop a formal retention plan. The following strategies have been found to be effective:

- Recruiting people who are a good fit with the organization.
- Creating a positive work environment.
- Developing effective orientation, performance management, and coaching processes.
- Providing innovative compensation and benefit packages.
- Establishing a recognition and rewards program.
- Providing training and educational opportunities that improve job skills and provide career development.
- Establishing a mentoring program.
- Providing career growth opportunities.
- Providing an adequate, safe work environment.
- Conducting exit interviews to find out why employees leave.

A retention plan may involve a combination of these strategies. The success of the jail's retention plan can be measured using the following indicators:

- Reduced turnover rates.
- Reduced absenteeism.
- Improved employee morale.
- Reduced numbers of disciplinary actions.
- Increased productivity.

Review Checklist: Adequate Staffing, Recruitment, Selection, and Retention

- Does your jail have a written staffing plan that is updated regularly?
- Are current staffing levels sufficient to provide full coverage of all posts, actively supervise inmates, and cover all essential jail functions? Are staffing levels sufficient to ensure inmate and staff safety and compliance with standards?
- Are both male and female staff available in the facility when both male and female inmates are housed?
- Are there written job descriptions for all positions?
- Is the jail able to recruit and retain qualified staff?
- Is the budget sufficient to address staffing needs?

Staff Training and Supervision

A good staff training and development plan is critical to effective jail operations. In fact, it may possibly yield more benefits to the organization than any other function. Effective staff training can improve consistency in operations, promote staff confidence and professionalism, improve morale, and reduce workplace stress, operational problems, and liability. Staff training contributes to effective operations by helping to ensure that staff:

- Understand and adhere to policies and procedures.
- Know what to do while on duty and how to do it.
- Know how to operate complex jail systems and equipment.

Staff training is not optional. It is the duty of the sheriff and jail administrator to properly train staff. To win a case, plaintiffs may need only to show a causal link between a constitutional violation and a reasonable assumption that it could have been prevented through training.

The goal of training is to change staff behavior to improve job performance. Although training needs for new employees are different from those for existing employees, the goal remains

the same. With new employees, the focus of training is on building entry-level knowledge and skills in the core tasks the officer performs in the course of duty. With existing employees, the focus is on addressing deficiencies and performance issues identified through an individualized performance analysis. The jail's training program must address the training needs of both groups to be of maximum benefit.

Following are recommended steps for implementing a jail training program:

- **Write a job description** for the training coordinator.
- **Designate a training coordinator.** In small agencies, this duty may be added to an existing position. Larger agencies may be able to justify filling the position on a full-time basis.
- **Provide training to the training coordinator.** The training should focus on developing coordination skills. The training coordinator, as the title implies, organizes the training and sees that it is delivered but may not necessarily do a lot of hands-on training.
- **Develop policies and procedures** for the training program.
- **Develop an annual training plan** that includes:



- Training goals for the current year.
- A summary of previous years' needs and problems.
- A list of topics to be addressed in the current year.
- A proposed master schedule.
- A total training budget.
- A plan for evaluating the impact of training.
- **Implement** the annual training plan.
- **Evaluate** the results of the training provided.

The annual training plan should include basic training for new employees as well as inservice training for existing staff. It should address all job classifications in the facility. The sheriff can support the provision of training for jail staff by:

- Designating a training coordinator.
- Establishing a line item for training in the jail budget and including adequate funding in the jail's budget request.

- Assuring adequate access to training space and equipment.
- Approving overtime and/or schedule changes to allow staff to attend training as necessary.

It is incumbent upon the jail administration to provide active, ongoing supervision of staff to ensure that the knowledge and skills developed in training are used in the jail and to ensure that staff are following the jail's policies and procedures. The supervisory duties of the jail administration are often scrutinized in litigation against the jail. In defending against such challenges, the sheriff and jail administrator must be able to demonstrate that staff were performing duties in accordance with the training they received and that practices were consistent with policies and procedures. The combination of training and ongoing supervision also helps jail staff achieve competency and maintain it over time.

Review Checklist: Staff Training and Supervision

- Does your jail have a designated training coordinator?
- Are there adequate training staff, facilities, equipment, and materials?
- Is there a specific budget allocation for training?
- Does your jail have a formal, written staff training plan that is updated annually?
- Is your jail in compliance with preservice and inservice training requirements for all staff?
- Is all training provided and received thoroughly documented?
- Is there a formal, written system for assessing staff performance (performance appraisals)?
- Is there a supervisor or lead officer who is accountable and responsible for all staff and their actions on each shift?

Policies, Procedures, and Post Orders

The sheriff has a duty to provide direction to the staff about how the jail is to be operated. Accordingly, jails should have a written policies and procedures manual developed specifically for the facility and consistent with the jail's mission and goals. The manual should be comprehensive, addressing all aspects of jail operations. It should conform to current case law, professional practices, statutes, state standards, and the operational capabilities of the organization and should reflect the sheriff's own philosophy. Staff should receive training in policies and procedures, and copies of the manual should be readily available to staff for use as a reference. The policies and procedures manual should be reviewed and updated at least annually and whenever major operational changes are made.

Post orders detailing the responsibilities and tasks for each post and position included in the jail staffing plan should also be prepared and implemented in the same manner as operational policies and procedures. The policies and procedures manual provides staff direction for what is to be done, why it is to be done, and how it is to be done. Post orders detail what specific tasks are to be done, when they are to be done, and who will do them.

Written policies and procedures offer a number of benefits for the jail and its operation. They serve to:

- Provide clear direction to staff on operations.
- Communicate the organization's mission and values and the sheriff's philosophy to staff.
- Promote consistency, efficiency, and professionalism by standardizing how staff carry out their duties.
- Provide the basis for on-the-job staff training.
- Provide protection for the jurisdiction against liability when individual acts can be shown to be outside what is prescribed in the policies and procedures.
- Facilitate compliance with standards and other legal requirements.

