



PREVIOUS INSPECTION _____ Location _____
Sybil Brand Commission for Institutional Inspections

Courts _____ Jails x Sheriff Stations _____

COMMISSIONER(S):
 Miller, Veral

TIME 4/28/2022
DATE

FACILITY NAME:	Men's Central Jail
ADDRESS:	450 Bauchet St/ LASD SUPERVISOR CONTACTED:
Census:	(Capacity: _____) (Current Census: (3877__))
Location(s) Inspected:	2900, 3xxx
Issues Reported to:	<input type="checkbox"/> BOS <input type="checkbox"/> Officer in Charge <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LASD <input type="checkbox"/> ISD <input type="checkbox"/> OIG <input type="checkbox"/> COC Rickell

RATING: S = Satisfactory U = Unsatisfactory CA = Corrective Action Needed N/A = Not Applicable

ITEMS	RATING	COMMENTS
1. Conditions of Confinement		
Cells/Toilets/Sinks		
Showers (water temperature, rust, mold etc.)		
Crowding		
Cleanliness/Graffiti	U	See below
Safety, Conflict, Tension		
Common Areas		
Air Quality/Temperature		
Deputy/Detainee Relations (incl. specific incidents or allegations of misconduct)		
Strip Search Issues		
Access (Drinking Water)		
Access (Mail/Reading Materials/Law Library)	U	<p>Mail is only delivered once a week in 2900. We inspected this module in March 2022 and heard the same complaints. People are receiving mail 6-8 weeks after it is sent. This has not been their experience at any other correctional facility – only the LA jail. Other places process mail much more quickly.</p> <p>Watch Commander Rickell acknowledged this time lapse, but did not have an explanation as to why it took so long to screen and deliver the mail. In addition, the incarcerated people complained that mail might be returned with no notice given to the intended recipient that the mail had been processed and returned. The people to whom we spoke complained that they had requested from jail staff the jail guidelines describing the processing of mail, and had filed grievances regarding the mail processing process. However, these grievances themselves to a long time to process and had not resulted in a speed-up of mail processing. Given that mail is one of the few methods of communication with their families, lawyers, and others, and serves an</p>

		important penological and rehabilitative purpose.
Access (Toilets (for common room))		
Access (Toiletries, Appropriate Combs/Brushes)		
Access (Exercise, Religious Practice)		
Access (Legal Counsel)		Commissioner Miller interviewed a pro per individual in 2900. He stated that the computer kiosks used to access electronic legal databases had been rendered inoperable by a recent software update, and that despite filing a grievance about the issue and being told (after a 10-day wait to have a Sheriff Deputy discuss his grievance with him) that the Sheriffs Department had filed a work order. However, he was still waiting for the computers to become operable.
Access (Visitation, correspondence)		
Solitary Confinement		
Privacy/Dignity (showers, bathrooms)		
Special needs populations (pregnant, non-ambulatory, hearing impaired, mentally ill, medical conditions, developmental disability)		
Module Information Postings (re: time calculations, complaint procedures, messages to SBC)		
Complaint Procedures (e.g., Deputy, medical complaints – confidential procedures to SBC, OIG, COC)	U	See below
Fees Assessed/Money on Books		
Other: _____		
2. Nutrition Quality/concerns		We spoke to multiple people in 2900 who complained that the lunchmeat provided to them by the jail staff was labeled “not fit for human consumption.”
Access to special diets		

