



Prison Rape Elimination Act: 2023 Annual Report

Osceola County Corrections Department

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The Osceola County Corrections Department (OCCD) is committed to provide a safe, secure, and humane environment for the public, staff, and those requiring detention or supervision in Osceola County and meeting the requirements of the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003. This report is a summary of the agency's PREA compliance efforts.

Prison Rape Elimination Act: 2023 Annual Report

Purpose

Each year, an annual review is conducted to assess and improve the effectiveness of sexual abuse prevention, detection and response policies, practices, and training for the Osceola County Corrections Department, pursuant to §115.88 and §115.89 of the national PREA standards. Therein, the department is required to:

1. Review and aggregate incident-based sexual abuse data annually in order to improve the effectiveness of sexual abuse prevention, detection and response policies, practices, and training to include:
 - a. Identifying problem areas;
 - b. Taking corrective action on an on-going basis; and
 - c. Preparing an annual report of its findings.
2. Compare the current year's data and corrective actions with those from prior years and provide an assessment of the agency's progress in addressing sexual abuse.
3. Publish the annual report on the Osceola County website of its findings and corrective actions for the agency as a whole.

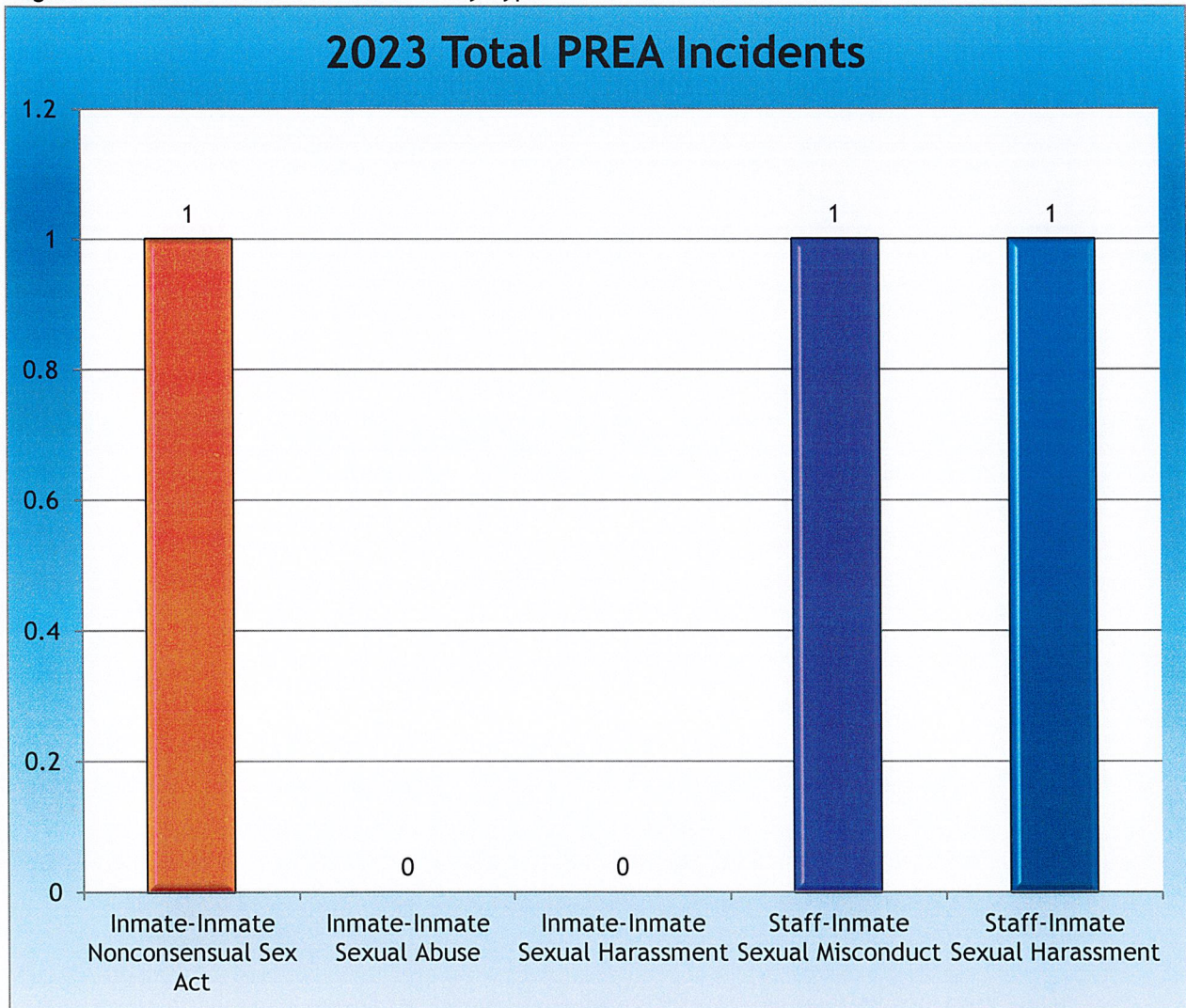
Prison Rape Elimination Act: 2023 Annual Report

Aggregate Data

The OCCD collects data from the referrals for investigation of sexual abuse/misconduct and sexual harassment; both inmate-on-inmate and staff-on-inmate. This section contains the aggregate data for calendar year 2023.