The sheriff can help the jail administrator develop and implement policies and procedures by:

- Clearly communicating his/her values and philosophy so they may be reflected in the written directives.
- Supporting requests for resources needed for the development and implementation of the policies and procedures and helping to secure a legal review of the directives by the county counsel.
- Supporting efforts to monitor compliance and keep the policies and procedures current through ongoing monitoring and annual review.
- Facilitating review of the policies and procedures by the jurisdiction's legal counsel.



Review Checklist: Policies, Procedures, and Post Orders

- Does your jail have a written policies and procedures manual developed specifically for your facility? Is the manual up to date?
- Is the policies and procedures manual comprehensive, covering all aspects of your jail's operation?
- Is the manual reviewed and updated at least annually?
- Have the policies and procedures been reviewed by your jail's legal counsel?
- Have staff been trained in the policies and procedures?
- Is there a process in place to verify that policies and procedures are being followed on all shifts?
- Does your jail have written post orders for key posts and positions within the facility?
- Are staff trained in the post orders for the posts to which they are assigned?
- Are post orders reviewed and updated as applicable policies and procedures, schedules, or other aspects of your jail's operations are changed?

Jail Security

The primary goals of jail security are to prevent escapes and institutional violence and to maintain order within the facility. Security in jails is established through a combination of appropriate staffing, adequate facilities, and well-defined operational procedures.

A jail's security requirements are determined by its mission and the types of inmates housed in the facility. The security capabilities of jails are defined by such factors as internal design and layout, perimeter security features, facility capacity, construction method and materials, type of security equipment, staffing pattern, and operations. Effective security depends on a good match between the jail's security capabilities and the custody level of the inmate population.

The basic elements of effective jail security include:

- **Perimeter security.** Effective perimeter security prevents inmates from escaping the secure area of the jail and prohibits unauthorized access by the general public. The security perimeter is the barrier between the secure area of the jail and the outside world.

The barrier must be constructed of materials that cannot be easily breached and must be maintained in good repair and working condition. To prevent unauthorized access, the jail should have a *facility access policy* that governs entry into the facility.

- **Monitoring and communication.** There should be a means to monitor the overall security of the jail. This includes ongoing monitoring of audio and video electronic surveillance systems, life safety and security systems, electrical and mechanical building systems, and general movement within the facility from a central control post.

Communication between members of the jail staff is also vital to security. Jail communications systems typically include internal telephones or intercoms connecting each jail post and a control center post, intercoms or call boxes strategically located throughout the facility, portable radios carried by individual staff, and personal alarm devices.

- **Inmate well-being checks and counts.** Jail staff must be able to account for and assure the well-being of inmates at all times. This is accomplished through a system of inmate

well-being checks and counts. The presence of staff in inmate-occupied areas is the most effective means of assuring the well-being of inmates. Good practice dictates that all inmates in the general population be viewed by staff in person at least every 30 minutes on an irregular schedule. Persons who are violent, mentally ill, intoxicated, or have other special problems warranting closer supervision require more frequent checks.

The jail should also have a system to physically count inmates to verify that all inmates in custody are present or otherwise accounted for. Counts should occur on a regular, routine basis and when there is some indication that inmates may be missing.

■ **Searches and contraband control.**

Searches in jails are operational strategies used to control contraband and detect conditions that adversely affect the security and well-being of both staff and inmates. Jail policies and procedures should detail criteria and methods for searches of inmates and their personal property, other persons having access to the jail, vehicles, and the facility.

- **Control of equipment and supplies.** Jail staff must be able at all times to account for and control access to keys, weapons, tools, equipment, and supplies used in the jail. Failure to do so can potentially provide inmates access to materials that can facilitate their escape or result in harm to themselves, staff, or the public.

- **Use of force and restraints.** To maintain security and order in the jail, it is sometimes necessary to use force, security equipment, and/or restraints to control an inmate or a group of inmates. The use of force and

restraints as security measures must be balanced against the jail's obligation to safeguard the individual rights of inmates.

■ **Inmate movement and transportation.**

Inmate movement includes movement of inmates internally from one area of the jail to another to access services, participate in programs, and receive visitors. It also includes the external transport of inmates (generally by agency vehicle) outside the security perimeter for a court appearance, transfer to another facility, or appointments in the community. The jail should establish procedures to respond to the increased security risk presented by inmates during either type of movement.

- **Security inspections.** Inspections are an integral part of the jail's security program. They provide a systematic method to evaluate the condition of security features of the physical plant, the proper function of security devices, and adherence to appropriate security practices. The process should provide for regular inspection of all areas of the facility, including inmate housing, program areas, support services areas, intake and release areas, administrative areas, the public lobby, parking areas, the exterior grounds, the security perimeter, and mechanical services and shop areas.

If there are questions or concerns about jail security, the sheriff should seek a comprehensive security audit of the jail. Such an audit will uncover deficiencies in facilities, systems, equipment, or practices that may adversely affect security in the jail. Action plans should then be developed to resolve deficiencies.



Review Checklist: Jail Security

- Does the jail have a physically secure perimeter separating inmate-occupied areas from the outside world?
- Are all security devices and features operable and in good repair?
- Are all monitoring and communications systems adequate and in good working order?
- Do the locations of staff posts allow staff to observe and manage inmate behavior effectively?
- Does the jail have a system for physically counting inmates to verify that all inmates are in custody or otherwise accounted for?
- Are staff required to conduct and document frequent well-being checks of inmates?
- Does the jail have written policies and procedures governing searches of inmates, property, visitors, the facility, and vehicles?
- Does the jail have adequate provisions for the control of contraband?
- Does the jail have adequate provisions for the proper storage and controlled use of keys, weapons, tools, equipment, supplies, and hazardous materials?
- Does the jail have adequate written policies and procedures governing the use of force and restraints?
- Are security inspections conducted on a regular basis? Is there a supervisory review of inspection findings and prompt corrective action taken to address issues?

Jail Safety

The sheriff has a responsibility to provide a safe jail setting for staff, inmates, and others who visit or use the facility. The primary goal of safety in the jail is to protect inmates, staff, and the public from harm. This goal is achieved through the identification and management of risks to the safety and well-being of jail occupants and the community. These risks include not only those unique to the jail environment, such as inmate assaults or violence, but also risks inherent in any residential and work setting (e.g., accidents, disease, natural disaster).

