

# 2022 St. Clair County Juvenile Detention Center Inspection Report

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## Executive Summary

The Department of Juvenile Justice conducted an annual inspection of the St. Clair County Juvenile Detention Center on August 3, 2022, pursuant to 730 ILCS 5/3-15-2(b). The Department observed some areas of strength during the review, including strong staffing levels. There were some areas non-compliance observed as well. 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	All facilities shall have a developmentally appropriate, research informed behavioral management program that supports the development of pro-social skills and provides positive reinforcement for good behavior. The program shall provide opportunities for immediate recognition of pro-social behavior as well as meaningful incentives and rewards for improvement and maintenance of desired behavior. The program shall also include potential sanctions for negative behavior that are developmentally appropriate, research informed, proportionate and fair. . Room confinement may be used only as a temporary response to behavior that threatens the safety of the youth and others. 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.
2602.50 Admissions Procedures	Following admission, a strip search may be administered only when there is an individualized, reasonable suspicion. . Within 72 hours after the youth’s arrival at the facility and periodically throughout a youth’s confinement, the agency shall obtain and use information about each youth’s personal history and behavior to reduce the risk of sexual abuse by or upon a resident. Assessments shall be conducted using an objective screening instrument

## Methodology

- Interviews Conducted
  - Superintendent
  - Assistant Superintendent

- Mental Health Professional
- Six youth
- Four Corrections Officers
- Training Coordinator
- Documents Reviewed
  - School District 189 School Schedule
  - Fire Department Inspection
  - Health Department Inspection
  - Nursing Credentials
  - Use of Force Policy
  - Confinement Policy
  - Youth Orientation Sheet
  - Daily Medicine Distribution Logs
  - Sick Call Logs
  - Sample Training Records

## **Overview**

The St. Clair Juvenile Detention Center is a 53-bed facility located in Belleville, IL. The on-site portion of the inspection took place on August 3, 2022. The facility has eight living units surrounding a control room, a gym, outdoor space, classrooms, and multi-purpose rooms.

## **Admission Policy and Procedures**

The St. Clair Juvenile Detention Center conducts intakes 24-hours per day. All youth are strip searched upon intake. County Detention Standards permit strip searches of youth upon admission only when there is an individualized, reasonable suspicion of weapons, contraband, or body pests.

The facility has an Orientation Sheet that is provided to youth. The sheet is only two pages long and is dated 2013. It explains rules youth must follow, confinement, visitation information, and grievance procedures. The orientation is lacking in detail in areas of youth rights and Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) standards.

Youth complete a Mental Status Information Form upon intake that captures information on mental health and substance abuse backgrounds. The information is forwarded to the Mental Health Practitioner (MHP) if needed. County Detention Standards require completion of a Risk for Victimization Assessment during the intake process. This is not yet in place at the facility.

## **Areas of Non-Compliance and Recommendations**

- 2602.50 Admissions Procedures states: “Following admission, a strip search may be administered only when there is an individualized, reasonable suspicion. . . Within 72 hours after the youth’s arrival at the facility and periodically throughout a youth’s confinement, the agency

shall obtain and use information about each youth's personal history and behavior to reduce the risk of sexual abuse by or upon a resident. Assessments shall be conducted using an objective screening instrument."

- Recommendations:
  - Eliminate the use of strip searches as a standard process during intake.
  - Implement the PREA Risk for Victimization Assessment for youth within 72 hours of admission and periodically throughout a youth's confinement.
  - Hire a PREA Officer to supervise facility compliance with PREA standards.

### **Personnel, Staffing and Supervision**

On the date of the inspection, the facility housed nine total youth, with four Corrections Officers and one Supervisor on duty. In total, the facility employed 26 staff with one additional part-time transportation staff. While many county facilities have struggled with hiring over the past few years, the St. Clair Juvenile Detention Center has been able to maintain adequate staffing numbers, well above the minimum staffing levels required by standards.

### **Detention Programs, Youth Discipline, and Confinement**

The facility changed administrators over the past year. The new administration ended the previous behavior management and incentive system but has not replaced it with a new one. At the time of the inspection, there was not an active behavior management or incentive system in place to build skills and promote positive behavior amongst the youth. The facility does not have an active token economy system with any kind of positive reinforcement or commissary to reward youth.

