

May 8-9, 2023

Monitoring Visit to Wyoming Correctional Facility

Correctional Association
of New York

Post-Visit Briefing
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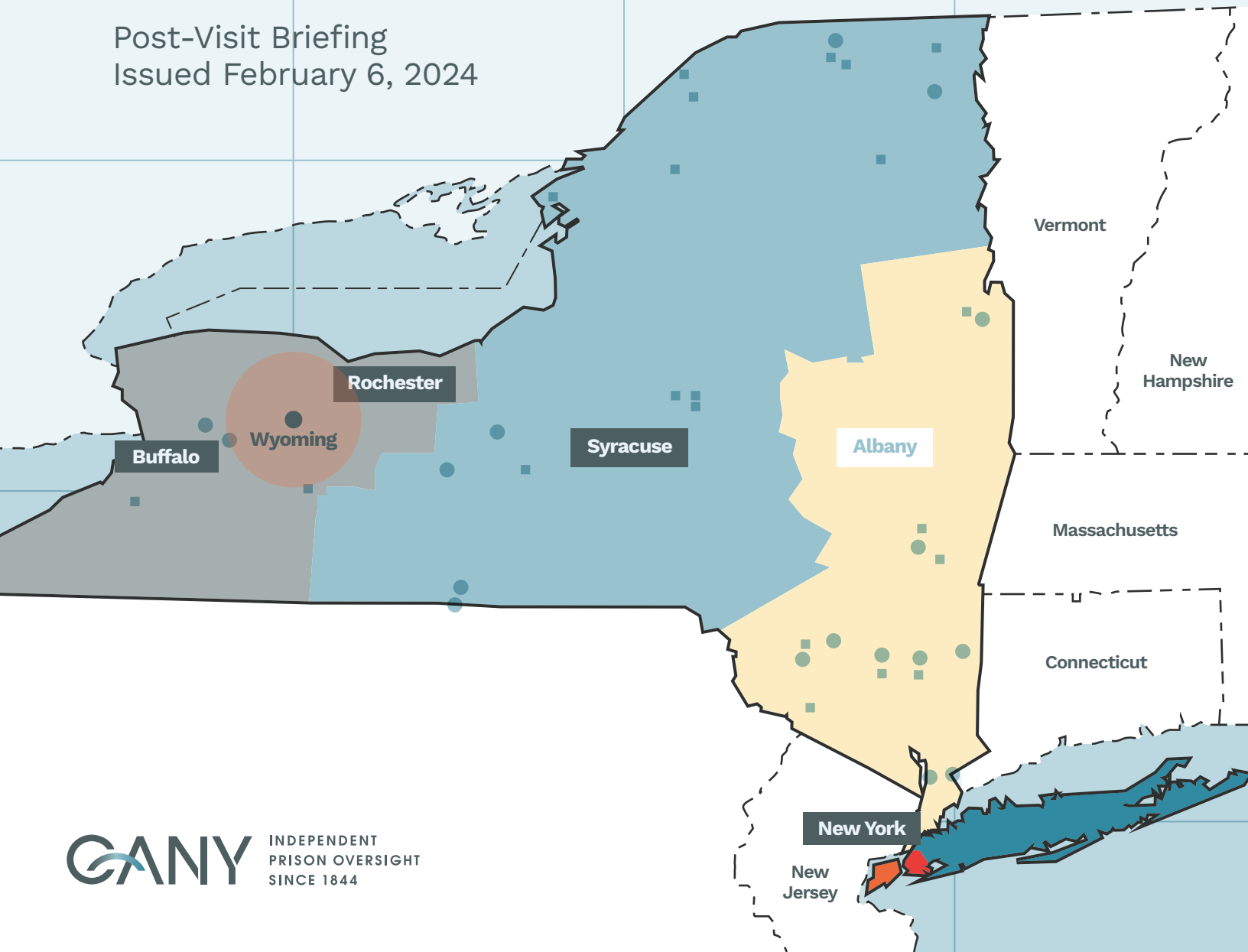


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Background

On May 8th and 9th, 2023 the Correctional Association of New York (CANY) conducted a monitoring visit to Wyoming Correctional Facility, a medium security facility for adult men in the town of Attica in Wyoming County New York. CANY’s monitoring visit to Wyoming was conducted as part of its oversight mandate pursuant to Correctional Law §146(3).

During the monitoring visit, CANY representatives: (1) interviewed 141 incarcerated people (see Table 1 below); (2) held informational meetings with staff, employee union representatives, and members of the Incarcerated Liaison Committee (ILC) and Incarcerated Grievance Review Committee (IGRC);¹ and (3) observed several areas within the facility, including the medical clinic, program areas, general library, law library, mess hall, recreation yard, and mail and package room.

Table 1. Breakdown of the Number of People Interviewed

| Housing Unit | Interviewees |
|---|--------------|
| General Population | 131 |
| Special Housing Unit (SHU), Protective Custody (PC), and Contraband Watch | 10 |
| Total | 141 |

Impressions from Visit

Below are the initial impressions from the visit to Wyoming that CANY representatives reported to the DOCCS facility executive team during the debrief meeting. A version of these impressions was also emailed to DOCCS’ central office and mailed to the ILC and IGRC groups following the visit.

Programming

CANY representatives received positive reports about the quality of programming offered, as well as the Deputy Superintendent of Programs’ leadership. Incarcerated people reported having access to the programs they needed, which take place daily via two program models. CANY representatives were particularly impressed by the Special Education services offered to individuals under 21 and the extensive horticulture program.

¹ CANY representatives held separate meetings with (1) the executive team; (2) nurse administrator; (3) State Office of Mental Health (OMH) staff; (4) members of the ILC and IGRC; and (5) union representatives from the New York State Public Employees Federation (PEF), Civil Service Employees Association of New York (CSEA), and New York State Correctional Officers and Police Benevolent Association (NYSCOPBA).