The sheriff should establish a safety program that provides comprehensive protection against potential hazards and specific protection against known hazards. Elements of an effective safety program include the following:

- Management commitment and employee involvement.
- Assigned responsibility and authority.
- Worksite analysis.
- Hazard prevention and control.
- Written policies and procedures.
- Safety and health training.
- Internal inspections by trained staff and independent inspections by external auditors.
- Recordkeeping and evaluation.

Support by the sheriff and jail administrator provides the motivating force and resources necessary for organizing and managing safety activities within the jail. Executive officials must regard the safety of inmates, staff, and visitors to the facility as a fundamental value of the organization.

The first step in improving jail safety is a comprehensive safety audit to identify safety hazards and develop strategies to eliminate, minimize, or control them. A safety program should be devel-

oped for the jail and a safety officer designated to oversee the program. The sheriff should provide the leadership and resources necessary for the safety program to be effective.

Review Checklist: Jail Safety

- Has a safety officer for the jail been designated and trained?
- Has a recent worksite analysis been conducted to identify potential safety hazards?
- Is the jail in compliance with applicable safety standards (jail standards, fire codes, building codes, Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations, etc.)?
- Does the jail have written policies and procedures to govern the safety program?
- Is the jail's safety record satisfactory?
- Does the jail have a system for routine inspections conducted by designated jail staff to identify potential hazards?
- Do staff receive adequate training on safety issues and control measures?
- Are inmates made aware of their responsibilities with regard to safety?

Emergency Preparedness

Despite efforts to maintain a safe and secure environment, emergencies can arise. An emergency is any significant disruption of normal facility routine or order caused by a riot, an escape, a fire, a natural disaster, or some other serious incident. Emergency situations can result in serious harm to people and property.

Emergency preparedness in jails:

- Reduces the likelihood of emergency situations.
- Contains emergencies (when and if they occur) before they escalate into major incidents or disasters.
- Mitigates the consequences or the amount of harm resulting from emergencies.

A comprehensive emergency response plan is the foundation of emergency preparedness. An effective plan should include the following components:

- **Risk assessment and control** to identify the types of emergencies that could occur in the jail and to implement appropriate control measures.
- **Organization and coordination of emergency response** to provide a clear process for decisionmaking, assignment of staff, and deployment of resources during an emergency.
- **Emergency plans** to direct the actions of jail staff in containing and controlling emergencies, and to provide for the protection of staff, inmates, and visitors during emergencies.
- **Equipment and resources** to effectively respond to emergency situations and carry out emergency response plans.
- **Training and drills** to train staff in the execution of emergency plans and in the use of emergency equipment and devices.
- **Recovery** to provide for the return to routine operations once an emergency is over.



- **Reporting** to document critical events and actions associated with the emergency.
- **Review** to provide a systematic means of ascertaining all the pertinent facts about the emergency situation.

The sheriff should seek an assessment if there are questions about the jail's emergency preparedness. Such an assessment will identify deficiencies or weaknesses in the jail's emergency response capabilities. Action plans should then be developed to resolve deficiencies.

Review Checklist: Emergency Preparedness

- Does the jail have a comprehensive, written emergency response plan? The plan should include the following:
 - Assessment and control strategies.
 - An organizational structure for emergency response.
 - Interagency coordination.
 - Written emergency plans for a range of predefined emergencies.
 - Evacuation plans, including arrangements for designated evacuation sites.
 - Appropriate equipment and resources.
 - Training and drills.
 - Recovery plans.
 - Reporting and documentation.
 - Critical incident review.
- Does the jail have the necessary emergency systems, equipment, and resources in place and operational? These should include:
 - Communications.
 - Alarms.
 - Fire detection and suppression.
 - Emergency generators.
 - Emergency keys.
 - Protective equipment.
 - Floor plans and related information.

Inmate Behavior Management

Management of inmate behavior is a key component of safety, security, and the overall effective operation of the jail. If inmate behavior is effectively managed, jails can be a good workplace for staff, a safe and clean detention environment for inmates, and a valuable and highly regarded service to the community. The sheriff and jail administrator should view managing inmate behavior as the primary function of the jail.

Historically, jails have focused on physical containment as a means of maintaining security. Staff safety was believed to depend on maintaining physical barriers between staff and inmates. Accordingly, staff-inmate interaction was minimized. Unfortunately, this approach resulted in many of the problems commonly associated with jails, such as assaults, suicides, vandalism, contraband, unsanitary conditions, and inmate misconduct.

These problems are minimized when staff continuously and actively supervise inmates, set clear expectations for behavior, and hold inmates accountable for their behavior. In addition to maintaining a secure physical environment, staff management of inmate behavior is essential to achieving safety and security in the jail.

An integrated approach to inmate behavior management includes six essential elements:

- Assessing the risks and needs of each inmate at various points during his/her incarceration.
- Assigning inmates to housing.
- Meeting inmates' basic needs.
- Defining and conveying expectations for inmate behavior.
- Actively supervising inmates.
- Keeping inmates occupied with productive activities.

Assessing Risks and Needs

The risk and needs assessment, also called inmate classification, lays the foundation for inmate behavior management. Information gathered in this assessment is used to classify the inmate and develop a strategy for managing his/her behavior while in the facility. An effective classification system is objective, straightforward, and easily understood and implemented by staff. It is based on a consistent set of criteria and a systematic method of applying the criteria to classification decisions.

Inmate risks and needs must be assessed at various points during incarceration. During booking and intake screening, arrestees are first screened to determine their fitness for confinement. Once accepted into custody, the inmate is further screened to determine how he/she should be managed in the booking room. The booking and intake screening process identifies and responds to critical issues related to the information gathered.

The next assessment takes place when the decision is made to admit the inmate into the jail and assign him/her to housing. This is an in-depth assessment that provides the basis for decisions about how to best manage the inmate's behavior while in jail, the inmate's housing assignment, the level of supervision, and access to services and programs.

The inmate's risk and needs should be reassessed at regularly scheduled intervals and when new information is received. This reassessment ensures that staff can respond to changing circumstances affecting inmates.