The facility does utilize a confinement-based approach to youth sanctions, typically in eight, 16, and 24-hour increments. The facility control room has several magnets that are placed outside of youth room doors to indicate when youth are on confinement. During the walkthrough, one youth was in his room and had a "24" magnet on his room door. Staff and youth reported he had been placed on confinement the previous day. Staff and youth indicated that youth sleeping hours do not "count" towards a youth's confinement so, in practice, a youth sanctioned to serve 24 hours of confinement serves closer to 36 hours. The Youth Orientation Sheet indicates confinement can last up to 24 hours for violating rules.

At the time of the audit the nine youth at the facility were spread out amongst many of the eight living units (one living unit was undergoing maintenance). Some youth were alone in the dayrooms with employees monitoring from outside the dayroom through windows. Youth do go to the gym in groups once per day and sometimes recreate in groups in dayrooms, however some youth reported experiencing a lot of isolation even when out of their rooms during the day.

### **Areas of Non-Compliance and Recommendations**

- 2602.170 Discipline states: "All facilities shall have a developmentally appropriate, research informed behavioral management program that supports the development of pro-social skills and provides positive reinforcement for good behavior. The program shall provide opportunities for immediate recognition of pro-social behavior as well as meaningful incentives and rewards

for improvement and maintenance of desired behavior. The program shall also include potential sanctions for negative behavior that are developmentally appropriate, research informed, proportionate and fair. . .Room confinement may be used only as a temporary response to behavior that threatens the safety of the youth and others. Room confinement shall not be used for a fixed period, 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:
  - Implement a behavior management program that includes positive reinforcement for good behavior.
    - Develop and implement training materials for staff.
    - Incorporate information about the behavior management program into youth orientation materials.
  - End the practice of using eight-, 16-, and 24-hour confinements for youth.
  - Develop and implement a policy that states room confinement may not be used for a fixed amount of time, requires supervisory staff notification, and ends as soon as the youth is calm enough to rejoin programming.
    - Develop a method for tracking all youth confinements, including the reason for the confinement, start and end times, approving supervisors, and documentation of youth behaviors impacting the decisions to maintain or release a youth from confinement.

### **Medical and Health Care**

The facility has two part-time nurses on-site approximately every other day. There is a local doctor on contract to provide services for youth when needed. Medication is distributed by facility staff and documented on a distribution log. The same log contains a sick call portion where youth requesting medical services are listed along with the complaint.

### **Mental Health Services**

Mental health services are provided through Chestnut Behavioral Health. Youth are screened using a Mental Status Form upon intake. If any areas of concern are flagged, the facility superintendent is contacted to determine if a youth will receive an Illinois Medicaid Comprehensive Assessment of Needs and Strengths (IM+CANS) Assessment. Youth are referred to the Chestnut caseload based on the results of the assessment.

The assigned MHP had been with the facility for approximately one month and was present at the facility meeting with youth during the inspection. Youth on the Chestnut Caseload receive individual treatment services, including a treatment plan.

### **Education**

Educational services are offered through the East St. Louis School District and operate off the School District 189 Schedule. Summer school is offered to youth as well. There are two primary educators posted at the facility.

**Additional Notes**

Since the time of the on-site visit, the facility begun development of a level-based program for youth to address some of the non-compliant around in the discipline category. DJJ has provided some feedback on the program and the facility is actively working to implement improvements.

**Recommendations**

Section	Recommendations
Admissions Policies and Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate the use of strip searches as a standard process during intake.</li> <li>• Implement the PREA Risk for Victimization Assessment for youth within 72 hours of admission and periodically throughout a youth’s confinement.</li> <li>• Hire a PREA Officer to supervise facility compliance with PREA standards.</li> </ul>
Discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement a behavior management program that includes positive reinforcement for good behavior.</li> <li>• Develop and implement training materials for staff.</li> <li>• Incorporate information about the behavior management program into youth orientation materials.</li> <li>• End the practice of using eight-, 16-, and 24-hour confinements for youth.</li> <li>• Develop and implement policy that states room confinement may not be used for a fixed amount of time, requires supervisory staff notification, and ends as soon as the youth is calm enough to rejoin programming.</li> <li>• Develop a method for tracking all youth confinements, including the reason for the confinement, start and end times, approving supervisors, and documentation of youth behaviors impacting the decisions to maintain or release a youth from confinement.</li> </ul>