



U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Office of Professional Responsibility
ICE Inspections
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**Office of Detention Oversight
Follow-Up Compliance Inspection**

**Enforcement and Removal Operations
ERO New Orleans Field Office**

**River Correctional Center
Ferriday, Louisiana**

May 10-12, 2022

FOLLOW-UP COMPLIANCE INSPECTION
of the
RIVER CORRECTIONAL CENTER
Ferriday, Louisiana

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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 a follow-up compliance inspection of the River Correctional Center (RCC) in Ferriday, Louisiana, from May 10 to 12, 2022.¹ This inspection focused on the standards found deficient during ODO’s last inspection of RCC from November 2 to 4, 2021. The facility opened in 2001 and is owned and operated by LaSalle Corrections. The ICE Office of Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) began housing detainees at RCC in 2019 under the oversight of ERO’s Field Office Director in New Orleans (ERO New Orleans). The facility operates under the Performance-Based National Detention Standards (PBNDS) 2011 (Revised 2016).

ERO has assigned deportation officers to the facility. An RCC warden handles daily facility operations and manages ■ support personnel. LaSalle Corrections provides food services and medical care, and Correct Commissary provides commissary services at the facility. The facility does not hold any accreditations from any outside entities.

Capacity and Population Statistics	Quantity
ICE Bed Capacity ²	■
Average ICE Detainee Population ³	■
Adult Male Detainee Population (as of May 10, 2022)	■
Adult Female Detainee Population (as of May 10, 2022)	■

During its last inspection, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, ODO found 55 deficiencies in the following areas: Admission and Release (4); Correspondence and Other Mail (1); Detainee Transfers (7); Emergency Plans (10); Environmental Health and Safety (8); Food Service (7); Funds and Personal Property (9); Medical Care (1); Personal Hygiene (3); Searches of Detainees (2); Use of Force and Restraints (2); and Voluntary Work Program (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 May 9, 2022.

³ *Ibid.*

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.

While follow-up inspections are intended to focus on previously identified deficiencies, ODO will conduct a complete review of several core standards, which 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 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.

**FINDINGS BY PERFORMANCE-BASED NATIONAL
DETENTION STANDARDS 2011 (REVISED 2016)
MAJOR CATEGORIES**

PBND Standards 2011 (Revised 2016) Standards Inspected^{4,5,6}	Deficiencies
Part 1 – Safety	
Emergency Plans	0
Environmental Health and Safety	0
Sub-Total	0
Part 2 – Security	
Admission and Release	0
Custody Classification System	0
Funds and Personal Property	0
Searches of Detainees	0
Special Management Units	0
Staff-Detainee Communication	3
Use of Force and Restraints	0
Sub-Total	3
Part 4 – Care	
Food Service	0
Hunger Strikes	0
Medical Care	0
Personal Hygiene	1
Significant Self-harm and Suicide Prevention and Intervention	0
Sub-Total	1
Part 5 – Activities	
Correspondence and Other Mail	8
Voluntary Work Program	1
Sub-Total	9
Part 7 - Administration and Management	
Detainee Transfers	0
Sub-Total	0
Total Deficiencies	13

⁴ For greater detail on ODO’s findings, see the *Follow-up Compliance Inspection Findings* section of this report.

⁵ 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 21 detainees, who each voluntarily agreed to participate. None of the detainees made allegations of discrimination, mistreatment, or abuse. Two detainees indicated concerns with anxiety and/or stress during the interview, and ODO immediately referred them to ERO New Orleans and facility medical staff for evaluation. Most detainees reported satisfaction with facility services except for the concerns listed below.

Medical Care: One detainee stated he did not know the whereabouts of his wife and child, and as a result he was suffering from anxiety and emotional stress.