Inmate classification should be a formal, documented process that is reliable, valid, and equitable. The sheriff should work with the jail administrator to establish detailed classification policies and procedures and assign trained staff to conduct the process. Adequate supervision of



classification staff is important to ensure that they implement the system according to policies and procedures.

Assigning Inmates to Housing

Assigning inmates to appropriate housing based on a well-thought-out plan is a second essential element of effective inmate behavior management. Information gathered during the risk and needs assessment serves as the basis for assignment of housing. Each jail should have a housing plan that describes how bedspace within the jail is to be used. Housing plans are based on the following factors:

- The characteristics of existing bedspace, including the number of housing units, the number of beds within each unit, the configuration of the units, and the level of physical security in each unit.
- The level of supervision in each housing unit.
- The overall breakdown of risk and needs of the inmate population, including compatibility factors and security threat status.
- The number of inmates within each classification.

In addition to describing how space will be used for the general population, the housing plan must also designate space for separating inmates in disciplinary detention, protective custody, and other special designations. If the jail is not able to meet the housing requirements of the population served, it may include provisions for housing certain types of inmates in other jurisdictions.

A carefully developed housing plan helps ensure that:

- Inmates are placed where they can be best managed.
- Groups of inmates that must be separated by law are kept separate.

- Inmates that must be separated for safety and security reasons are kept separate.

Meeting Inmates' Basic Needs

A third element of effective inmate behavior management is meeting inmates' basic needs, which are no different than those of all human beings. In the jail, these include physical needs such as adequate food, medical care, hygiene, and physical exercise. Providing a safe, clean, and healthy environment also is vitally important. As with all people, inmates have basic safety needs; they wish to be protected from illness or injuries resulting from an assault or unsafe environmental conditions. The social needs of inmates include maintaining contact with family and friends and positive interaction with others in the jail environment. The jail should provide mail, telephone, and visiting services as well as opportunities for positive interaction with other inmates and staff.

If the jail does not meet the inmates' basic needs, it cannot be a safe environment. Inmates who are angry form gangs and can pose a threat to safety. Staff who work in an environment where their own basic need for safety is not met often resort to counterproductive ways to meet this need. They may resign, avoid interacting with inmates, carry weapons, or physically abuse inmates as a way to establish their authority. Such practices exacerbate the already-dangerous conditions in the jail—conditions that can quickly become deadly for staff and inmates.

Defining and Conveying Expectations for Inmate Behavior

The staff's expectations for inmate behavior and the way these expectations are conveyed have a powerful influence on how inmates act. Historically, jail staff have expected inmates to be uncooperative, destructive, aggressive, violent, and manipulative. Staff have communicated these expectations by avoiding interaction with

inmates, adopting a negative demeanor when they do interact with inmates, and accepting negative inmate behavior as normal. It is important to set high, but attainable, expectations for inmates and then ensure that the inmates have the means to comply. Once acceptable inmate behavior is defined, the jail must convey its expectations to the inmates.

Jails convey their expectations for inmate behavior both directly and indirectly. Most jails develop a handbook for inmates that not only gives information about jail schedules, procedures, and services, but also includes rules for the inmates. These rules include a description of sanctions if rules are broken and a description of the jail's disciplinary process. Staff can indirectly demonstrate that they expect inmates to behave well by interacting extensively with them, treating them with respect and consideration, and ensuring that inmate living areas are maintained in good order.

The jail environment should be such that it is in the inmate's self-interest to meet behavior expectations. Housing units for inmates who behave well and do not pose high-level security risks should allow for easy access to basic necessities, services, and programs. Staff should promote positive inmate behavior with incentives ranging from a simple "thank you" to an inmate who has done a good job cleaning his cell to special rewards for accomplishing extra tasks within the housing unit.

Conversely, there should be disincentives for negative inmate behavior. Such disincentives include removal from the housing area, lockdown within the housing unit, lockdown within a disciplinary unit, loss of the right to participate in programs, and loss of commissary privileges. The jail should have a formal, clearly articulated disciplinary process so that both staff and inmates are aware of the rules and the consequences of rule violations.

Supervising Inmates

The fifth element of effective inmate behavior management is supervising inmates to hold them individually accountable for their behavior. To do this, staff must interact with inmates. Such interaction has a clear purpose: to encourage positive inmate behavior and compliance with the jail's rules.

In their interactions with inmates, jail staff must exercise the skills of a good supervisor. These skills include effective decisionmaking and problem solving and the ability to communicate, listen, provide direction, and motivate. Jail staff must treat all inmates fairly. Staff must be able to detect and solve small problems before they become crises. They should be able to devise strategies to ensure that the inmate housing unit is safe, clean, quiet, and orderly and then determine the effectiveness of these strategies through inspection and documentation. It is essential that each staff member serve as a positive role model for inmate behavior. In addition, staff must demonstrate a thorough knowledge of jail policies and use their supervisory skills to establish their authority in the housing unit. All staff should be respectful in their interaction with inmates and should expect the same in return.

The effectiveness of staff supervision is affected by several factors:

- The physical plant.
- Staffing levels.
- Staff placement within the facility.
- Staff behavior.
- The level of administrative commitment to staff interaction.

Each of these factors can be either fixed or variable. For example, if the physical plant is a barrier to supervision of inmates, and the physical plant cannot be changed, the jail can still increase supervision of inmates by changing the



expectations for the level and type of staff interaction with inmates. If the number of staff cannot be increased for political or budgetary reasons, rethinking the placement of staff can enable a jail to more actively supervise its inmates. The sheriff should work with the jail administrator to assess the extent to which the factors listed above impede staff interaction and then develop strategies to decrease barriers created by one or more of these variables.

Although following these recommendations for inmate supervision may represent a major change in current jail operations, significant improvements in inmate behavior will result. The staff will benefit too; they will begin to feel safer at work and more positive about their jobs. As they hone their supervisory skills, many staff members will gain a greater sense of professional fulfillment.