Allegations of Abuse

CANY representatives heard repeated allegations of verbal, physical, and racialized abuse by staff at Wyoming. Considering these allegations, the First Deputy Superintendent proposed that he would reiterate to sergeants the need to be present on the walkways and other locations of concern and restate their responsibility to oversee officers' interactions with incarcerated individuals.

Reports of Hair-Based Discrimination

CANY received multiple reports of differential treatment of Black individuals based on their chosen hairstyle. Examples of the differential treatment included turning people away from the recreation yard or mess hall. The executive team committed to looking into the matter and addressing it with security supervisors.

Grievance Process

CANY representatives spoke to incarcerated people who did not trust the grievance process in Wyoming. Incarcerated individuals reported having felt pressured by security staff to "sign off" on grievances as having been informally resolved and fearful of retaliation for grievances filed about security staff. Upon hearing these concerns, the executive team explained that, while they do not condone retaliatory behavior, they do not have the staff capacity required to monitor each grievance for evidence of retaliation. They described their practice of monitoring staff harassment grievances and making referrals directly to OSI.

Phones

CANY representatives received reports about difficulty accessing the phones in the dorm or in the yard. The executive team informed CANY that they monitor yard phones for gang activity and had recently installed additional yard phones.

Mess Hall

Across the dorms, CANY representatives heard from people who reportedly do not eat in the mess hall because of the poor quality of the food. The executive team informed CANY representatives that each dorm has refrigerators and kitchen appliances people can use to cook their own meals, and that many prefer to do so. They also stated that the mess hall menu is created and maintained centrally and thus facility leadership does not have input.

Commissary

Incarcerated people reported concerns with the commissary. Items in commissary were reported to be frequently out of stock and increasingly expensive. Many individuals described particularly low selection available to people visiting the commissary later in the week after others have already gone. The executive team stated their belief that commissary inventory and prices were more favorable at Wyoming than at many facilities. They also reported that when a particular item has been out of stock for a long time, they seek out a new vendor that can fulfill the order. To address these concerns, the executive team said they were working on instituting individual buy limits on popular items and using a rotating commissary schedule to ensure equal access.

Packages

CANY representatives heard many instances of items from packages going missing or being denied. The executive team reiterated that the rules are clearly stated in Directive 4911A and that many of the issues could be attributed to vendors such as Amazon sending items in multiple boxes and sometimes failing to include a packing list, for example. They mentioned that they frequently discuss concerns about packages with the ILC.

Discipline

CANY representatives heard reports of loss of privilege sanctions. The executive team reported that the number of Tier II tickets has increased since the implementation of HALT, which introduced changes to the disciplinary criteria. They explained that many Tier II tickets were reportedly for smoking in bathrooms and using K2.

Physical Plant

CANY representatives observed most fixtures in living areas to be in good working order and heard reports that when needed, items are fixed in a timely manner. CANY representatives also heard some reports of broken showers on the East side of the facility. The executive team reported that a capital project is planned to install new showers on the East side.

Medical Care

CANY representatives heard mixed accounts of the medical care provided at the facility. While some individuals cited a timely response to sick calls and positive interactions with staff, CANY representatives also came across several reports of long wait times to receive specialty care (i.e., medical care outside of the facility). The executive team informed CANY they are currently recruiting an additional medical provider; they are hopeful that additional staffing will increase clinical capacity and decrease wait times.

Dental Care

Incarcerated individuals described the quality of dental care as adequate, and commended the care they received from the hygienist, despite some reports of long wait times.

Overview of Wyoming Correctional Facility

Wyoming is a medium security prison for adult men in Attica, Wyoming County New York. The facility first opened in 1984 and adjoins Attica Correctional Facility, a larger maximum-security prison. During CANY's visit, the executive team reported information about Wyoming's layout, capital projects, programs, staff, and incarcerated population. CANY supplemented the information reported by the executive team by reviewing administrative datasets obtained via FOIL request. CANY uses these datasets to compare the demographic characteristics of the Wyoming population and incidents reported in Wyoming to those of the entire DOCCS system.

Physical Layout

Wyoming is made up of two compounds: East and West. The East compound consists of general population housing units; a guidance and counseling programming area; and an educational programming area for people under 21. The West compound consists of general population units, SHU units, a contraband watch unit, a unit for people with sensory disabilities, a gym, a space dedicated to transitional services, and an infirmary. A perimeter camera system surrounds both compounds.²

Capital Projects

To maintain the physical plant and comply with regulations, the executive team recently completed several capital projects and is working to initiate several others. These projects include updates to the phones, shower renovations, HALT-related changes, and a planned demolition.

At the time of the visit, the facility's phone lines were being updated and new phones for the yards had been requested. The West compound showers had been renovated and there were plans to renovate the East compound showers as well. To comply with HALT, RESTART chairs were installed, and the executive team was navigating subsequent capacity changes. Finally, the facility's annex was slated for demolition as part of its five-year plan.³ In addition to working on these capital projects, the executive team reported that it is planning to roll out body worn cameras. They were unsure of the roll out timeline but specified that they would be using a cloud-based system for data storage and noted that the facility had no prior experience with body worn cameras.

Programs

The executive team described the academic, vocational, industry, recovery, and re-entry programs available at the facility. Table 2 below summarizes the programs listed by the executive team and any additional discussion of a particular program, which was occasionally driven by follow-up questions from CANY representatives. Throughout the visit, CANY representatives heard positive feedback about the quality of programs delivered under the executive team's leadership.

2 Per the executive team, the facility is also equipped with two (2) indoor security cameras used to monitor individuals under observation.

