

2024 Champaign County Juvenile Detention Center Inspection Report

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Executive Summary

The Department of Juvenile Justice conducted an annual inspection of the Champaign County Juvenile Detention Center on November 4, 2024, pursuant to 730 ILCS 5/3-15-2(b). The sections and specific requirements of the 20 Ill. Adm. Code 2602 County Juvenile Detention Standards (“County Detention Standards”) noted as non-compliant are listed in the table below, while specific observations are noted in the following sections of this report. Each section of the report also includes policy and practice recommendations to either gain compliance or move towards best practice. Those recommendations are combined in a second table at the end of the report.

Areas of Non-Compliance

Section	Requirement
2602.170 Discipline	Room confinement shall not be used for a fixed period of time, but only until the youth is calm enough to rejoin programming without being a risk to the safety of others. Supervisory staff shall be notified immediately when room confinement is used. At no time should room confinement exceed 4 hours without administrators and/or mental health staff developing an individualized plan to address the behavior.
2602.210 Visiting	Visits shall be contact visits unless specific concerns preclude contact visits for identified individuals.
2602.230 Education	The educational authority must ensure that: IEPs are in place for youth with special education status. Teachers shall follow the IEP and document the progress.
2602.50 Admissions Procedures	The agency shall also provide at least one way for youth to report abuse or harassment to a public or private entity or office that is not part of the agency and that is able to receive and immediately forward resident reports of sexual abuse and sexual harassment to agency officials, allowing the resident to remain anonymous upon request.
2602.90 Mental Health Services	All facilities shall employ or contract with qualified mental health professionals to address the needs of youth identified in the mental health screening, as well as needs that arise during the period of confinement. Services shall meet or exceed the community level of care.

Methodology

- Interviews Conducted
 - Superintendent
 - Educators (2)
 - Supervisor

- Youth (5)
- Corrections Officer (1)
- Nurse
- Mental Health Practitioner

- Documents Reviewed
 - Sample Youth Files
 - Sample Incident Reports
 - Sample Employee Background Checks
 - Dietary Menu
 - Educator Credentials
 - Fire Inspection Report (8/21/24)
 - Sample Employee CPR Certificates
 - School Schedule
 - Medical and Mental Health Licenses
 - Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Policies
 - Sample Employee Training Records
 - Program Schedule
 - Fire Drill Documentation
 - Behavior Management Grading Criteria Handbook
 - Resident Orientation Handbook
 - Room Confinement Policy

Overview

The Champaign County Juvenile Detention Center is a 40-bed facility with two close-observation rooms. The current rated capacity is 25 youth.

Personnel, Staffing and Supervision

The facility Superintendent reported that maintaining sufficient staffing levels has been a significant challenge over the past year. At the time of the audit, the facility employed 20 Detention Officers (three of which are on light duty and five are in training) six Assistant Superintendents that supervise shifts and have specialized roles, such as operations management and Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) oversight. Staffing levels have been a consistent problem throughout the year, so much so that both the facility Superintendent and the Probation Director have been covering shifts on a regular basis. There have been some instances in which only one or no detention officer has been present for a shift. With an average shift operating with three detention officers and a supervisor; administrators would prefer to have at least five detention officers on every shift. Recruitment has improved in recent months, with five new staff hired in October and several interviews being conducted. The county has also put together recruitment videos to increase application submission. The facility has stopped accepting out of county admissions to manage the population size. Staffing problems have impacted operations as outlined later in the report.

Admission Policy and Procedures

The facility has made improvements towards compliance with the PREA-related portions of the County Detention Standards. All youth receive an assessment for risk of victimization upon intake. However, despite administrator efforts to find one, there is no contract in place for youth to make confidential reports to a neutral third party. In July 2024, a Metrasens contraband detector was purchased and placed into use during the intake process for searches to produce a thorough search without subjecting youth to a strip search.

Areas of Non-Compliance and Recommendations

- 2602.50 Admissions Procedures states: “The agency shall also provide at least one way for youth to report abuse or harassment to a public or private entity or office that is not part of the agency and that is able to receive and immediately forward resident reports of sexual abuse and sexual harassment to agency officials, allowing the resident to remain anonymous upon request.”
 - Recommendation:
 - Contract with a third-party entity for youth to report abuse or harassment in a confidential manner.

Detention Programs, Youth Discipline, and Confinement

The 2023 Inspection Report cited several improvements to the volume and quality of programming available to youth. Some of these improvements have been maintained or enhanced. Adjustments were made to the youth behavior program, programming hours were changed to remove any break periods, and all residents have the option to be involved in programming from 8:30am until 9:00pm. Showers begin for all residents at 9:00pm regardless of their level within the behavior management system. Bedtime was changed to 10:00pm for all residents with the opportunity for higher level residents to extend the bedtime to 10:30pm on weekdays and 11:00pm on weekends. The facility also deployed tablets for residents to use to have daily calls with family members. These tablets also have the capability to make anonymous and confidential calls to the PREA reporting agency. The tablets were not in use at the time of the audit, as the vendor was in the process of enhancing security features. These tablets will have a positive impact on youth contact with family and access to private reporting. Some additional programming improvements from 2023 have fallen off, as some volunteer and outside agencies are no longer able provide programming to youth. Administrators are seeking alternatives.