- Action Taken: ODO immediately stopped the interview and asked the detainee if he would like to speak with a mental health professional. The detainee stated that he did, and ODO requested that a member of the facility staff inform the medical department. ODO remained with the detainee until medical staff arrived. Once medical was onsite, ODO stepped out of the interview room for the detainee's medical evaluation. ODO notified facility leadership and ERO New Orleans of the detainee's issue. On May 10, 2022, the facility's licensed professional counselor (LPC) assessed the detainee for anxiety and depression. The detainee denied having current suicidal and homicidal ideations. The LPC advised the detainee of coping strategies and informed him of the procedures to access sick call if necessary. The detainee verbalized understanding and returned to his housing unit. On May 11, 2022, the detainee was able to speak to his wife. On May 19, 2022, at the detainee's request, the mental health nurse practitioner (MHNP) evaluated the detainee for anxiety. The detainee denied feeling suicidal or having homicidal ideations. The MHNP prescribed 25mg of Vistaril and instructed the detainee to notify staff of any worsening symptoms and advised of medication safety and side effects. The facility's mental health staff will continue to monitor the detainee. The detainee verbalized understanding and returned to his housing unit.

Medical Care: One detainee stated he was feeling stressed as a result of his confinement at the facility and wanted to speak to a mental health professional, which he previously did not disclose to facility staff.

Action Taken: Following ODO's interview with the detainee, ODO informed the facility's Health Services Administrator (HSA), that the detainee was feeling stressed as a result of his confinement but indicated he did not have thoughts of harming himself or others. On May 11, 2022, the LPC conducted an initial assessment of the detainee. During the assessment the detainee indicated his stress as it relates to confinement was due to another detainee getting angry with him, and as a result he did not know what to do. At times during the assessment the LPC observed the detainee's mood as anxious, depressed, and calm. The detainee denied having current suicidal and homicidal ideations. The detainee requested medicine for his stress and as a result the LPC referred him to the MHNP. On May 12, 2022, the MHNP evaluated the detainee, and found the detainee has an adjustment disorder, mixed anxiety and a depressed mood. The MHNP prescribed 25mg of Vistaril for anxiety and scheduled a follow-up appointment in 1 month. Additionally, the MHNP instructed the detainee to notify staff of any worsening symptoms and advised of

medication safety and side effects. The detainee verbalized understanding and returned to his housing unit.

Personal Hygiene: Two male detainees stated female facility staff members did not announce their presence when entering their housing units.

- Action Taken: ODO toured the facility housing units and noted signage posted above the housing unit entrance to remind staff members to announce their presence in a housing unit of the opposite gender. Additionally, ODO interviewed the facility's (PREAC) and confirmed facility staff members receive instruction on proper entry into housing units. However, on May 11, 2022, ODO observed a female officer entering a male housing unit without announcing her presence. ODO cited this as a deficiency in the *Personal Hygiene* section of this report.

FOLLOW-UP COMPLIANCE INSPECTION FINDINGS

SECURITY

STAFF-DETAINEE COMMUNICATION (SDC)

ODO interviewed an ERO New Orleans supervisory detention and deportation officer (SDDO) and found the facility contract detention processing officers accessed the secure ICE drop-box (**Deficiency SDC-15⁶**).

ODO interviewed an ERO New Orleans SDDO, reviewed 591 detainee request logs, and found in 87 out of 591 requests, ERO New Orleans did not respond in person nor in writing within 3 business days of receipt. Specifically, the 87 detainee request log entries did not indicate when the facility forwarded the requests to ERO New Orleans, nor the date ERO New Orleans returned the requests to the detainees (**Deficiency SDC-16⁷**).

ODO reviewed the facility's staff-detainee communication log for written requests and found the log does not include the following:

- Justification for marking a request "urgent" and a faster response time;
- The date the facility forwarded the request to ERO New Orleans; nor
- The date ERO New Orleans returned the requests to the detainee (**Deficiency SDC-20⁸**).

⁶ "The facility shall provide a secure drop-box for ICE detainees to correspond directly with ICE management. Only ICE personnel shall have access to the drop-box." See ICE PBNDS 2011 (Revised 2016), Standard, Staff-Detainee Communication, Section (V)(B).

