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U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Office of Professional Responsibility
ICE Inspections
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Office of Detention Oversight
Unannounced Follow-Up Compliance
Inspection
2023-004-136

Enforcement and Removal Operations
ERO Houston Field Office

Joe Corley Processing Center
Conroe, Texas

June 13-15, 2023

UNANNOUNCED FOLLOW-UP COMPLIANCE INSPECTION
of the
JOE CORLEY PROCESSING CENTER
Conroe, Texas

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UNANNOUNCED FOLLOW-UP COMPLIANCE INSPECTION TEAM MEMBERS



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FACILITY OVERVIEW

The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) Office of Detention Oversight (ODO) conducted an unannounced follow-up compliance inspection of the Joe Corley Processing Center (JCPC) in Conroe, Texas, from June 13 to 15, 2023.¹ This inspection focused on the standards found deficient during ODO's last inspection of JCPC from January 10 to 12, 2023. The facility opened in 2008 and is owned and operated by GEO Group, Inc. (GEO). The ICE Office of Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) began housing detainees at JCPC in 2008 under the oversight of ERO's Field Office Director in Houston (ERO Houston). The facility operates under the National Detention Standards (NDS) 2019.

[REDACTED] A facility administrator handles daily facility operations and manages [REDACTED] support personnel. GEO provides food services and medical care, and Keefe Commissary provides commissary services at the facility. The facility was accredited by the American Correctional Association in January 2019 and the National Commission on Correctional Health Care in June 2018. In June 2018, JCPC was audited for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) and was DHS PREA certified.

| Capacity and Population Statistics | Quantity |
|---|------------|
| ICE Bed Capacity ² | [REDACTED] |
| Average ICE Population ³ | [REDACTED] |
| Adult Male Population (as of June 13, 2023) | [REDACTED] |
| Adult Female Population (as of June 13, 2023) | [REDACTED] |

During its last full inspection, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, ODO found one deficiency in the following area: Transportation by Land (1).

¹ This facility holds male detainees with low, medium-low, and high security classification levels for periods greater than 72 hours.

² Data Source: ERO Facility List as of June 12, 2023.

³ *Ibid.*

UNANNOUNCED FOLLOW-UP COMPLIANCE INSPECTION PROCESS

ODO conducts oversight inspections of ICE detention facilities with an average daily population of 10 or more detainees, and where detainees are housed for longer than 72 hours, to assess compliance with ICE National Detention Standards. These inspections focus solely on facility compliance with detention standards that directly affect detainee life, health, safety, and/or well-being. In FY 2021, to meet congressional requirements, ODO began conducting follow-up inspections at all ICE ERO detention facilities, which ODO inspected earlier in the FY.⁴

While unannounced follow-up inspections are intended to focus on previously identified deficiencies, ODO will conduct a complete review of several core standards, which may include but are not limited to Medical Care, Hunger Strikes, Suicide Prevention, Food Service, Environmental Health and Safety, Emergency Plans, Use of Force and Restraints/Use of Physical Control Measures and Restraints, Admission and Release, Classification, and Funds and Personal Property. ODO may decide to conduct a second full inspection of a facility in the same FY based on additional information obtained prior to ODO's arrival on-site. Factors ODO will consider when deciding to conduct a second full inspection will include the total number of deficiencies cited during the first inspection, the number of deficient standards found during the first inspection, the completion status of the first inspection's uniform corrective action plan (UCAP), and other information ODO obtains from internal and external sources ahead of the follow-up compliance inspection. Conditions found during the inspection may also lead ODO to assess new areas and identify new deficiencies or areas of concern should facility practices run contrary to ICE standards. Any areas found non-compliant during both inspections are annotated as "Repeat Deficiencies" in this report.

⁴ ODO reviews the facility's compliance with selected standards in their entirety.

FINDINGS BY NATIONAL DETENTION STANDARDS 2019 MAJOR CATEGORIES

| NDS 2019 Standards Inspected ^{5,6} | Deficiencies |
|---|--------------|
| Part 1 - Safety | |
| Environmental Health and Safety | 0 |
| Transportation by Land | 1 |
| Sub-Total | 1 |
| Part 2 - Security | |
| Admission and Release | 0 |
| Custody Classification System | 0 |
| Facility Security and Control | 1 |
| Funds and Personal Property | 0 |
| Use of Force and Restraints | 0 |
| Special Management Units | 0 |
| Staff Detainee Communication | 0 |
| Sub-Total | 1 |
| Part 4 - Care | |
| Food Service | 0 |
| Medical Care | 0 |
| Personal Hygiene | 0 |
| Significant Self-Harm and Suicide Prevention and Intervention | 2 |
| Terminal Illness and Death | 0 |
| Sub-Total | 2 |
| Part 5 - Activities | |
| Recreation | 0 |
| Telephone Access | 0 |
| Sub-Total | 0 |
| Part 6 - Justice | |
| Grievance System | 0 |
| Sub-Total | 0 |
| Total Deficiencies | 4 |

⁵ For greater detail on ODO's findings, see the *Unannounced Follow-Up Compliance Inspection Findings* section of this report.

⁶ Beginning in FY 2022, ODO instituted a process of rotating all standards on a 3-year basis. As a result, some standard components may not be present in all standards.