3 Prison administrators work with DOCCS central office to develop a five-year capital plan for their respective facilities.

Table 2. Programs Listed by Wyoming Executive Team

| Type | Program | Additional Discussion |
|--|--|---|
| Vocational | Computer Information and Technology Support | |
| | Computer Operation | |
| | Building Maintenance | |
| | Custodial Maintenance | |
| | Electrical | |
| | Small Engine Repair | |
| | Painting and Decorating | |
| | HVAC | The HVAC program had been on hold for a month and a half while the instructor was on medical leave. |
| | Horse Handling | |
| | Welding | |
| Academic | Adult Basic Education (ABE) | |
| | Pre-High School Equivalency | |
| | High School Equivalency (HSE) | The executive team pointed out that the facility's "GED numbers are great." |
| | English as a Second Language (ESL) | |
| | Special Education | |
| | American Sign Language (ASL) | A sign language instructor leads this program. |
| | College Program | The facility recently piloted a tablet-based program with Ashland University. Seventeen (17) students participated in the inaugural semester and 20 students were slated to participate in the following semester. The facility is also planning to work with the University of Rochester and Genesee Community College as part of the Rochester Education Justice Initiative expansion. |
| Industry | Recycling | Wyoming serves as a recycling hub for DOCCS, as well as a couple of neighboring towns and school districts. Incarcerated people in Wyoming recycle clothing, paper, and food waste. They also make compost. |
| | Horticulture | The Horticulture program is led by two instructors. The horticulture program yielded 8,000 pounds of produce this year and 13,000 pounds of produce last year. All the food harvested through the program is distributed to food banks. |
| Alcohol and Substance Use Treatment | Trauma, Addiction, Mental Health, and Recovery (TAMAR) ⁸ | TAMAR is a voluntary program run by substance abuse service staff. Throughout the program, program participants discuss past trauma and the effects of incarceration. Participants progress through the program at their own pace. Many incarcerated people have expressed interest in participating in TAMAR. Currently, there are eight (8) participants that meet twice a week for 90-minute sessions. |
| | Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) | The AA program is led by volunteers. |
| Re-Entry | Aggression Replacement Training (ART) | |
| | Transitional Services Program (Phases I, II & III) | |
| | Non-Driver ID Pilot Program ⁹ | The pilot program is run in partnership with the New York Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and allows people to obtain a non-driver ID through Wyoming. At the time of CANY's visit, 163 IDs had been issued through the program. |
| | Osborne Association Programs | People can participate in Osborne Association program via teleconference. To be eligible, individuals must be within 90 days of release if returning to NYC. |
| | Volunteer-Led Programs | Volunteer programs include community access programs focusing on health care, care for people with HIV-AIDS, and substance use recovery. |
| Guidance and Counseling | Sex Offender Program | |
| Other | Sensory Fitness | The Sensory Fitness program is designed for people with partial disabilities. |
| | Fresh Start | The Fresh Start program consists of a series of skill-building, release planning, life skills, and money management modules for people under the age of 21. The program is led by an education counselor. |

Staffing

The executive team answered questions about their security, administration, program, and medical staffing needs, highlighting that there were several unfilled positions at the time of the visit. While outlining their staffing needs, the executive team described some of their recruitment challenges, which include hiring people for weekend shifts and relatively low-paying entry-level positions.

The facility's security staffing needs included filling the Deputy of Security role, two (2) captain roles, and 17 officer roles. To help maintain operations, lieutenants were filling in for captains. The facility's administrative needs included hiring a utility assistant, maintenance supervisor, cook, store clerk, and mail clerk. The facility's program needs included filling nine (9) positions: a recreation leader, an Offender Recreation Coordinator (ORC) for the Use Treatment (ASAT) program, a Senior Offender Recreation Coordinator (SORC), three (3) teachers, two (2) office assistants, and a part-time library clerk. The executive team noted that these vacancies had only a minor effect on program operations due to a recent decrease in the population. The executive team also reported that they were trying to hire four (4) nurses and one (1) dental hygienist, noting that they had been trying to hire a dental hygienist for some time and that nurses are working 12-hour shifts to account for the unfilled positions.

The executive team's presentation of the facility's staffing needs roughly mirrors the data in a bi-weekly staffing report issued on January 4, 2023, suggesting that many of the open positions discussed during CANY's visit have been unfilled since the beginning of the year. Per the bi-weekly staffing report, which CANY obtained via a Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) request, the facility had roughly 37 vacancies. Agency and facility administrators need to fill: 17 out of 394 security positions, 13 out of 62 support service positions, four (4) out of 21 health service vacancies, and three (3) out of 92 program positions.

Population

Per the executive team, the facility's capacity is 1,410 incarcerated people. On the first day of the visit, May 9th, the executive team reported that there were 978 people in custody, eleven (11) of whom were housed in the SHU. They also noted that Wyoming is the DOCCS prison with the largest population of young people 21 and younger: 67 making up 7% (67/978) of the facility's population on the day of the visit.

CANY reviewed an administrative dataset, "Incarcerated Individuals Under Custody," to (1) supplement the information reported by the executive team and (2) compare the demographic characteristics of the Wyoming population with that of the rest of the New York State prison population. "Incarcerated Individuals Under Custody" represents the individuals under the custody of DOCCS on a particular day. CANY reviewed the data file from May 1st, 2023, the closest available file to the visit date.

4 On July 26, 2023, DOCCS and the DMV issued a press release stating that all 43 state-run correctional facilities are expected to be participating in the non-Driver ID program by late October 2023.

On May 1st, there were 971 people incarcerated in Wyoming. The administrative data reflects the trends described by the executive team—Wyoming houses 10% (72/711) of 18 to 21-year-olds in state correctional facilities. Young people between the ages of 18 and 21 are overrepresented in Wyoming; they make up 7% (72/971) of the Wyoming population and 2% (711/31,666) of the state prison population.

