

2025 Peoria County Juvenile Detention Center Inspection Report

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ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

Executive Summary

The Department of Juvenile Justice conducted an annual inspection of the Peoria County Juvenile Detention Center on August 19, 2025 pursuant to 730 ILCS 5/3-15-2(b). The facility was found to be compliant with the sections and specific requirements of the 20 Ill. Adm. Code 2602 County Juvenile Detention Standards ("County Detention Standards").

Areas of Non-Compliance

None.

Methodology

- Interviews Conducted
 - Superintendent
 - Assistant Superintendent
 - Compliance Administrator
 - Youth Detention Specialist
 - Mental Health Practitioner
 - Nurse
 - Youth (4)
 - Educators (2)
- Documents Reviewed
 - Commissary Sheet
 - Contractual Employee Licenses
 - Changes to Behavior Management Program Log
 - Health Department Inspection (3/26/25)
 - Sample Confinement Records and Confinement Log
 - Sample Background Checks
 - Fire Drill Documentation
 - Sample Use of Physical Intervention Records
 - Youth Grievance Log
 - Sample Employee Training Records
 - Daily Schedules

Overview

The Peoria County Juvenile Detention Center is a 63-bed facility located in Peoria, Illinois. The facility has three living pods (A, B, and C). Each pod has three separate living spaces surrounding a dayroom. Each pod has a separate outdoor recreation space accessible from the pod dayroom. The facility had 30 youth at the time of inspection. Administrators have continued to focus on staff recruitment and retention. An educational waiver is still in place from the Administrative Office of Illinois Courts (AOIC) to assist with broadening the applicant pool. At the time of the inspection, there were eight Youth Detention

Specialist (YDS) openings. The facility has also been approved for an additional Assistant Superintendent role to serve as an Evidence-based Coordinator.

The facility has two gyms. One of which contains weight-training equipment and a school area with multiple classrooms. Overall, the facility is in good physical condition. Many walls in the facility are decorated with murals, most of which reflect different portions of the facility cognitive-behavior program.

The facility was found to be in full compliance with the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) in its most recent formal audit conducted in 2022.

Admission Policy and Procedures

The Peoria County Juvenile Detention Center offers 24-hour coverage for admissions. Youth property is collected, inventoried, and laundered in accordance with County Detention Standards.

The facility ended the practice of conducting strip searches as routine practice during admission in 2014; only conducting them when there is an individualized need identified. The facility has an established tracking mechanism for all strip searches that are conducted, including the name of the supervisory staff that approved the search.

The facility has a Youth Orientation Manual that includes a broad overview of programming and rules. Youth receive an orientation by facility staff that includes information on PREA.

Nursing staff complete physicals for all youth within seven days of admission. Youth medication is approved by the on-call physician. Medication distribution is managed by nursing staff and storage of medication is compliant with County Detention Standards. A dentist is on-site at the facility once per month and conducts dental exams for youth.

Detention Programs, Youth Discipline, and Confinement

The facility has several programs in place to develop youth skills. The facility has started a partnership with Liberation Library, and several youth were carrying books provided by them during interviews. The facility manages a token economy system. Youth earn points in different behavioral categories throughout time blocks during the day, which in turn are converted into behavior levels once per week. Privileges associated with higher levels include increased items permitted in rooms, later bedtimes, and access to video games. The facility has opened an "Honor's Unit" over the past year for youth who achieve and maintain the highest behavioral level. Youth assigned to the Honor's Unit have access to additional privileges, such as daily phone calls, a "pop-a-shot" machine, and Playstation 5. Youth also earn "coupons" for exhibiting positive behaviors. Coupons can be redeemed through a commissary that contains a variety of items, including snacks, treats, durags, and bonnets. Youth are also permitted to have pencils in their rooms and are provided with grievance and sick call forms.

The facility uses a timeout system to address negative behavior. Timeouts generally last 15 minutes or less; with more egregious behaviors requiring completion of a CBT tool called “Rational Self Analysis.” This tool prompts residents to identify irrational thoughts that contribute to inappropriate behavior and focus on more rational beliefs when handling similar situations in the future. The facility has an active, intentional process for reviewing the behavior management program through a Behavior Management Committee that meets once per month. The committee includes both facility staff and youth. All youth confinements are tracked in the facility case management system.

The facility no longer utilizes a “Special Group Status (SGS).” Instead, the facility has moved to classifying egregious behaviors as Tier 1 or Tier 2. Significant incidents no longer require implementation of an individualized plan, and youth are reintegrated back into programming much more expeditiously. Youth confinement is well-managed at the facility and well within County Detention Standards. Based upon staff and youth reports as well as confinement documentation, most confinements are short term and do not exceed three hours in duration.

In addition to the behavior management program, the facility continues to provide several other sources of daily programming for youth. Detention staff facilitate four focus groups per day (two on each shift). Group topics are assigned via 21-days of lesson plans to match the average length of stay. Groups are facilitated through the school and YDSs. The facility also has volunteers who provide regular programming.

Family visits are permitted both in-person and via zoom. Families can schedule visits online via Microsoft Bookings, where they can choose from available times and select if they prefer a contact or virtual visit.

Medical and Health Care

Medical services are provided through a contract with Advanced Correctional Healthcare (ACH). The contract includes on-site nursing coverage for 63 hours per week. Nursing staff are present at the facility nine hours per day/seven days per week. All youth receive a physical within seven days of admission. A physician is on-site twice per week and on-call 24-hours a day. A physician reviews and approves medication prescriptions. Dentistry services are provided once per month through the Peoria Health Department. The facility’s medical and mental health services have been accredited through the National Commission on Correctional Healthcare (NCCHC).

Mental Health Services

Mental health services are provided through a contract with ACH. A full-time Mental Health Practitioner (MHP) is on-site full-time. All youth receive a mental health assessment within seven days of admission, which is logged in the electronic medical records system and determines if the youth is placed on the mental health caseload. Treatment plans are developed for youth on the caseload to guide treatment. Youth who are not on the caseload are able to request services at any time via the facility sick call process.

Education

There are four educators working at the facility, three of which are employees of the Limestone School District 310. The fourth teacher is a special education teacher from the Special Education Association of Peoria County. The facility uses a blend of direct instruction and online education through the Edgenuity Credit Recovery System. Direct instruction takes place Mondays through Thursdays. Online work takes place on Fridays. School was in session at the time of the inspection. The school schedule consists of 45-minute periods that rotate between Math, Science, History, and English classes. Youth start attending classes immediately upon admission. The school district has a process in place to obtain youth transcripts from home schools; a process that usually takes no more than one day. Teachers take attendance and submit grades which are shared with home schools upon release. On the day of the inspection there were four youth at the facility with active IEPs.

The facility is taking steps to expand educational services by offering career and technical programming. Some youth at the facility are receiving CPR and food handler certificates by completing required training courses. The facility is also pursuing a grant to procure a Caterpillar simulator to help youth learn bridge skills to local employment. The facility is still seeking to become certified by the Correctional Education Association (CEA).