Keeping Inmates Productively Occupied

A final element of effective inmate behavior management is keeping inmates occupied with productive activities. This may include assigning inmates to work or providing a range of structured and

unstructured activities for inmates both inside and outside the housing unit.

Productive activities provide a powerful incentive for inmates to maintain positive behavior. When they have access to meaningful activities and continued access is based on the appropriateness of their behavior within the jail, inmates are strongly motivated to behave according to expectations. Providing access to activities gives staff a tool with which to reward positive behavior and enforce consequences for negative behavior, thereby, enhancing their ability to supervise and manage inmate behavior. If the jail does not provide inmates with productive activities, they will find other ways to fill their time, often through activities that are destructive and contrary to the jail's mission of providing a safe and secure environment.

Sheriffs should assess the extent to which inmate behavior is being effectively managed in the jail. To place control of the jail firmly in the staff's hands, sheriffs should develop and implement a comprehensive plan that incorporates the six elements of effective inmate behavior management.

Review Checklist: Inmate Behavior Management

- Does the jail have a procedure for systematically screening inmates on admission to determine security and safety risks and to identify the need for special services or supervision?
- Are intake staff provided training in the screening process and the use of screening instruments?
- Does the jail have a formal, written classification process to determine housing assignment, supervision requirements, and program eligibility?
- Is there a housing plan that provides for housing assignment and management of inmates based upon behavior, compatibility, and legal mandates or standards?
- Are inmates provided a formal orientation to the jail upon admission?
- Does the jail have an inmate handbook that outlines rules, expectations for inmate behavior, and consequences for rule violations?
- Are there enough staff to provide adequate inmate supervision on all shifts?

Continued on next page

Review Checklist: Inmate Behavior Management (continued)

- Are the staff positioned within the jail so they can see, hear, and promptly respond to what is happening in inmate-occupied areas?
- Are staff trained in effective communication and supervisory skills?
- Is the level of interaction of staff with inmates sufficient for staff to effectively supervise inmates and manage their behavior?
- Is a system of incentives and sanctions used to guide inmate behavior?
- Are inmates kept productively engaged in activities throughout the day to avoid extended periods of idleness?

Inmate Discipline and Grievance

Fundamental fairness in the treatment of inmates is an essential aspect of effective jail operations. It rests primarily in the inmate discipline and grievance processes.

Discipline is the ongoing correction of undesirable behavior, which includes coaching inmates to improve marginal behavior, positively reinforcing their positive behavior, and administering appropriate consequences for negative behavior. It is critical that the disciplinary process be fair from both a legal and operational standpoint. Inmates must be fully informed of the rules and the sanctions for violating the rules. The rules should be upheld consistently over time and from inmate to inmate.

Disciplinary policies and procedures must be carefully crafted to meet basic due process requirements and ensure fairness. A clearly defined disciplinary process can be a positive tool in regulating inmate behavior and can reduce the jail's exposure to potential liability for violations of due process.

Fundamental fairness involves providing inmates with the opportunity to air and resolve grievances. The jail's grievance process plays an important role in establishing a fair and just environment and, therefore, is an essential part

of the jail's overall behavior management scheme. A viable grievance system benefits both inmates and the jail in the following ways:

- Relieves tension by providing inmates with a way to resolve real or perceived problems arising from their incarceration.
- Provides a formal means of conveying information between inmates and the jail administration.
- Highlights potential weaknesses in facilities or operations.
- Provides an effective way for the jail administrator to spot trends and assess overall operational performance.
- Provides a means for the administrator to assess the jail climate.
- Provides an alternative to the filing of a lawsuit to resolve issues.

The jail's grievance system should be governed by written policies and procedures that define the kinds of issues appropriately addressed through this process and provide specific guidance in the filing, investigation, response, and documentation of grievances. If the process has credibility, inmates will use it to resolve complaints rather than act out in inappropriate ways. By providing an administrative remedy, the grievance process may also reduce the level



of litigation and potential liability for the jail. Indeed, the federal Prison Litigation Reform Act of 1995 requires inmates to exhaust administrative

remedies through the jail's grievance system before litigation can proceed in federal court.

Review Checklist: Inmate Discipline and Grievance

- Does your jail have a formal, written inmate disciplinary process?
- Are inmates made aware of the jail rules, expectations, and possible sanctions for violations?
- Are rules enforced consistently and fairly?
- Does your jail have a formal, written inmate grievance process?
- Are inmates made aware of the grievance process and procedures for filing a grievance?

Special Management

The ability to temporarily isolate inmates who are a threat to security, who are a danger to themselves or others, or who have other special needs is essential to the safe and secure operation of the jail. The jail's behavior management plan should include provisions for the separate housing and management of inmates who require temporary segregation from the general population. By definition, these are inmates who require special attention, including closer supervision and access to services more specialized than can be provided in general population housing. Deciding to place inmates in special management and determining the conditions under which they are housed involve important considerations in the area of due process.

Special management generally includes three categories:

- **Disciplinary detention.** Disciplinary detention is used to segregate inmates either detained for or found guilty of violations of the inmate rules and regulations. Inmates who are accused of committing serious rule violations, who are disruptive, or who are a threat to the safety and security of the jail may also be temporarily segregated, pending a hearing.

- **Administrative segregation.** Administrative segregation is used for inmates who, for a variety of reasons other than discipline, must be separated from the general population. Those segregated may include:

- Inmates who, through their threats or actions, present a clear danger to other inmates, staff, themselves, or the security of the jail.
- Inmates who have communicable diseases or need to be isolated for other medical reasons.
- Inmates who cannot function appropriately and safely in the general population due to mental health problems or developmental disabilities.

- **Protective custody.** Protective custody is used for inmates requesting or requiring protection from inmates in the general population. It may include inmates who are resented by the other inmates due to the nature of their criminal charges, codefendants who may testify against other inmates, or inmates who are unable to adjust to living with others and may be the target of assaults.

The jail may house all three categories of inmates in the same area. However, the privileges of

inmates in segregation may be quite different from those of inmates in disciplinary detention. Because placement in administrative segregation or protective custody is not intended to be punitive, programs and services provided to inmates in these categories should approximate (to the extent possible) those available to the general population. On the other hand, the programs and services provided to inmates in disciplinary detention, while still fulfilling basic personal needs, may be much more limited.