The facility has made improvements to the use of behaviorally driven confinement. In January of 2024, the Room Confinement policy was rewritten. Room confinement is no longer used for a fixed period of time, and only used when absolutely necessary for the safety of the resident or others. The Administrative Intervention Program policy was rewritten. The program has been changed to an individualized program with the resident setting goals for themselves. An individualized plan will be developed to reintegrate the resident back into the general population rather than use of a predetermined timeframe before reintegration found in the former policy. Staffing challenges have contributed to operationally driven confinements. Confinement documentation, youth and staff reports all indicate that youth are confined due to low staffing numbers during certain times.

The facility offers family visitation three days per week; however, all visitation is non-contact despite the County Detention Standard requirement for visitation to be contact.

Areas of Non-Compliance and Recommendations

- 2602.170 Discipline states: “Room confinement shall not be used for a fixed period of time, but only until the youth is calm enough to rejoin programming without being a risk to the safety of others. Supervisory staff shall be notified immediately when room confinement is used. At no time should room confinement exceed 4 hours without administrators and/or mental health staff developing an individualized plan to address the behavior.”
 - Recommendations:
 - Continue efforts to increase staffing levels in the facility to prevent the use of operationally driven confinement.
- 2602.210 Visiting states: “Visits shall be contact visits unless specific concerns preclude contact visits for identified individuals.”
 - Recommendations:
 - Permit youth to have contact visits with family unless specific concerns preclude contact visits for identified individuals.

Youth Grievances

The facility has a youth grievance process in place. Youth were familiar with the process, and it is outlined in the Detainee Handbook. Grievance boxes have been placed in the common library area near the classrooms, dining room, and intake area. The facility maintains a log to retain copies of youth grievances.

Medical and Health Care

Nursing coverage is provided via a contract with Advanced Correctional Healthcare (ACH). Nurses are on-site from 8am – 11am, seven days per week, and on call 24 hours per day. A medical doctor is on-site once per week. Medical documentation had all required information, including the appropriate consents and referrals to the medical doctor and/or psychiatrist when needed. The facility has a method by which it monitors youth who are sick at the facility. Medication management was compliant with County Detention Standards.

Mental Health Services

The facility entered a contract with ACH in April 2022 for mental health services coverage, which calls for twelve hours of mental health services per week (facility administrators can add hours on an as-needed basis). The mental health practitioner (MHP) is typically on-site two days per week and meets with all new youth to complete an initial mental health screening and suicide assessment. She also conducts a weekly group based on a 25-week Dialectical Behavior Training (DBT) curriculum. The facility was on week four of that curriculum at the time of the inspection.

While it is commendable that the facility entered a contract for mental health services to be provided and increased the number of hours of availability, twelve hours over two days is likely insufficient to cover the need at the facility. An increase in the number of hours available to the MHP or addition of MHPs will be necessary to meet the needs of the youth.

Areas of Non-Compliance and Recommendations

- Section 2602.90 Mental Health Services states: “All facilities shall employ or contract with qualified mental health professionals to address the needs of youth identified in the mental health screening, as well as needs that arise during the period of confinement. Services shall meet or exceed the community level of care.”
 - Recommendations
 - Increase the number of mental health hours provided to youth at the facility.

Education

Facility educators are employees of the Regional Office of Education (ROE). At the time of the inspection there were only two full-time educators employed. Classes run from 8:30am – 2:30pm consisting of six 45-minute class periods. Attendance is taken through IGrade Plus although the ROE is switching to the Teacher Ease System this school year to track attendance and grades. Despite some staffing challenges identified earlier in the report, the facility has largely managed to avoid school cancellations during the current school year. Classrooms were in good condition. The facility has purchased new desks, and the classroom walls were freshly painted two years ago.

Since the 2023 Inspection, the ROE has assigned a staff member to obtain youth educational records from youth home schools. The ROE has access to youth IEPs which are shared with educators at the facility. Neither educator has a special education endorsement.

Areas of Non-Compliance and Recommendations

- 2602.230 Education states: “The educational authority must ensure that: IEPs are in place for youth with special education status. Teachers shall follow the IEP and document the progress.”
 - Recommendation:
 - Hire an additional certified special education teacher.

Recommendations

Section	Recommendations
Admissions Policies and Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract with a third-party entity for youth to report abuse or harassment in a confidential manner.
Discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue efforts to increase staffing levels in the facility to prevent the use of operationally driven confinement.
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire an additional certified special education teacher.
Mental Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of mental health hours provided to youth at the facility.