3. Trustees		
Quarters		<p>We visited a recreation room on the 3000 fl that had been converted into a housing unit for trustees: incarcerated people with special privileges and responsibilities that allows them more time out of their cells working in the facility. This unit housed twelve people in twelve bunkbeds. Watch Commander Rickell's explanation given for this decision by was that space was needed for mental health housing. However, even by the standards of the jail, this arrangement provided little opportunity for privacy. The people housed in this cell clearly took some efforts to make this situation work, but one of the people housed in this converted recreation room pointed out that it created additional stress for people not used to being in such a large group.</p>
Training & Selection		
Workload and Hours		
Calculation/Time Served		
4. Medical Services (Access, wait times, responsiveness, TB and other medical screening, dental, vision; infectious disease protocol)	U	<p>During the inspection in 2900, an incarcerated person had a seizure. One of the people incarcerated in his cell called for help, and Commissioners Veral and Miller discovered an incarcerated person face-down in his cell having convulsions. There was no Sheriff Deputy or other jail official within shouting distance. The only Sheriff Deputy was on the floor below, in a room with a heavy metal door that made it hard to hear what was going on in the unit, and with a television. When Commissioners Veral and Miller banged on the door to alert the Sheriff Deputy to the medical emergency, he was surprised and unaware of the incident. After alerting the Sheriff Deputy to the emergency, help did arrive quickly in the form of another Sheriff and a medical nurse: however, the nurse did not know where to go because the Sheriff Deputies were on the floor above, and required Commissioners Veral and Miller to direct him. It is really disturbing to think how long an inmate might have had to have suffered had not the Sybil Brand Commissioners not happened to be there. The Commissioners saw no evidence of frequent patrol of the barracks in any of the units they visited. Instead, it appeared that the Sheriff Deputies had their part of the jail, and avoided the part occupied by the people incarcerated there. This was reported to Watch Commander Rickell.</p> <p>We spoke with two incarcerated persons who had been prescribed suboxone but had not received it. One of the individuals had spoken to Commissioner Sherman about two week prior on an earlier inspection requesting suboxone but had not heard anything from the medical staff. Commissioner Miller also spoke with another inmate who was in significant pain due to fentanyl withdrawal and who had not received treatment. That</p>

		inmate had not filed a grievance: he suggested that if he filed the grievance "too soon," the Jail staff would disregard it.
5. Mental Health Services (Access, wait Times, treatment options, assessment procedures)		
6. Telephones Access/Functionality		
7. EBI Services Availability/Type/Access Volunteer Services (Type, Access, Concerns)	U	Individuals in module 2900 do not have access to any EBI programming. Multiple people requested it.
8. Clean Clothing and Bedding (Including laundry practices)		
9. Facilities/Maintenance		
Back Log Unfilled Order(s)		
Kitchen/ Laundry		
Chemical exposure (kitchen, laundry, trustee duties)		
10. Deputy Staffing		
Quality of Interactions w/Detainees		
Use of Force (Last 30 days)		
Assault on Staff (Last 30 days)		
Staff Training (MH, trauma informed etc.)		
11. Detainee Complaints/Concerns		
12. Deputy Complaints/Concerns		
13. Prior Corrective Action Resolution		
14. Detainee Documentation (e.g., intake/release, procedures: classification, logs, detainee management files, Exit interview – policies/procedure grievances. generated funds, classifications)		
15. Discipline Proceedings		
16. Emergency Preparedness/Systems (e.g., fire extinguishers, airpack tags, emergency evacuation routes, control centers, emergency lighting fixtures, safety drills, First Aid and Suicide kits)		
17. Grounds (conditions, unlawful postings on exterior grounds (e.g., if ever been convicted cannot visit a detainee, etc.)	U	<p>Inside the Watch Commander's office, a wall is covered with a large Gadsden Flag. The symbolic meaning of the flag has changed over time as it has become highly politicized in recent years, so that where once it was primarily associated with the military, now it is associated with partisan political views or racist views. I question whether it is appropriate to display this flag in the jail setting.</p> <p>The Gadsden flag is but one of many murals in the facility. While some of the murals plausibly serve an hortatory purpose, displaying a variety of mottos and affirmative statements, the overall impression is to create an "us versus them" atmosphere in which the jail appears less as a institution designed to house individuals at the pre-trial stage, and so presumed to be innocent, as well as individuals suffering primarily from mental illness and drug withdrawal. The culture of the institution expressly presents is not one of serving or</p>