Unusual Incidents and Deaths

CANY reviewed: (1) DOCCS' unusual incident data for January through March of 2023 and (2) State Commission of Correction's (SCOC) death data, which reflects a more complete record of deaths in DOCCS facilities, as some deaths in custody do not necessarily trigger an unusual incident report.⁵

The unusual incident data reveals that the rates of (1) drug/alcohol contraband discovery, (2) fires, and (3) disruptive behavior categorized as "other" are higher in Wyoming compared to the system overall. Meanwhile, the SCOC data reveals that a Hispanic man died at Wyoming on July 30th, 2022, and that the SCOC's investigation into this death is still ongoing.⁶ This man's death is not reflected in the unusual incident data.

5 DOCCS defines an unusual incident in Directive 4004 as, "a serious occurrence that (1) may impact upon or disrupt facility operations, or (2) has the potential for affecting the Department's public image, or (3) might arouse widespread public interest. In general, any incident shall be reportable under the provisions of this directive which (1) satisfies the definition (above) of 'unusual incident,' or (2) involves the use of chemical weapons, or (3) involves staff use of a weapon, or (4) results in moderate or serious injury to any incarcerated individual/releasee or staff. SCOC's death data reflects a more complete record of deaths because, pursuant to New York Correction Law, section 47(1), the SCOC's correction medical review board is responsible for (1) investigating and reviewing the cause and circumstances surrounding the death of an incarcerated person in a correctional facility and (2) submit a report thereon to the commission and to the governor.

6 While all deaths of incarcerated individuals in the custody of a correctional facility are investigated by the SCOC, the SCOC does not issue a report for all deaths that are investigated.

Table 3. Unusual Incidents, January – March, 2023

| Type | Incident | Wyoming | | System Wide | |
|--|---|---------|---|-------------|---|
| | | Count | Avg. Monthly Rate 1K PPL. in Custody | Count | Avg. Monthly Rate 1K PPL. in Custody |
| Assaults | Assault on Incarcerated Individual | 8 | 2.6 | 374 | 4.0 |
| | Assault on Staff | 3 | 1.0 | 270 | 2.9 |
| | Other Assault | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 0.0 |
| Contraband | Weapons | 17 | 5.6 | 583 | 6.2 |
| | Drugs/Alcohol | 9 | 3.0 | 71 | 0.8 |
| | Other | 0 | 1.1 | 104 | 1.1 |
| Deaths in Custody | Deaths by Natural Causes | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 0.0 |
| | Other Deaths, Excluding Natural Deaths | 0 | 0.0 | 9 | 0.1 |
| Disruptive Behavior | Refused Instruction/ Refused Strip Frisk | 3 | 1.0 | 295 | 3.1 |
| | Cell Extraction | 0 | 0.0 | 51 | 0.5 |
| | Other | 2 | 0.7 | 2 | 0.6 |
| Facility Disruption | Accident | 0 | 0.0 | 85 | 0.9 |
| | Lost/Stolen Property | 0 | 0.0 | 18 | 0.2 |
| | Fire | 1 | 0.3 | 9 | 0.3 |
| Health-Related | Use of Narcan | 1 | 0.3 | 111 | 1.2 |
| | Use of AED | 0 | 0.0 | 25 | 0.3 |
| | Contagious Disease | 0 | 0.0 | 85 | 0.9 |
| Self-Harm & Suicide | Self-Inflicted Injury | 0 | 0.0 | 14 | 0.1 |
| | Suicide Attempts | 0 | 0.0 | 31 | 0.3 |
| | Suicides | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 0.0 |
| Staff Use of Force | Use of Chemical Irritant | 6 | 2.0 | 422 | 4.5 |
| | Use of Baton | 0 | 0.0 | 33 | 0.4 |
| | Use of Other Weapon | 0 | 0.0 | 3 | 0.0 |
| Source: DOCCS Unusual Incident Reports, January – March 2023 | | | | | |

Methodology

CANY's findings draw primarily from interview data. Throughout the visit, CANY representatives conducted one-on-one interviews with 141 incarcerated individuals and held semi-structured informational meetings with (1) incarcerated individuals serving on various committees, (2) the facility's executive team, (3) medical staff, and (4) union representatives. To supplement the information gathered through these interviews, CANY representatives recorded notes ad hoc as they walked through housing units, medical clinic, and academic, industry, and vocational programming areas. The sections below contain additional details about CANY's interview methods.

One-on-One Interviews

CANY representatives interviewed 141 incarcerated individuals: 131 in general population housing and ten (10) in the Special Housing Unit (SHU), Protective Custody (PC), and Contraband Watch. Two protocols were used to guide these interviews: (1) a 28-question protocol for people in general population housing units, and (2) a 58-question protocol for people in SHU, PC, and Contraband Watch. The questions in the general population protocol are organized into five (5) topic areas: (1) medical and dental services, (2) mental health services, (3) programs and work, (4) treatment, grievances, and discipline, and (5) conditions at Wyoming, which includes questions about the provision of environmental conditions as well as basic services and entitlements (e.g., commissary, access to clean water, access to phones, etc.). The questions in the SHU protocol are organized into six (6) topic areas: (1) compliance with the Humane Alternatives to Long-Term Solitary Confinement Act (HALT); (2) discipline; (3) programs, recreation, and tablets; (4) medical, dental, and mental health services; (5) treatment in the SHU; and, (6) awareness of the HALT act. The first and last questions on both protocol forms are open-ended. The inclusion of these questions makes it possible for incarcerated people to discuss experiences and/or concerns that might not have come up otherwise.⁷ Additionally, both protocols clarify that participation is voluntary and that respondents do not have to answer every question.⁸

CANY representatives transcribed their interview notes in the week following the visit. Once the interview data is transcribed, CANY staff tabulated responses to closed-ended questions. To gauge whether the people's responses at Wyoming mirror those at other medium security prisons, CANY compares close-ended responses collected on this visit to those collected at other medium security prisons between January 2022 and May 2023, including Ulster, Marcy, Mid- State, and Albion.⁹

7 All interview protocols contain open-ended questions. Responses to these questions are captured by CANY representatives, who take notes during each interview. These notes typically include a combination of direct quotes and paraphrase.

