Implementing The Prison Rape Elimination Act: A Toolkit for Jails

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Introduction

Welcome to *Implementing the Prison Rape Elimination Act: A Toolkit for Jails* (the Toolkit)! The goal of this Toolkit is to provide jails of all sizes, political divisions, and geographic locations with a step-by-step guide for preventing, detecting, and eliminating sexual abuse of inmates[1] in their custody – and for responding effectively to abuse when it does occur. Prison rape includes all forms of inmate sexual abuse within any correctional facility, including state and federal prisons, county and municipal jails, police lock-ups, holding facilities, inmate transportation vehicles, juvenile detention facilities, and community corrections facilities. Protecting arrestees, detainees, and inmates from sexual violence is part of a jail's core mission. This Toolkit will help assess your jail's operations with an eye to improvements.

The topic of sexual abuse of inmates was acknowledged by the United States Congress in 2003 when it unanimously passed The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA). PREA initiated the development of a set of National Standards to Prevent, Detect, and Eliminate Prison Rape, which will be discussed in detail throughout the Toolkit.

The Toolkit includes:

Introductory information:

- An historical perspective of PREA
- General information about the PREA law
- A discussion of Federal partners and their roles
- A review of the work of the National Prison Rape Elimination Commission
- An overview of the role of the Review Panel on Prison Rape
- A description of the role of the National PREA Resource Center

A Self-Assessment Checklist and supporting forms to provide a step-by-step process for jails to review and assess policies, procedures, and practices in light of the PREA Standards and accepted best practices.

Resources to assist in PREA-readiness, including:

- Websites
- Policy Development Guides
- Important research, articles and reports
- Links to ready-to-use training materials – curriculum, lesson plans, interactive exercises

[1] The term "inmate" is used throughout the Toolkit and is used to denote any arrestee, detainee, inmate, or other person legally detained/held by a law enforcement agency, jail, or prison.

A Word on Policy and Procedure Development

The Toolkit will provide the reader with policy considerations and suggestions. It is strongly recommended that agencies NOT merely copy policies of other jails, but rather analyze their own jail's operations as new or revised policies to address PREA are developed. States have different laws[2] that will affect development of policy and procedures; jails have unique facility designs, staffing, and budget issues that influence procedures. Agencies are encouraged to use the Policy Guide and Self-Assessment Checklists to develop the most appropriate and effective policies and procedures for their facilities.

[2] For a listing of these laws, see *The Project on Addressing Prison Rape*. *Fifty State Survey of Sexual Assault Laws* (http://www.wcl.american.edu/endsilence/statesurveys.cfm)