⁷ "In Facilities with ICE/ERO Onsite Presence The ICE/ERO staff member receiving the request shall normally respond in person or in writing as soon as possible and practicable, but no later than within three (3) business days of receipt." See ICE PBNDS 2011 (Revised 2016), Standard, Staff-Detainee Communication, Section (V)(B)(1)(a).

⁸ "All requests shall be recorded in a logbook (or electronic logbook) specifically designed for that purpose. At a minimum, the log shall record: ...

h. specific reasons why the detainee's request is urgent and requires a faster response; and

CARE

PERSONAL HYGIENE (PH)

ODO interviewed the facility PREAC, observed facility staff entering the detainee housing units over 3-day period, and on one occasion ODO observed a female facility staff member enter a male housing unit without announcing her presence (**Deficiency PH-43⁹**).

ACTIVITIES

CORRESPONDENCE AND OTHER MAIL (COM)

ODO reviewed the facility's site-specific detainee handbook and found no notification to detainees for the following:

- Outgoing special correspondence or legal mail shall not be opened, inspected, nor read (**Deficiency COM-19¹⁰**);
- The procedure to obtain advance approval from the facility's administrator to send or receive packages (**Deficiency COM-20¹¹**);
- A description of mail which the facility may reject nor a description of mail the facility allows detainees to keep in their possession (**Deficiency COM-21¹²**);
- Identity documents such as such as passports, birth certificates, etc., found in a detainee's possession may be used by ERO New Orleans as evidence against the detainee or for other purposes authorized by law (**Deficiency COM-22¹³**). **This is a**

i. the date the request was forwarded to ICE/ERO and the date it was returned shall also be recorded.”

See ICE PBNDS 2011 (Revised 2016), Standard, Staff-Detainee Communication, Section (V)(B)(2)(h-i).

⁹ “Staff of the opposite gender shall announce their presence when entering an area where detainees are likely to be showering, performing bodily functions, or changing clothing.” *See* ICE PBNDS 2011 (Revised 2016), Standard, Personal Hygiene, Section (V)(E).

¹⁰ “The facility shall notify detainees of its rules on correspondence and other mail through the detainee handbook, or supplement, provided to each detainee upon admittance. At a minimum, the notification all specify: ...

5. That incoming special correspondence or legal mail may only be opened in the detainee's presence, and may be inspected for contraband, but not read, and that outgoing special correspondence or legal mail shall not be opened, inspected or read.”

See ICE PBNDS 2011 (Revised 2016), Standard, Correspondence and Other Mail, Section (V)(C)(5).

¹¹ “The facility shall notify detainees of its rules on correspondence and other mail through the detainee handbook, or supplement, provided to each detainee upon admittance. At a minimum, the notification shall specify: ...

6. That packages may neither be sent nor received without advance arrangements approved by the facility administrator, as well as information regarding how to obtain such approval.”

See ICE PBNDS 2011 (Revised 2016), Standard, Correspondence and Other Mail, Section (V)(C)(6).

¹² “The facility shall notify detainees of its rules on correspondence and other mail through the detainee handbook, or supplement, provided to each detainee upon admittance. At a minimum, the notification shall specify: ...

7. A description of mail which may be rejected by the facility and which the detainee shall not be permitted to keep in his/her possession.”

See ICE PBNDS 2011 (Revised 2016), Standard, Correspondence and Other Mail, Section (V)(C)(7).

¹³ “The facility shall notify detainees of its rules on correspondence and other mail through the detainee handbook, or supplement, provided to each detainee upon admittance. At a minimum, the notification shall specify: ...

8. That identity documents, such as passports, birth certificates, etc., in a detainee's possession are contraband and may be used by ICE/ERO as evidence against the detainee or for other purposes authorized by law (however, upon request, the detainee shall be provided a copy of each document, certified by an ICE/ERO

repeat deficiency;

- The procedure to obtain writing implements, paper, and envelopes (**Deficiency COM-25¹⁴**); and
- The procedure for purchasing postage (**Deficiency COM-26¹⁵**).