The following graph depicts a breakdown of the 2023 sexual abuse/misconduct and sexual harassment data by type, referencing both inmate-on-inmate and staff-on-inmate. This data includes all reported allegations at the facility in 2023. A total of three (3) allegations were reported during this time period.

Figure 1.1- 2023 PREA Case Breakdown by Type



Prison Rape Elimination Act: 2023 Annual Report

The two following graphs (Figure 2.1 & Figure 2.2) represent a comparison between calendar year 2022 and calendar year 2023 agency reports of sexual abuse/misconduct and sexual harassment. These totals include all the reports received, irrespective of their case dispositions. In 2022, the total was five (5) while the total in 2023 was three (3).

Figure 2.1- 2022 Total PREA Reports (5)

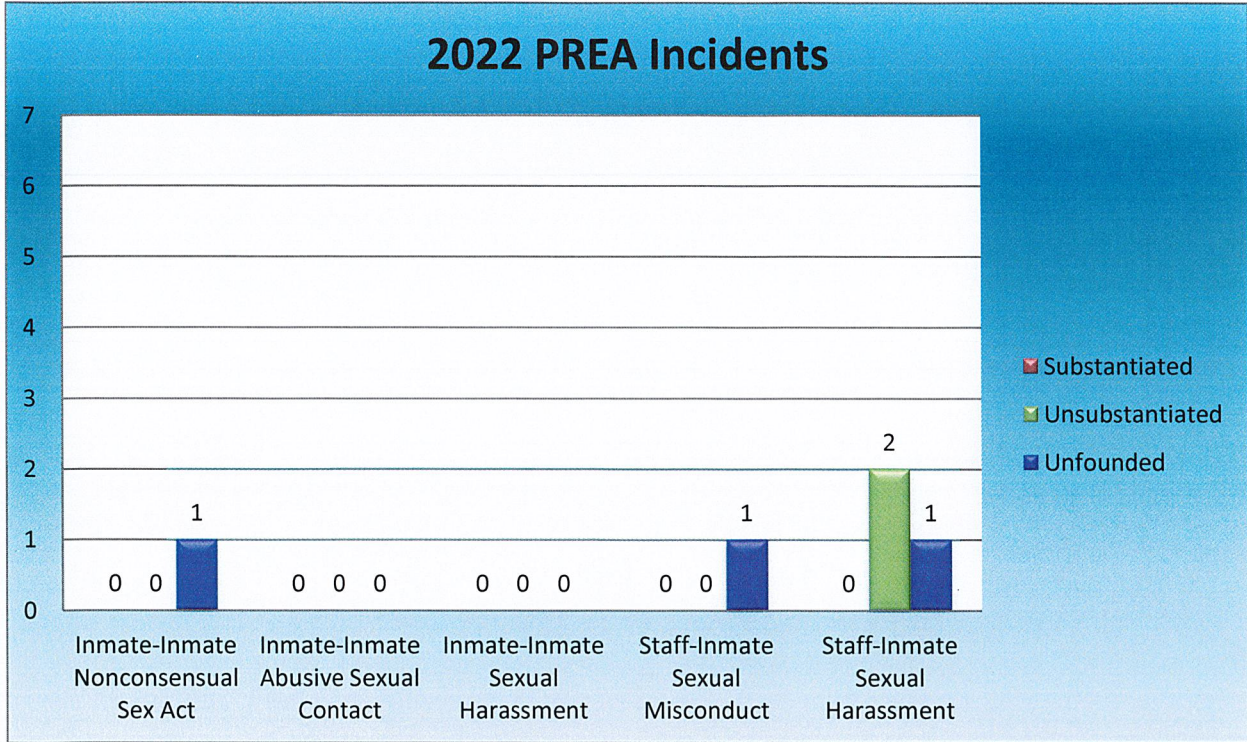
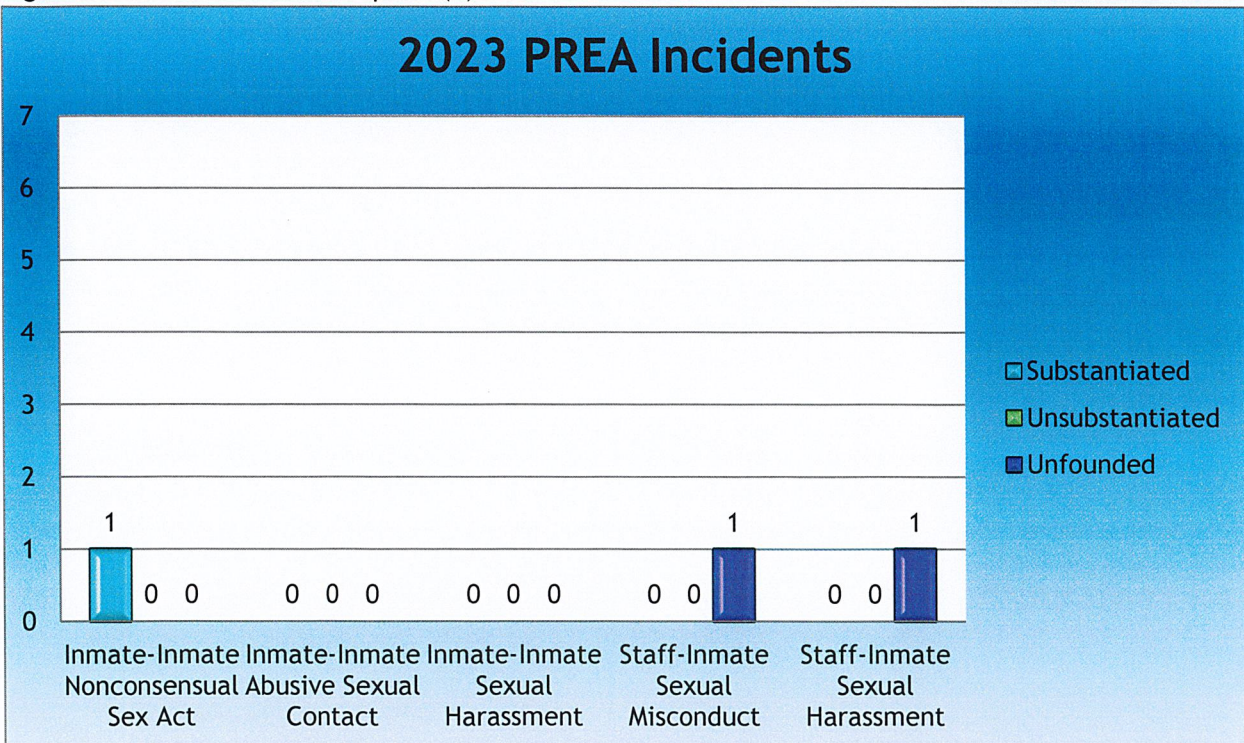