8 Due to incarcerated people's preferences and the visit's time constraints, CANY representatives may not ask all the questions in a particular protocol form. For these reasons, the total number of people who responded to a particular question does not always match the total number of respondents interviewed in general population or SHU units.

9 CANY also visited the medium security prison Orleans in June 2022. CANY representatives interviewed 14 people in general population units during this visit. This visit is excluded from the reference group because of the small number of interviews conducted, which focus primarily on RRU units. Instead, data from this visit appears in footnotes throughout the report.

To identify prevalent themes, the open-ended interview data is coded using a combination of “top-down” and “bottom-up” approaches. Staff begin coding the data using a predetermined set of codes based on the topics outlined in CANY’s protocol forms, which include questions about key services and entitlements, as well as CANY’s thematic analysis of past visit data. As staff conduct this initial round of coding, they keep notes to identify additional patterns that emerge from the interviews. Subsequently, staff re-code the data using the codes derived from the interviews. This report highlights (1) counts of the unique individuals who addressed a particular theme or sub-theme during their interview, (2) counts how often a particular theme or sub-theme came up across all interviews, and (3) illustrative quotes.¹⁰

Informational Meetings

During the visit, CANY representatives held meetings with (1) Wyoming’s executive team, (2) members of the ILC and the IGRC, (3) the Nurse Administrator and a facility doctor, and (4) representatives from the New York State Public Employees Federation (PEF), Civil Service Employees Association of New York (CSEA), and New York State Correctional Officers and Police Benevolent Association (NYSCOPA). These meetings followed structured and semi-structured interview guides outlining questions tailored to each stakeholder group.

CANY representatives held two meetings with the executive team: an informational meeting at the start of the visit and a debrief visit at the end of the visit. At the debrief meeting, CANY representatives outlined and asked questions about their initial impressions of conditions at Wyoming. The issues CANY representatives raised at this meeting were issues that appeared to come up repeatedly or to be especially urgent and concerning, regardless of their prevalence. For a high-level summary of these issues see the “Impressions from Visit” section of this report.

Following the visit, CANY representatives transcribed their notes from the informational meetings. CANY staff reviewed meeting notes to gain a better understanding of the institution’s policies, procedures, practices, and major initiatives underway (e.g., capital projects). CANY staff reviewed the debrief meeting notes as they analyzed interview data to (1) assess the prevalence of and/or (2) further illuminate the issues raised to the executive team.

¹⁰ A theme or sub-theme may come up repeatedly in a single interview, so the number of individuals who mention a particular issue does not always align with the number times that issue came up. CANY recently updated its qualitative methods to be able to highlight the number of individuals whose interviews touch on a particular theme; this is the first post visit briefing report to employ these methods.

Findings from Interview Data

Basic Provision of Services

- 1. Commissary** Respondents find that commissary items are often unavailable and sometimes unaffordable. Moreover, respondents believe that their access to commissary items is impacted by external factors, like inflation, as well as internal factors, like the facility's fixed commissary schedule.
- 2. Food** While a large share of respondents in report being afforded three meals a day, they also report dissatisfaction with food quality and either opting out of dining at the mess hall or encountering barriers to accessing the mess hall.
- 3. Phones** Neary all respondents report being able to access phones and tablets.
- 4. Visits** While many respondents indicate that they receive in-person visits, the proportion of respondents who report receiving in-person visits in Wyoming is lower compared to other medium security prisons.
- 5. Packages** Most respondents report that they can access items from packages in a timely manner. However, many of these same respondents find packages to be incomplete and perceive decisions about permissible package items to be arbitrary.

Medical and Dental Care

- 6.** Respondents were generally satisfied with the health care provided in Wyoming but frustrated by long waiting times.

Mental Healtch Care

- 7.** No respondents report being on the OMH caseload. Some respondents expressed a desire to receive mental health care and, on occasion, hesitancy about seeking OMH services.

Programming

- 8.** A higher proportion of respondents report being able to access necessary academic and vocational programs in Wyoming compared to other medium security prisons.

Staff Behavior

- 9.** Reports of racialized abuse carried out by staff are higher in Wyoming compared to most other medium security prisons. Several Black respondents made reports of

Staff Behavior (continued)

discrimination by staff based on their chosen hairstyle, asserting that this discrimination negatively impacted their ability to access services. CANY representatives also heard several reports of staff's mistreatment of young incarcerated people.

Grievances

10. Few respondents report filing grievances. Respondents frequently characterized the grievance process as illegitimate, regardless of whether they had engaged with the process or not.

Discipline

11. Respondents describe the disciplinary system as unfair, arbitrary, and disproportionately harsh.

Material Conditions and Environmental Issues

12. Respondents were satisfied with some material and environmental conditions, like the state of their living quarters. However, temperature controls were frequently characterized as inadequate.