DETAINEE RELATIONS

ODO interviewed 37 detainees, who each voluntarily agreed to participate. None of the detainees made allegations of discrimination, mistreatment, or abuse. Most detainees reported satisfaction with facility services except for the concerns listed below.

Funds and Personal Property: One detainee stated he needed to retrieve his cellular telephone from his personal property to obtain important phone numbers.

- Action Taken: ODO interviewed an ERO Houston DO and facility intake officer (IO), reviewed the ICE detainee request logs and grievance submissions from January 10 to June 14, 2023, and confirmed the detainee had not submitted a request to obtain telephone numbers from his cellular telephone that the facility stored with his personal property. On June 14, 2023, the DO and IO assisted the detainee with obtaining the needed telephone numbers and ODO confirmed with the detainee he was able to retrieve the information he needed.

Telephone Access: One detainee stated the facility's telephones could not connect with certain telephone numbers in his native county of Iran.

- Action Taken: ODO interviewed the site administrative technician (SAT), reviewed the detainee's file, and confirmed the detainee's home country is Iran. On June 14, 2023, ODO tested and successfully contacted the Iranian consulate. On the same day, ODO spoke with the SAT and JCPC IT staff and confirmed the blocking of certain Iranian phone numbers. ODO and the SAT spoke with the detainee, received his requested numbers, and the SAT added them to the approved call list. On June 14, 2023, ODO spoke with the detainee, tested the phone numbers, and the detainee successfully contacted those numbers.

UNANNOUNCED FOLLOW-UP COMPLIANCE INSPECTION FINDINGS

SAFETY

TRANSPORTATION BY LAND (TL)

ODO reviewed 25 Order to Detain or Release forms (Form I-203) for transports and found in 2 out of 25 forms, the ICE official did not sign the form (**Deficiency TL-4**⁷).

⁷ "Detainees should not be transported to/from any facility, including ICE/ERO detention facilities, unless a Form G-391, I-216, or I-203, or equivalent, is furnished to authorize the transportation. These forms must be properly signed and shall clearly indicate the name of the detainee(s), the place or places to be escorted, the purpose of the trip and other information necessary to carry out the detail efficiently." See ICE NDS 2019, Standard, Transportation by Land, Section (II)(A).

SECURITY

FACILITY SECURITY AND CONTROL (FSC)

ODO reviewed five JCPC cell search logs and found in two out of five logs, three occurrences where facility staff did not document the second shift searching officer's name in the log for C Hall on June 3 and 6, 2023, and in the A-Hall on June 10, 2023 (**Deficiency FSC-11⁸**).

CARE

SIGNIFICANT SELF-HARM AND SUICIDE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION (SSHSPI)

ODO observed six cells the facility used for constant monitoring and found Cell Number 459 contained a partially removed communication box cover that could facilitate a suicide attempt (**Deficiency SSHSPI-20⁹**). **This is a priority component.**

Corrective Action: Prior to the completion of the inspection, the facility initiated corrective action. Facility staff replaced the damaged communication box (**C-1**).

ODO reviewed two detainee medical files for detainees requiring close supervision and found in one out of two medical files, one instance of a detainee's monitoring interval documented at 20 minutes instead of 15 minutes, as required by standard (**Deficiency SSHSPI-21¹⁰**). **This is a priority component.**

CONCLUSION

During this unannounced follow-up inspection, ODO assessed the facility's compliance with 17 standards under NDS 2019 and found the facility in compliance with 14 of those standards. ODO found four deficiencies in the remaining three standards. Since JCPC's last full inspection in January 2023, the facility has trended down. JCPC went from one deficient standard and one deficiency in December 2023 to three deficient standards with four deficiencies which includes a priority component for 15-minute monitoring of detainees under close supervision during the most recent unannounced inspection. The facility completed its uniform corrective action plan for ODO's last inspection of JCPC in January 2023, however ODO cited another finding in the standard for missing ICE officials' signatures on releases. ODO recommends ERO Houston continue to work with the facility to resolve any deficiencies that remain outstanding in accordance

⁸ "Each housing unit, including the Special Management Unit (SMU), will document cell and area searches including the date, time, and findings, including location(s) where contraband is found, type(s) of contraband, and the searching officers' names." See ICE NDS 2019, Standard, Facility Security and Control, Section (II)(B)(1).

⁹ "A mental health provider may place a detainee in a suicide-resistant cell with constant monitoring (one-to-one). A suicide-resistant cell must be free of objects and structural elements that could facilitate a suicide attempt and must be approved by a health care practitioner." See ICE NDS 2019, Standard, Significant Self-harm and Suicide Prevention and Intervention, Section (II)(F).

¹⁰ "The monitoring must be documented every 15 minutes or more frequently if necessary." See ICE NDS 2019, Standard, Significant Self-Harm and Suicide Prevention and Intervention, Section (II)(F).

with contractual obligations.

| Compliance Inspection Results Compared | FY 2023 Full Inspection (NDS 2019) | FY 2023 Follow-up Inspection (NDS 2019) |
|---|---|--|
| Standards Reviewed | 19 | 17 |
| Deficient Standards | 1 | 3 |
| Overall Number of Deficiencies | 1 | 4 |
| Priority Component Deficiencies | 0 | 2 |
| Repeat Deficiencies | 0 | 0 |
| Areas Of Concern | 0 | 0 |
| Corrective Actions | 0 | 1 |
| Facility Rating | Superior | N/A |