Figure 2.2- 2023 Total PREA Reports (3)

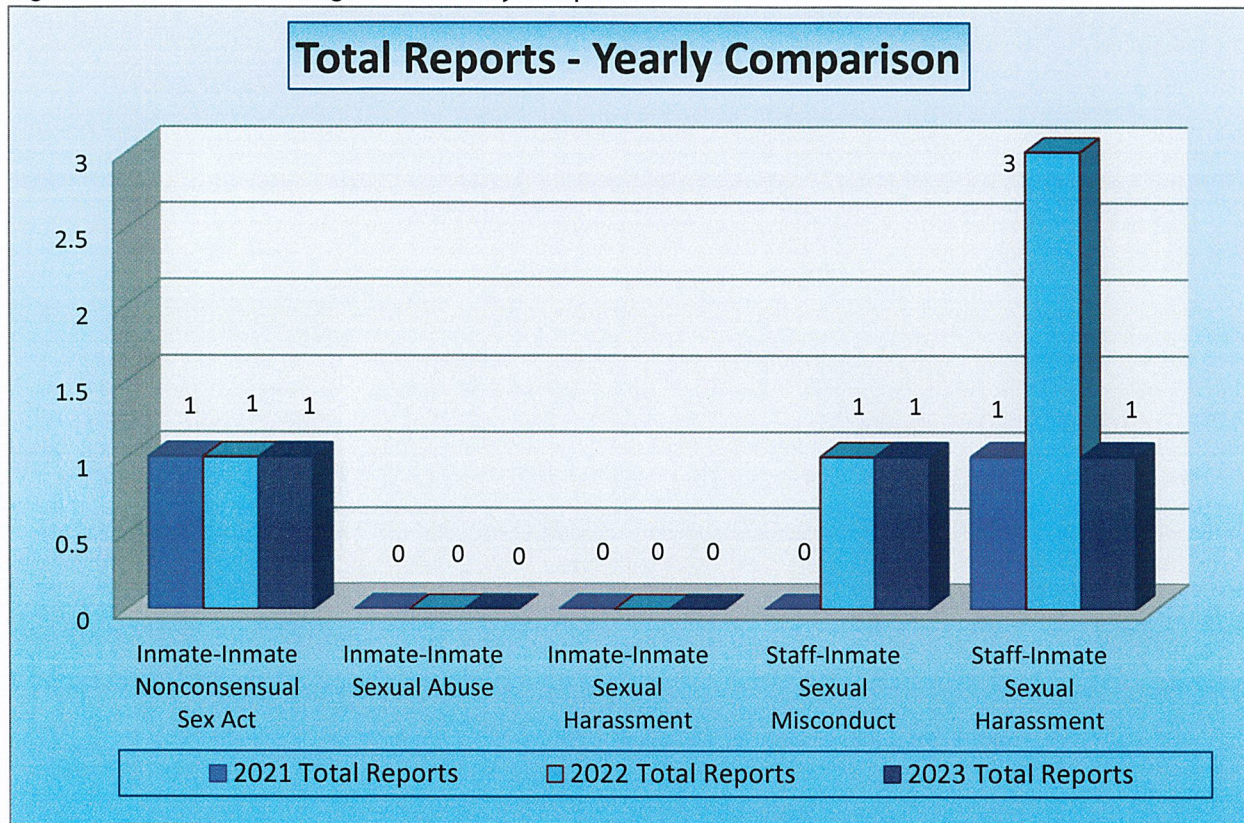


Prison Rape Elimination Act: 2023 Annual Report

Comparative Data Analysis

In 2023, facility functions returned to normal operations post pandemic, and the inmate population began to show an increase, nearing the pre-pandemic levels. Inmate movement was not limited, and Court functions were returning to normal operations. This provided opportunities for increased sexual abuse allegations. In 2023, however, there was another reduction in reported allegations, nearly back to the number reported in 2021. The chart below (Figure 3.1) compares the total number of allegations, in each category, over the three-year period, 2021 through 2023.

Figure 3.1- Total PREA Allegations - Yearly Comparison



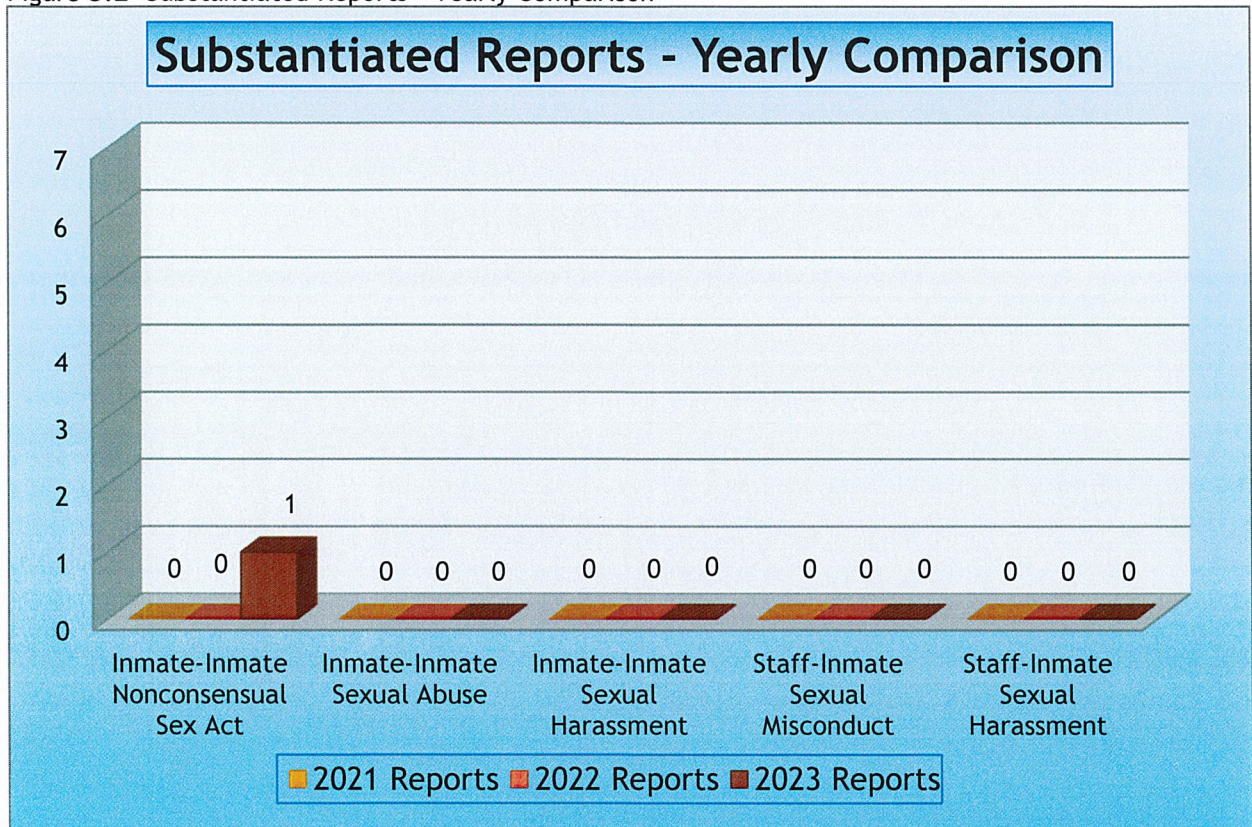
The agency continues to see a significant number of the annual allegations that are investigated and determined to be unfounded. In 2020, five (5) of the six (6) total reported allegations were unfounded. In 2021, one (1) of the two (2) allegations was determined to be unfounded. In 2022, four (4) of the five (5) allegations were determined to be unfounded. This trend continued in 2023, with two (2) of the three (3) total allegations determined to be unfounded. This finding of unfounded requires one of two things: conclusive evidence that the allegation was false or that the inmate who submitted the allegation was being untruthful. The ability to clearly identify that the allegation is false is a credit to the investigative process and the efforts to conduct thorough investigations. Notification to inmates regarding the outcome of the investigation helps to reinforce to the inmate population that the agency takes these allegations seriously and will exhaust all means possible to ensure inmates are not victimized while in our custody.