Inmates cannot be placed in special management arbitrarily. Due to the loss of liberty and other restrictions inherent in segregation, inmates must be afforded basic “due process” when placement in special management is being considered. With this in mind, the sheriff and jail administrator should establish written policies and procedures for making such placement decisions and should ensure that these decisions are implemented

through the jail’s classification or disciplinary systems.

The safe and effective operation of special management housing areas within the jail includes the following key elements:

- Effective behavior-based classification systems.
- Written policies and procedures.
- Appropriate staffing.
- Effective inmate supervision.
- Thorough documentation.
- Appropriate management, monitoring, and oversight.

Attention to these key elements will enhance the overall safety and security of the jail and ensure the fair treatment of inmates segregated from the general population.

Review Checklist: Special Management

- Does the jail have written policies and procedures governing the management of inmates in administrative segregation, protective custody, and disciplinary detention?
- Does the jail have a separate housing area for special management inmates?
- Do the conditions in the special management housing area approximate those of the general population housing areas?
- Have staff received training in the management and supervision of special management inmates?

Inmate Services

Jails must provide certain basic services to maintain the health and well-being of those in custody. These services provide the essentials of daily living such as food, health care, clean clothing and linens, personal hygiene resources, exercise, and communication with the outside world.

Food Services

The goal of food services should be the provision of nutritionally adequate meals each day that are reasonable in cost and produced and served under sanitary conditions. The importance of food service in the overall operation of the jail should not be underestimated. Whereas food service itself is an ongoing function essential to inmates’ health and well-being, the quality of food service has a significant impact on the



jail climate. Food takes on an exaggerated importance in the daily lives of inmates.

Medical and Mental Health Care Services

Adequate health care services are essential to the well-being of inmates and should be viewed as a basic human right and as the responsibility of the jail. Health care services not only serve the individual's needs, but also prevent the spread of disease within the facility. Every jail should have a written health care plan that provides for the identification, treatment, and/or referral of both emergency and nonemergency medical and mental health problems.

Inmate Clothing and Linens

The jail is responsible for providing adequate clothing and linens for inmates. Clothing provided to inmates should be in good repair, clean, and properly sized. Inmates assigned to work details should be provided with protective clothing and gear appropriate to the assignment. Inmates not released at intake must also be provided with appropriate bedding and linen. A typical issue includes a mattress (constructed of fire-retardant material that is easily sanitized), sheets, one or more blankets appropriate to the season, a pillow, a towel, and a washcloth.

Laundry Services

To maintain adequate levels of sanitation and prevent the spread of disease, the jail must provide laundry services. Clothing, linens, and bedding of all inmates must be laundered when tendered at inmate release and before being reissued. Clothing and linens must also be laundered on a regular schedule.

Inmate Personal Hygiene and Grooming

The jail has a responsibility to provide inmates with the resources necessary to maintain personal hygiene. Proper hygiene not only promotes

the health and well-being of the individual, but also helps prevent the spread of disease to other inmates and staff. Additionally, good grooming enhances morale and the attitudes of both staff and inmates. A personal hygiene program should provide for the daily care of the skin, hair, and teeth. Equipment and supplies should be made available on a scheduled basis for personal grooming and hygiene.

Inmate Visits

The jail must provide inmates with the opportunity to maintain contact with persons outside the jail through personal and professional visits. Professional visits with attorneys, bondsmen, investigators, probation and parole officers, examiners, the clergy, and the news media are generally considered a right. Therefore, restrictions on these types of visits can be imposed only with substantial justification. Although inmates should be allowed personal visits with family and friends within a reasonable jail schedule, jail officials generally have more latitude in placing restrictions on personal visits for security and disciplinary reasons.

Inmate Mail and Telephone Services

The jail also provides mail and telephone services to enable inmates to maintain contact with persons in the community. Jail administrators must distinguish between what is and is not considered privileged communication. Whether by telephone or mail, communication between inmates and their attorneys, the courts, probation officers, the media, and certain public officials is privileged. Communication between inmates and their family and friends is considered nonprivileged. Inmates generally have a right to confidentiality in privileged communications, but other communications can be constitutionally monitored as long as the inmate is given notice that such monitoring may take place.

Inmate Exercise and Recreation

Active indoor and outdoor exercise is important to the physical and mental well-being of inmates and to facility security. Outdoor exercise is especially beneficial because of exposure to fresh air and sunlight and because it provides a temporary (supervised) release from confinement within the building. In addition to being beneficial to inmate health, the availability of outdoor and indoor exercise may result in fewer operational problems such as inmate-on-inmate assaults, inmate assaults on staff, damage to jail property, and lawsuits. The provision of indoor and outdoor exercise in jails is generally required by case law and standards.

Most jails also provide for passive recreational activities to reduce boredom and idleness. These may be unstructured dayroom activities such as table games, reading, radio, and television or organized activities such as arts and crafts, educational classes, movies, or other entertainment. Reading materials available to inmates are generally provided through library services at the jail.

Inmate Commissary Services

Although not generally obligated to do so, many jails provide commissary services. The commissary gives inmates the opportunity to purchase various items or amenities not otherwise provided by the jail. These items help to break the monotony of the jail diet and routine and provide access to a few “extras” that contribute to a more normalized environment. A commissary may also reduce jail costs, in that it provides a means for inmates to purchase items that the jail might otherwise be obligated to provide for free. Items that are typically available through the commissary include personal hygiene products, over-the-counter medications, stationery, postage stamps, playing cards, and snacks.

Inmate Programs

Beyond basic services, many jails elect to provide a range of self-improvement programs and other opportunities to help inmates make constructive use of their time. These programs help inmates with problems and assist in their reintegration to the community.

Inmate programs are important to the overall management of jails and to the community as well as to inmates. Programs keep inmates busy, establish expectations, provide goals, and help inmates recognize their potential for growth. Programs enable inmates to learn useful skills, continue their education, overcome substance abuse problems, improve their mental health, receive spiritual guidance, improve parenting skills, work on anger and stress management, and ultimately learn to change antisocial and criminal behavior.