ODO reviewed 591 detainee request log entries and found the facility did not forward 2 identity document requests to ERO New Orleans. Specifically, the facility advised the detainees ERO New Orleans possessed their documents (**Deficiency COM-23¹⁶**).

ODO interviewed the facility's mailroom supervisor, reviewed two incoming mail rejection notices, and found the facility's administrator did not sign the rejection notices sent to both the detainee and the addressee (**Deficiency COM-81¹⁷**).

VOLUNTARY WORK PROGRAM (VWP)

ODO reviewed ■ detainee detention files and found in ■ out of ■ files, detainees undertook work assignments before signing a voluntary work program agreement confirming receipt and understanding of training. Specifically, 21 detainees working in food services did not complete required training (**Deficiency VWP-63¹⁸**).

officer to be a true and correct copy; the facility shall consult ICE/ERO with any and all requests for identity documents)"

See ICE PBNDS 2011 (Revised 2016), Standard, Correspondence and Other Mail, Section (V)(C)(8).

¹⁴ "The facility shall notify detainees of its rules on correspondence and other mail through the detainee handbook, or supplement, provided to each detainee upon admittance. At a minimum, the notification shall specify: ...

9. The procedure to obtain writing implements, paper and envelopes."

See ICE PBNDS 2011 (Revised 2016), Standard, Correspondence and Other Mail, Section (V)(C)(9).

¹⁵ "The facility shall notify detainees of its rules on correspondence and other mail through the detainee handbook, or supplement, provided to each detainee upon admittance. At a minimum, the notification shall specify: ...

10. The procedure for purchasing postage (if any), and the rules for providing indigent and certain other detainees free postage."

See ICE PBNDS 2011 (Revised 2016), Standard, Correspondence and Other Mail, Section (V)(C)(10).

¹⁶ "The facility shall notify detainees of its rules on correspondence and other mail through the detainee handbook, or supplement, provided to each detainee upon admittance. At a minimum, the notification shall specify: ...

8. That identity documents, such as passports, birth certificates, etc., in a detainee's possession are contraband and may be used by ICE/ERO as evidence against the detainee or for other purposes authorized by law (however, upon request, the detainee shall be provided a copy of each document, certified by an ICE/ERO officer to be a true and correct copy; the facility shall consult ICE/ERO with any and all requests for identity documents)."

See ICE PBNDS 2011 (Revised 2016), Standard, Correspondence and Other Mail, Section (V)(C)(8).

¹⁷ "Both sender and addressee shall be provided written notice, signed by the facility administrator, with explanation, when the facility rejects incoming or outgoing mail." See ICE PBNDS 2011 (Revised 2016), Standard, Correspondence and Other Mail, Section (V)(H).

¹⁸ "A detainee shall not undertake any assignment before signing a voluntary work program agreement that, among other things, confirms that the detainee has received and understood training from the supervisor about the work assignment." See ICE PBNDS 2011 (Revised 2016), Standard, Voluntary Work Program, Section (V)(N)(2)(b).

CONCLUSION

During this inspection, ODO assessed the facility's compliance with 17 standards under PBNDS 2011 (Revised 2016) and found the facility in compliance with 13 of those standards. ODO found 13 deficiencies in the remaining 4 standards. ODO recommends ERO New Orleans work with the facility to resolve any deficiencies that remain outstanding in accordance with contractual obligations. ERO provided ODO with the uniform corrective action plan for ODO's last inspection of RCC which occurred on November 2, 2021.

Compliance Inspection Results Compared	First FY 2022 (PBNDS 2011) (Revised 2016)	Second FY 2022 (PBNDS 2011) (Revised 2016)
Standards Reviewed	23	18
Deficient Standards	12	4
Overall Number of Deficiencies	53	13
Repeat Deficiencies	0	1
Areas Of Concern	0	0
Corrective Actions	0	0
Facility Rating	Good	N/A