Prison Rape Elimination Act: 2023 Annual Report

If the investigation proves that an allegation of abuse or harassment has occurred, the allegation is determined to be substantiated. Following a three-year period with zero substantiated allegations, in 2023 there was one (1) substantiated allegation of an inmate-inmate nonconsensual sexual act.

The chart below (Figure 3.2) illustrates the number of substantiated allegations over the three-year period, 2021 through 2023.

Figure 3.2- Substantiated Reports - Yearly Comparison



This reported allegation of a physical act between two inmates was properly investigated by an outside law enforcement agency. The facility's video monitoring system had not captured the contact between the two inmates, but the investigation concluded that the offender did, in fact, touch the victim against his will. Criminal charges were properly filed against the offender.

Prison Rape Elimination Act: 2023 Annual Report

Corrective Actions

The Osceola County Corrections Department continuously monitors the safety of inmates through the review of incidents by the Sexual Abuse Incident Review Team. The team is comprised of the PREA Coordinator, Security Operations Major, Security Operations Captain, Classification Supervisor, Quality Risk Control Manager, Health Services Administrator, and Mental Health Director.

Each reported incident, regardless of the outcome, is reviewed by the team to determine:

- a. Whether the allegation indicates a need to change policy or practice;
- b. Whether the incident was motivated by a significant factor, such as race, gender, ethnicity, or gang affiliation;
- c. Whether physical barriers in the location where the incident occurred were a factor;
- d. Adequacy of staffing levels at the time of the incident; and
- e. Whether monitoring technology should be deployed or augmented in the area.

These reviews allow the agency to act and make any changes necessary to ensure the safety of all inmates. The department is dedicated to on-going monitoring and corrective action to sustain full PREA compliance.

To that end, the agency conducted and successfully passed, with full compliance, its third PREA audit in April 2023.

The agency has not identified any patterns of allegations or behavior based on the allegations of abuse in 2023. Therefore, no changes to our housing or staffing were recommended.

The agency continues to upgrade its substantial video monitoring system to provide the best opportunity to supplement the corrections officers' monitoring of inmates in the facility's housing units. Video monitoring enhances the safety for all inmates and staff. It is another tool that can be utilized to enhance safety and allow for a prompt response in the event of an emergency. In 2023, the agency continued to add additional cameras inside inmate cells and in staff work spaces. Outdated cameras were upgraded to digital cameras, which provide a clearer picture. This provides the agency with an excellent investigative tool when an allegation is made as well as a deterrent to improper conduct inside the inmate cells.

The agency will continue to provide annual training for all staff, volunteers, and contractors to reinforce the agency's commitment to the prevention, detection, and response to allegations of sexual abuse and sexual harassment.



Chief



PREA Coordinator



Date



Date