

New Jersey Juvenile Justice Commission Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Annual Report - 2017

The increased educational efforts of the NJ Juvenile Justice Commission (NJ JJC) related to PREA have led to a higher awareness by NJ JJC residents and staff, leading to greater reporting and accountability. The NJ JJC continues its efforts to implement best practices and promote zero tolerance for sexual abuse and sexual harassment of its residents.

In 2017, the average daily population of residents within the NJ JJC was 370. The rate of reported allegations of sexual abuse was 9.45 percent of the 2017 average daily population of residents. The NJ JJC thoroughly investigated each alleged incident reported in 2017.

While the NJ JJC's rate of reported incidents for 2017 was 9.45 percent, there were two substantiated cases of sexual abuse during that year. Specifically:

- In 2017, thirty-five (35) instances of alleged sexual abuse were documented with thirty-two unfounded¹ cases, two substantiated cases, and one unsubstantiated case.²

¹ An unfounded allegation means an allegation that was investigated and determined not to have occurred. An unsubstantiated allegation means an allegation that was investigated and the investigation produced insufficient evidence to make a final determination as to whether or not the event occurred. A substantiated allegation means an allegation that was investigated and determined to have occurred.

² In the two substantiated cases between NJ JJC residents, immediate corrective action was taken to address this issue, which included, but was not limited to, separating the residents and providing appropriate counselling services. The staff member allegedly involved in the unsubstantiated staff-on-youth sexual abuse case is no longer employed by NJ JJC.

The above numbers are also reflected in NJ JJC's Survey of Sexual Violence which the agency completes each year for the Bureau of Justice Statistics.

The NJ JJC publishes this annual report regarding PREA-related incidents and, where necessary, continues to improve the agency's prevention, detection, and response efforts. Enhanced emphasis on the agency's zero tolerance of resident sexual abuse has reinforced prompt reporting. The NJ JJC regularly conducts sexual abuse/assault incident reviews to determine if changes to or improvements in environmental, procedural, staffing, and monitoring technology are necessary.