Programs also reduce vandalism, violence, and other misbehavior. The community benefits by having the offender leave the jail setting better prepared to live and work as a contributing member of society.

Education and Personal Development

Education and personal development programs focus on developing basic knowledge and skills in a variety of areas, including:

- Adult education (tutoring and testing for the General Equivalency Diploma).
- Literacy.
- English as a second language.
- Computer literacy.
- Health and nutrition.
- Employment (job seeking, career counseling, interviewing, etc.).



- Parenting.
- Domestic violence.
- Life skills.
- Behavioral change (self esteem, anger management, decisionmaking, stress management, etc.).
- Educational requirements for juveniles.

Counseling

With the help of volunteer organizations and professional service providers, jails may offer counseling programs intended to help inmates deal with emotional and behavioral problems. Programs of this type may include group and/or individual counseling in the following areas:

- Mental health.
- Chemical dependency.
- Family relationships.
- Spirituality.

Religious and Spiritual Programs

Inmates must be afforded the basic right to worship and given access to religious materials, unless doing so constitutes a justified threat to the security and order of the facility. Effective religious programs in jails often go beyond providing for these basic rights to address many of the spiritual, social, and personal needs of inmates. Religious/spiritual programming often includes:

- Group worship.
- Religious instruction.

- Distribution of religious literature.
- Individual and group spiritual counseling.
- Social help to inmates and their families.

Work Programs

Work programs provide a productive outlet for inmates and give them the opportunity to learn new job skills and establish positive work habits. Compensation for some jobs can provide restitution to victims or help support the inmate's family. Inmate labor can also reduce staffing needs for specific support services and may be a source of revenue for the jail. Jail work programs may include:

- Work release.
- Inmate worker programs.
- Public works.
- Jail industry programs.⁹

Identifying Community Resources

A range of services and programs responsive to the interests and needs of inmates is critical to effective jail operations. Attention to this area can lead to improved behavior and a more relaxed environment for both inmates and staff. Survey the community to identify resources that could be used to enhance jail services and programs. Develop cooperative agreements with other local government agencies and community service organizations to provide their services to inmates. These services could include health and mental health care, employment assistance, and substance abuse programs.

⁹Jail industries are not just for large jurisdictions. There are many opportunities for small jails to develop and operate jail industry programs as well. Miller, Sexton, and Jacobsen (2002) have developed a workbook that includes an introduction to jail industries, key development principles, components of the development process, and a step-by-step guide to planning and implementation.

Review Checklist: Inmate Programs

- Are essential services (medical and mental health care, food, laundry, personal hygiene, etc.) available to meet inmates' basic needs?
- Are visitation, mail, and telephone services available to provide inmates the opportunity to maintain contact with family and friends?
- Is a range of programs (Alcoholics Anonymous, education, substance abuse, job readiness, etc.) available to assist inmates in self-improvement and successful reintegration into the community?
- Are efforts (exercise, library materials, passive table games, work programs, etc.) made to reduce idleness and keep inmates productively occupied?
- Are efforts made to involve community service agencies in developing and providing programs for inmates in your jail?
- Does your jail provide suitable space, equipment, and supplies for services and programs?

Intake and Release

The intake and release processes are essential to the safe operation of the jail. If not handled properly, these processes pose a greater risk of liability than any other aspect of jail operations. Intake and release functions clearly distinguish jails from prisons and other correctional settings. The jail intake unit is a round-the-clock operation that handles an extremely diverse population. Arrestees presented for jail intake may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, be mentally ill, or have infectious diseases. Their behavior may run the gamut from violent to subdued and withdrawn. A majority are pretrial admissions with charges ranging from minor misdemeanors to serious felonies. Although some arrestees end up being detained in jail for lengthy periods of time, most are released within a day or two.

These factors present unique management challenges, some of which (e.g., disruptive behavior, suicide risk, infectious disease, substance withdrawal) may require the use of force and restraints or placement into special holding. The intake process also involves a number of legal issues, such as access to the courts, access to health care, and strip searches. Additionally, the process of preparing arrestees for placement

in the general population involves several steps, including identification, securing property, classification, and medical screening.

Although the release process is typically less intense, it is no less important. The release process includes positive identification of the inmate, a check for holds or detainers, victim notification, medical referrals for inmates with special needs or conditions, and the return of property.

The jail should have clearly defined policies and procedures to guide the intake process. The key elements of the intake process, presented in the sequence they generally occur, are as follows:

- **Receiving inmates** into the intake area.
- **Verification of arrest and identification** of the arrestee to ensure a legal commitment.
- **A preliminary medical assessment** to determine fitness to confine.
- **An initial search** for weapons and other contraband missed by arresting officers during their field search.
- **A medical screening** to identify infectious diseases, mental illness, and other nonemergent medical conditions or injuries so that



these may be treated and those who cannot be placed in the general population can be properly housed and supervised.

- **Inventory and disposition of inmate property.**
- **Inmate booking** to document the identity of the arrestee, personal data, and other essential information regarding pending legal matters.
- **A photograph and fingerprint** of the arrestee to establish and confirm his/her identity.
- **A check for warrants** or wanted notices from other jurisdictions in order to hold the arrestee on other charges, should they exist.
- **Telephone calls** for arrestees who need to contact family or friends to notify them of their whereabouts and to attorneys or bail bondsmen to aid in securing release.
- **A pretrial release screening** to determine eligibility for pretrial release.
- **A followup search and dress-out** of inmates unable to secure release at intake.
- **Classification and orientation** for inmates unable to secure release at intake.

Effective supervision and management of inmates at intake is critical. This period of incarceration presents the greatest potential for injury or harm to staff and arrestees because of the instability or uncertainty of the circumstances in which arrestees find themselves. It is essential for jail officers to use the intake process as an opportunity to “set the tone” for the inmate’s stay in the facility. The expectations established during the process, the ways in which these expectations are conveyed, and the level of professionalism displayed by officers can have a positive impact

on arrestees’ behavior during intake and throughout their stay in the facility.