Analysis of Interview Data

CANY staff analyzed the information collected during the monitoring visit to better understand (1) the provision of basic services, (2) medical and dental healthcare, (3) mental health care, (4) programming, (5) staff-incarcerated individual interactions, (6) grievances, (7) discipline, and (8) material conditions at Wyoming. This analysis supports the impressions that CANY representatives presented to the executive team and raises questions about two interrelated issues: (1) people's ability to access basic services and (2) allegations of racially motivated discrimination and abuse. Inconsistencies in the provision of some services, like packages and commissary, appear to be driven, at least in part, by operational challenges. Meanwhile, barriers to accessing other services and, like recreation and mess hall, appear to affect Black people with certain hairstyles disproportionately.¹¹ These cases, along with widespread reports of racially motivated physical and verbal abuse, raise concerns about the treatment of Black men in Wyoming.

Basic Provision Of Services

CANY representatives asked incarcerated people in general population units about their access to services such as commissary, packages, food, phone calls and visits. Below are the responses

¹¹ CANY representatives heard general descriptions of hair discrimination from ten (10) respondents and more specific descriptions of hair discrimination impeding someone's access to recreation or the mess hall from eight (8) respondents.

to those questions, which indicate that issues regarding the commissary, food service, and package delivery came up frequently.

Table 4. Provision of Basic Services in General Population Units

| Questions | Responses | | | | | |
|---|-----------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|
| | YES | | NO | | TOTAL | |
| | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | Percent | Count |
| Is the commissary adequately stocked with items on a regular basis? | 27% | 28 | 73% | 77 | 100% | 105 |
| Are you able to access items from packages in a timely manner? | 61% | 57 | 39% | 37 | 100% | 94 |
| Are you receiving three meals per day in adequate portions? | 82% | 86 | 18% | 19 | 100% | 105 |
| Are you able to make phone calls , either by using the phones or through a tablet? | 97% | 111 | 3% | 3 | 100% | 114 |
| Do you receive in-person visits ? | 79% | 85 | 21% | 22 | 100% | 107 |

Commissary

1 Respondents find that commissary items are often unavailable and sometimes unaffordable. Moreover, respondents believe that their access to commissary items is impacted by external factors, like inflation, as well as internal factors, like the facility’s fixed commissary schedule.

Reports of frequent stock shortages are relatively common across medium security prisons. The share of respondents in general population who reported that the commissary is adequately stocked on a regular basis is 27% (28/105) in Wyoming, 21% (7/33) in Ulster, 0% (0/62) in Marcy, and 21% (13/63) in Albion. Mid-State is an outlier— 62% (24/39) of respondents there found the commissary to be adequately stocked on a regular basis.¹²

Only a minority of respondents in Wyoming’s general population (27%; 28/105) find the commissary to be adequately stocked (13 instances). Yet, most of these same respondents (54%; 15/28) later qualified their responses by either (1) specifying that the commissary was well-stocked considering broader inflation and operational issues—“Filled to the best of their ability, reflects the outside society’s inflation rate...”—or (2) noting that, although items are available, they are expensive. Other respondents echoed these concerns.

¹² Eleven percent (11%, 1/9) of respondents in general population in Orleans report that the commissary is adequately stocked on a regular basis.

Sixty-eight percent (68%, 89/131) of all people in general population interviewed by CANY described issues with the commissary system. A subset of these respondents—13% (12/89)—attributed these issues to the facility’s approach to scheduling access to commissary.

Prices and availability

Fifty-eight percent (58%, 76/131) of respondents in general population described commissary items as expensive and often unavailable. One (1) respondent noted that, in addition to dealing with stock shortages, the rising cost of commissary items does not reflect their quality: “Always shortages! Prices keep rising...poor quality soups—the cheapest you can buy on the outside but we [get] charged a lot more...” Three (3) respondents explained that on top of being prohibitively expensive for some, high costs are difficult to manage given the spending cap imposed on incarcerated people.¹³

Commissary Schedule and Shortages

Twelve percent (12%, 20/131) of interview respondents expounded on commissary-related issues. Most of these respondents (12/21) focused on the facility’s commissary schedule, indicating that there is a link between one’s place on the commissary schedule and one’s ability to purchase goods.¹⁴ And, ten (10) respondents indicated that they are more likely to encounter stock shortages because they go to the commissary at the end of the week and “get the leftovers...”

The facility’s executive team appeared to be aware of concerns regarding stock scarcity. At the debrief conducted towards the end of the visit, CANY representatives highlighted the issue and asked the executive team to provide more information. In response, the executive team explained that it imposes limits on popular items that are regularly out of stock, like garlic powder. They also stated that, while they had been using a fixed, unit-based commissary schedule, they planned to implement a new, rotating schedule.

Food

2 While a large share of respondents in report being afforded three meals a day, they also report dissatisfaction with food quality and either opting out of dining at the mess hall or encountering barriers to accessing the mess hall.¹⁵

Reports of receiving three (3) substantive meals per day are relatively high in most medium security prisons. Ulster has the highest share of respondents in general population who reported receiving three (3) substantive meals per day at 91% (32/35), followed by 86% (30/35) in Mid-State, 82% (86/105) in Wyoming, 65% (40/62) in Marcy, and, finally, 59% (34/58) in Albion.¹⁶

13 DOCCS’ Commissary Operating Procedures Manual Rev. (2-2020) indicates that incarcerated people can spend only \$75.00 at the commissary. Incarcerated people in Wyoming report that DOCCS recently increased the spending limit to \$90.00 to account for changes in the package policy.

14 Seven (7) people linked their experiences with commissary to external factors, like inflation, and one (1) respondent focused on spending caps.

15 CANY will be taking a closer look at food and nutrition systemwide to get a better understanding of the concerns raised by incarcerated people and DOCCS staff regarding nutrition in the prisons. This will include looking at commissary, mess hall and other food resources (packages) available to incarcerated people.

