



Wisconsin Department of Corrections

Governor Tony Evers | Secretary Kevin A. Carr

Office of Detention Facilities

November 11, 2020

Sheriff Dennis Stuart
Washburn County Sheriff's Department
421 US Hwy 63
Shell Lake, WI 54871

Re: 2020 Annual Inspection

Dear Sheriff Stuart:

On August 19, 2020, the annual inspection of the Washburn County Jail was conducted pursuant to WI Statute 301.37(3). The inspection compared the facility and its operation to applicable state statutes and Department of Corrections Administrative Code Chapter DOC 350. This inspection consisted of a tour of the facility; interviews with administration, staff and inmates; review of inmate files; a review of the policy and procedure manual; and a review of facility records and documentation.

The maximum rated capacity of the facility is 30. On the day of the inspection, there were 21 inmates incarcerated in the facility.

Improvements since Previous Inspection

- New inmate visitation system installed and operating
- Phase 1 of Jail and Dispatch separation plan is being implemented
- Fully staffed the jail and dispatch positions

Goals and Initiatives

- Complete jail policy update
- Complete the Phase 1 of the Jail and Dispatch separation
- Install video court capabilities in the small interview room

Summary of Jail Operations

I met with the administrative, security, healthcare, and foodservice staff to conduct the annual inspection. The site visit included a review of the facility records and documentation, as well as a walkthrough of the detention areas.

The jail is old and antiquated, limiting the opportunity to provide programming and education, along with meeting safety and security expectations. The facility lacks the proper space needed for booking in new inmates, providing proper classification, and housing individuals on suicide watch as there is only one receiving cell for the whole facility. The lack of receiving cells in the facility also makes it very difficult for staff to have inmates change clothing. If the receiving cell is occupied, staff has an inmate walk through the secure perimeter of the jail to the multipurpose room and step into a closet to change over. Also, the medical room is very small, making it hard for medical staff to provide treatment and examinations while also having adequate space for administrative duties and properly securing confidential medical records.

Another area of concern is that professional visitors are brought into the secure perimeter of the jail to meet with inmates in person. This practice is a security and safety concern as it does not provide any physical barrier from the inmate in the case an inmate were to become assaultive or disruptive.

In addition to the above issues, the jail and the dispatch center are combined and centrally located within the jail. This makes it difficult to provide proper staff supervision with the added responsibilities when 911 calls come into the jail. This often takes staff away from jail duties and negatively affects overall safety and security. As referenced in past inspections, it is recommended that control center and dispatch be separated so staff can focus on their jail duties.

The facility is over 30 years old and, since it opened, corrections has changed dramatically. There should be thought given to future needs of the facility when it comes to conditions of confinement, housing options for classification, programming, and efficiency.

Variances

- The Washburn County Jail does not have any approved variances on file with the Department.

The following codes were found not to be in compliance:

- ***DOC 350.17(10)***

Inspection Findings:

A review of the documentation regarding inmates who are placed on suicide watch failed to show the name, date, and time a supervisor was contacted after an inmates was placed on a suicide watch.

Corrective Actions:

Please ensure a procedure is implemented to ensure all the code requirements of DOC 350.17(10) are being met and documented.

- *DOC 350.24(2)(f)&(3)(d)(7)*

Inspection Findings:

A review of the disciplinary material provided and the inmate rules failed to show a procedure to inform inmates of their right to an appeal regarding discipline.

Corrective Actions:

Please document a clear procedure informing inmates of their right to an appeal for both minor and major violations.

Approval

The Washburn County Jail is approved by the Department of Corrections for the secure detention of adult inmates with the maximum capacity of 30.

I wish to thank Captain Brereton and his staff for their assistance, cooperation, and professionalism during the inspection process.

If you have any questions regarding the inspection results summarized in this letter or any other correctional matters, please contact me.

Sincerely,



Brad Hoover
Detention Facilities Specialist

cc: Dan Brereton, Jail Administrator
Greg Bucholtz, Director-ODF
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