The release process may occur shortly after the intake process, if the arrestee secures pretrial release, or much later, at the end of a sentence or after disposition of the arrestee’s case. The process generally includes:

- **Verification of discharge approval** and identification of the inmate to be discharged.
- **A file check** to ensure that there are no active holds or detainers.
- **Return of the inmate’s property and money.**
- **Medical discharge planning and referrals**, if necessary.
- **Victim notification of release**, where required.
- **A final administrative check of the inmate’s file** to ensure that all requirements of sentencing have been met and any administrative charges or levies have been satisfied.
- **Arrangements for transportation** for the inmate, if necessary.
- **Completion of the release document or checklist.**

A well-planned release process provides for the safe, legal return of inmates into the community. Discharge planning, referral to community resources, and victim notification are becoming increasingly important elements of the release process. Attention to these issues as well as the more routine aspects of the release process will enhance the safety of the community, improve prospects for the inmate, and reduce the jail’s exposure to liability.

Review Checklist: Intake and Release

- Does the jail complete all essential steps in the intake process? The jail's intake process should include the following:
 - Securing of the arresting officer's weapons.
 - An initial pat or frisk search prior to entering the intake area.
 - Identification of the arresting officer.
 - Verification of arrest or legal commitment.
 - Assessment for medical clearance.
 - Search of the arrestee.
 - Property removal and inventory.
 - Medical/suicide screening.
 - Completion of booking forms.
 - Identification (photographs and fingerprints).
 - Warrant checks.
 - Arrestee telephone calls to family, bondsman, or attorneys.
 - A pretrial release screening.
 - A shower, dress-out, and issue.
 - Initial classification.
 - Orientation.
- Does the jail complete all essential steps in the release process? The jail's release process should include the following:
 - Verification of discharge documents.
 - Verification of the identity of the inmate being released.
 - A check for holds or detainers.
 - The return of property and money.
 - Referrals (medical, mental health, etc.).
 - Victim notification.
 - A review of release requirements.
 - Transportation arrangements.
 - The completion of release documents.
- Does the jail have policies and procedures governing the intake and release function?
- Are the basic tools such as rubber gloves, restraint equipment, and body-fluid protective equipment available in the intake area, and are staff trained in their use?
- Are staff trained in the supervision and management of intoxicated inmates?
- Are staff trained in universal precautions?
- Does the jail's policy prohibit the blanket strip search of all arrestees and allow their strip search only based upon reasonable suspicion that the arrestee is concealing contraband?



So Much To Learn . . . Where Do I Begin?

This chapter presents a list of steps new sheriffs can take to get to know their jail, understand how it operates, and identify any potential problem areas. Although the chapter is specifically oriented toward the newly elected sheriff, many of the concepts may also be helpful to veteran sheriffs seeking to improve the effectiveness of jail operations.

Sheriffs have many things to learn during their first few months in office. Some issues—like the budget, contracts, pending litigation, pending personnel actions, and facility problems—may require the sheriff’s immediate attention. In this initial period, it is imperative to sort out right away what is important to know and who can provide this information. To identify the major issues, sheriffs should:

- Meet with the jail administrator to determine what he/she views as major issues and priorities. The sheriff should use this meeting to clarify the jail administrator’s role and the scope of his/her authority within the organization to make decisions relating to the jail.
 - Talk to staff on a regular basis.
 - Identify the jail’s budget analyst in the jurisdiction’s budget office. Set up a meeting to review the current budget and discuss any outstanding budget issues requiring immediate attention. Note the key dates for budget preparation, submission, and reporting.
 - Review all contracts or interagency agreements to determine what services are offered, their cost, and their current status.
- Get contact information for each contract or agreement.
 - Identify the jail’s human resources representative. Schedule a meeting to go over collective bargaining agreements and other pending personnel issues.
 - Review the current staffing plan, current staffing levels, and staff turnover. Review the current organizational structure and reporting relationships to see whether they are consistent with the sheriff’s philosophy and management approach.
 - Request an audit of the inmate financial and commissary accounts.
 - Review emergency procedures and assess the jail’s current level of readiness to respond to emergencies.
 - Identify the jail’s legal representative. Set up a meeting to discuss current issues and any pending litigation, court orders, or consent decrees. Find out whether there is a history of litigation in any particular areas.
 - Review the most recent inspection reports of outside agencies such as the fire marshal, health department, or jail standards inspection agency. Identify any outstanding deficiencies and determine what steps have been taken to correct them. Deficiencies affecting the lives, health, and safety of inmates and staff should receive priority attention.
 - Identify key staff responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the jail. Schedule a meeting with them and with the jail administrator

to discuss the current condition of the facility and to identify any facility-related problems requiring immediate attention.

- Review documentation of past internal inspections (security, safety, sanitation, maintenance, etc.). Determine whether appropriate corrective action has been taken to resolve any deficiencies identified in these inspections.
- Review documentation of past incidents (e.g., suicides, suicide attempts, fires, use of force, disturbances) to identify potential problem areas and trends.
- Review data on jail population characteristics and trends to get a good understanding of who is in jail and how the jail is used by the local justice system.
- Determine the availability and current status of written directives (policies and procedures, post orders, etc.) and other types of documentation. Determine whether these written directives have been kept current and reviewed by the jail's legal counsel. Also determine whether staff have received training on these written directives and are following them.

- Identify key criminal justice officials whose decisions have an impact on the use of the jail. Set up a meeting to discuss their issues and concerns.
- Identify key media representatives and get their contact information. Review their record of past coverage of the jail. Meet with them as necessary to set a positive tone for the future.

The focus of this initial period should be to identify and compile a list of issues to be addressed and to gather information necessary to evaluate options. Once the issues are identified, the sheriff, working with the jail administrator, can develop a plan of action to address these issues.

There is no ideal way to begin addressing jail issues during the first few months in office. Each newly elected sheriff brings strengths and a certain level of experience to the office. The key to a good start is to have a plan for quickly getting “up to speed” and focused on the important issues. Once this is done, the sheriff can begin to make his/her own imprint on the organization by defining and communicating his/her vision and putting the pieces in place to implement that vision.

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