16 All respondents in Orleans (100%, 5/5) report receiving three, adequately portioned meals per day.

Most of the incarcerated people in Wyoming who spoke to CANY representatives about food (82%, 86/105) report receiving three well-portioned meals per day. However, when asked to elaborate on their experiences with the facility's food service, a fraction of these same respondents (16%, 14/86) indicated that they try to avoid eating at the mess hall whenever possible, suggesting that some of their meals might not come directly from the facility's food service.

Reported attempts to avoid the mess hall were not limited to this subset of respondents. Twenty percent (20%, 26/131) of all respondents in general population report opting out of dining at the mess hall. Additionally, 36% (47/131) of respondents had concerns about the quality and nutritional value of the food and 10% (14/131) of respondents described barriers to accessing the mess hall.

Mess Hall Participation

Twenty percent (20%, 26/131) of respondents in general population stated that they either fully abstain from eating at the mess hall or avoid it whenever possible.

- ▶ “Can’t eat in the mess [hall]. Can’t stand the food.”
- ▶ “I don’t eat the food...it’s disgusting...I’d rather starve and die, sometimes I starve...”

During the debrief, CANY representatives conveyed to the executive team their impression that a sizable proportion of incarcerated people do not eat at the mess hall. The executive team attributed this pattern to the availability of refrigerators.¹⁷ They asserted that, because housing areas are equipped with refrigerators, they can prepare their food with relative ease. The indication that preparing one's own food is relatively common in Wyoming highlights the importance of highly functioning commissary and package operations.

Quality and Nutritional Value

Forty-four percent (36%, 47/131) of respondents in general population expressed concerns about the quality and nutritional value of the food served at the mess hall. These respondents often characterized the food as unpalatable and expressed a strong aversion to it. A subset of these respondents expressed concerns about health risks, claiming that the mess hall food contained excessive quantities of soy (10 instances).

- ▶ “Not even my dog would eat the food.”
- ▶ “Food is nasty.”
- ▶ “Soy patties too often.”
- ▶ “Only eat certain things—processed food has too much salt...”

¹⁷ The executive team also stressed that the mess hall menu is determined by DOCCS' central office and that members of the ILC can share their feedback on the menu periodically.

Food Accessibility

Fourteen (14) respondents explained how factors unrelated to quality affected their access to food. These respondents described: not getting enough food at the mess hall (8 instances); missing meals because they were instructed to return to their housing areas by security staff (4 instances); struggling with the long walk between their respective housing units and the mess hall, which is one (1) and a half miles for some (4 instances); and, not getting approval for a religious meal service (1 instance).

- ▶ “...if you did something wrong or they don’t like how you look you get pulled off the line and miss the meal”
- ▶ “I have pain issues and the long walk to mess [hall] is very hard”

Phones

3 Nearly all respondents report being able to access phones tablets.

Most respondents in medium security prisons report being able to use phones or tablets to make calls. The share of respondents in general population who reported being able to use phones or tablets to make calls is 97% (111/114) in Wyoming, 97% (34/35) in Ulster, 97% (38/39) in Mid-State, 96% (38/30) in Marcy, and 92% (54/59) in Albion.¹⁸

Ninety-seven percent (97%, 111/131) of people who spoke to CANY representatives about phones in general population in stated that they were able to use phones or tablets to make calls, a finding that aligns with trends observed at other medium security prisons. Additionally, the executive team appeared to be responsive to people’s desire for more phones in the facility. Eight (8) respondents articulated a need for more phone access. Three (3) of these respondents stated that the limited number of phones, especially in the yard, made it difficult to make more than one (1) call per day. Another five (5) respondents wanted to be able to make calls through the tablets, pointing out that the option was available to people in the SHU.

Yard Phones

Three (3) respondents found it difficult to access the phones in the yard. The executive team appeared sympathetic to this challenge, as they requested additional phones for the yard. During the debrief, the executive team asserted that the yard phones are controlled by gangs, which makes increasing the accessibility of phones in the yard complex. While staff regulate the use of phones in the housing area—two (2) respondents alluded to the use of “lists” or schedules for phone use—it is unclear if and how the executive team will promote equal access to the phones in the yard.

¹⁸ Seventy-seven (77%, 7/9) respondents in general population in Orleans report being able to use a phone or tablet to make calls.

Visits

4 While many respondents indicate that they receive in-person visits, the proportion of respondents who report receiving in-person visits in Wyoming is lower compared to other medium security prisons.

A smaller share of respondents in general population in Wyoming reported having in-person visits compared to other medium security prisons. Seventy-nine percent (79%, 85/107) of respondents in general population at Wyoming report receiving in-person visits compared to 96% (45/47) in Marcy, 91% (31/34) in Mid-State, 91% (30/33) in Ulster, and 79% (45/57) in Albion.¹⁹ Six (6) respondents in general population in Wyoming elaborated on their experience with visits in their respective interviews.²⁰

Distance

Three (3) respondents stated that it is difficult for their families to make the long trip up to the facility. One (1) of these respondents said, “Hard for in-person visits—family is a six (6) hour drive away.” Another respondent whose family lives far from the prison stated that he would like to have video visits; without this option, his family must travel eight (8) hours to see him.

Incidents Impacting Visitors

Two (2) respondents recounted incidents that impacted their visitors. One (1) respondent reported that his wife had been banned from visits due to drug-related allegations. Another respondent explained that his visitor “got frisked by the dogs” even though “other visitors arriving at the same time weren’t.”

Packages

5 Most respondents report that they can access items from packages in a timely manner. However, many of these same respondents find packages to be incomplete and perceive decisions about permissible package items to be arbitrary.

Though 61% (57/94) of respondents in general population at Wyoming indicated that they received packages in a timely manner, frustrations with package procedures came up frequently in the interviews (62 instances).²¹ Frequently, people sensed that certain package items are rejected arbitrarily (31 instances).²²

19 Seventy-five percent (75%, 6/8) of respondents in general population in Orleans report receiving visits.

20 Three (3) reported that it was difficult for their families to travel to the facility, two (2) recounted incidents that impacted their visitors, and one (1) merely stated “no one really visits” him, without elaborating. The general population protocol form includes follow-up, open-ended questions about commissary, packages, and food, but not visits.