		<p>supporting these individuals, but of total domination. Given the concerns expressed by the monitors with regards to mental health, other people with disabilities, use of force, and response to grievances, the general tenor of the facility is one that projects a celebration of force rather than the other objectives of what is, in part, a pre-trial detention facility. While “[p]rison officials must be free to take appropriate action to ensure the safety of inmates and corrections personnel and to prevent escape or unauthorized entry,” <i>Bell v. Wolfish</i>, 441 U.S. 520, 547 (1979), recent monitors reports, especially in connection with the use of force under the <i>Rosas v. Baca</i> litigation, indicate that Sheriff Deputy culture within the jail has become more violent. Among the important penological purposes, in addition to security, is rehabilitation, especially for individuals who are in jail pre-trial and presumptively innocent. However, the extensive moralization celebrating a physically aggressive Sheriff culture is inconsistent with rehabilitation or an attitude of respect towards the people, many of whom may be factually innocent, who are incarcerated in the facility. This culture has a knock-on effect on many of the issues raised by the monitors reports and confirmed during our inspection by conversations with the individuals incarcerated there.</p>
<p>18. Inspection: Special Focus OIG: _____ COC: _____ Community: _____</p>		
<p>19. COVID-19: _COC Request_____</p>		
<p>20. PREA Issues: _____</p>		
<p>21. Other: _____</p>		

Inspection Detail for # 1 (cleanliness)

We visited areas on the 2000 and 3000 floors. The overall impression was of an institution in which the areas frequented by the Sheriff Deputies was generally well maintained, but that the areas predominantly inhabited by the people incarcerated in the institution were disgustingly filthy. While the incarcerated people we interacted with clearly tried to keep their cells clean, their control over cleanliness is limited by the small refuse bags provided and the willingness of the Sheriff Deputies who manage the different parts of the jail to ensure that the refuse is collected. In general, the various barracks we visited on the third floor were dark and dirty. Worst of all was the third floor cafeteria, which had refuse piled from floor to ceiling in crates along two walls. It looked as if the contents of two dumpsters had been emptied in the facility. The sheer filth of these parts of the facility is a rebuke to its management: other parts of that facility, which predominantly serve the Sheriff Deputies and civilian staff, though dilapidated, were much better maintained and quite clean. The overall impression is one of disregard for the living conditions of the people incarcerated in Men's Central Jail.

Inspection Detail for # 1 (grievance process)

We visited the Grievance Unit on the 3000 floor. The unit was staffed by Sgt. Fernandez and four staff members who oversaw sorting the grievances and directing them to various departments for response. We spoke to the staff members to better understand the process. The staff reported they receive about 400-500 requests per week and 100-125 grievances on average, along with medical requests that go to the healthcare facility, using color-coded forms. Requests were defined as solicitations for services or goods such as special diets or for shoes. Grievances were defined as complaints about staff conduct. Medical requests are requests for medical services.

The color-coded forms are individually scrutinized for various unit-generated keywords to determine whether the right form has been filled out, and so whether to place the form in the request, grievance, or medical stack. The person processing those forms enters the forms into the computer system, which then directs the grievances to various departments around the Jail. The Sheriffs then respond to the grievance, and once they have responded, they have the person who filed the grievance sign off on the response. The five people working in this unit thus have limited control over the process: they direct the grievances to the appropriate officials, and then follow up if a department has not responded within a set period.

One major task is responding to grievances on Monday and Tuesday, where about 200 grievances on average accumulate over the weekend. The person processing those grievances usually manages to input about 120 per day into the computer system, which means that the backlog for directing grievances to the relevant departments gets cleared up by Tuesday of each week. If the person filing a request or grievance does not agree that the issue has been dealt with, they may appeal. If they continue to complain about the same issue, they receive a “duplicate” report, that states that the issue has been dealt with and appealed. Apparently, no signature is necessary to acknowledge receipt of this duplicate report. If an incarcerated person files too many grievances, they are placed on a disciplinary list that limits the number of grievances they can file to four per month.

A major concern raised by the people incarcerated in Men’s Central Jail (and the Los Angeles County Jail system more generally) is that their requests for services are ignored. As discussed elsewhere in the report, a core concern is that the request process is not taken seriously enough by the Jail staff. The Grievance Unit appears primarily to engage in a rough sorting of the requests and grievances and then some follow up if the staff do not timely respond to the requests and grievances. The problem with insufficient attention to reports appears to come after the sorting process happens—that is, outside this Unit—when the requests are sent to the various departments.

Inspection Detail: EBI

2900 is a special population module but it appears as though they are not eligible for any programming.