21 Most respondents in medium security prisons report receiving packages in a timely manner. The share of respondents in general population who reported getting packages in a timely fashion is 68% (23/34) in Ulster, and 61% (57/94) in Wyoming.

22 Many incarcerated individuals reported concerns about access to package items in CANY’s most recent visits to Eastern, Ulster, Wende, and Wyoming due to recent changes to the DOCCS’ package policy, Directive 4911. This directive includes a list of allowable articles as an attachment which outlines approved items for the following categories: food items, food utensils, tobacco products, toilet articles/ cosmetics, clothing, educational supplies, miscellaneous, recreational supplies, art & hobby supplies, and religious articles.

Perception of Arbitrary Rejections and Allegations of Theft

Many of the respondents who reported receiving incomplete packages offered up explanations for the issue. Some respondents sensed that their package items were rejected due to a lack of coordination between facility staff, vendors, and incarcerated people (7 instances). For example, one (1) individual recounted the following: “The package had everything I ordered—but the tobacco pouches were larger than they usually send me, so I had to return them because they exceeded what I was allowed here.” In a couple of cases, these rejections appeared to introduce or heighten tensions between incarcerated people and staff. Seven (7) respondents used the words “stealing” or “stolen” when describing the delivery of incomplete packages, implying that staff are responsible for items going missing from packages. In the words of one (1) of these respondents, there is “a lot of stealing.”

CANY’s observations of the package room and debrief with the executive team provided additional insight into package- related issues. The CANY representatives who visited the mail and package room got the impression that the process for identifying permissible package items appeared cumbersome, noting that facility staff appeared to rely heavily on decisions made by DOCCS’ Central Office Review Committee (CORC) to make determinations about permissible items.

The executive team also pointed to issues with Amazon, stating that items from a single order will be sent in multiple packages, which could lead package recipients to believe that certain items in their order had been rejected by the facility.

Medical and Dental Healthcare

6 Respondents were generally satisfied with the health care provided in Wyoming but frustrated by long waiting times.

The share of respondents in Wyoming’s general population who report satisfaction with the healthcare provided is higher than other medium security prisons. Fifty-three percent (53%, 39/74) of respondents in general population report receiving adequate medical care in Wyoming, compared to 31% (11/35) in Marcy and 41% (11/27) in Mid-State.²³ Ulster is an outlier—74% (14/19) of general population respondents report receiving adequate medical care there.

Additionally, 59% (30/51) of respondents in general population in Wyoming report receiving adequate dental care, compared to 64% in Ulster (7/11); 25% (3/12) in Marcy; and 14% (1/7) in Mid-State.²⁴

As noted above, most respondents in general population in Wyoming stated that (1) providers had responded to their requests for medical and dental care and (2) they were satisfied with the quality of the care they received—17 respondents spoke positively of the facility’s clinic.²⁵ Additionally, the proportion of people who report being satisfied with services received is relatively high at Wyoming

23 CANY representatives did not ask this question at Albion or Orleans.

24 CANY representatives did not ask this question at Albion or Orleans.

25 The share of people who reported receiving adequate medical care is 74% (14/19) at Ulster, 31% (11/35) at Marcy, and 41% (11/27) at Mid-State. The share of people who reported receiving adequate dental care is 64% at Ulster (7/11); 25% (3/12) at Marcy; and 14% (1/7) at Mid-State. CANY representatives did not ask this question at Albion.

compared to other medium security prisons. Only Ulster had higher rates of reported satisfaction with medical and dental services. Yet, when asked to elaborate on their experiences with medical and dental healthcare, the issue that came up most frequently was long wait times.²⁶

Table 5. Medical and Dental Health Care in General Population Units

| Questions | Responses | | | | | |
|---|-----------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|
| | YES | | NO | | TOTAL | |
| | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | Percent | Count |
| If you requested medical care, have you received a response? | 81% | 59 | 19% | 14 | 100% | 73 |
| If you requested dental care, have you received a response? | 71% | 44 | 29% | 18 | 100% | 62 |
| Do you have unaddressed medical or dental needs? | 46% | 32 | 54% | 37 | 100% | 69 |

| | YES | | NO | | N/A | | TOTAL | |
|--|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|
| | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | Percent | Count |
| If you have received medical care, was the level of care adequate? | 53% | 39 | 39% | 29 | 8% | 6 | 100% | 74 |
| If you have received dental care, was the level of care adequate? | 59% | 30 | 24% | 12 | 18% | 9 | 100% | 51 |
| Are you receiving medication as prescribed, including scheduling and dosage? | 43% | 41 | 20% | 19 | 38% | 36 | 100% | 96 |

| | 2 DAYS | | 1 WEEK | | 2 WEEKS | | 1 MONTH | | >1 MONTH | | TOTAL | |
|--|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|----------|-------|---------|-------|
| | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | Percent | Count |
| If you have received medical care, how long did it take to care? | 35% | 17 | 35% | 17 | 2% | 1 | 2% | 1 | 27% | 13 | 100% | 49 |
| If you <i>have not</i> received medical care, how long has your request been outstanding? | 20% | 2 | 0% | 0 | 30% | 3 | 10% | 1 | 40% | 4 | 100% | 10 |
| If you have received dental care, how long did it take to care? | 28% | 8 | 17% | 5 | 0% | 0 | 3% | 1 | 52% | 15 | 100% | 29 |
| If you <i>have not</i> received dental care, how long has your request been outstanding? | 9% | 1 | 9% | 1 | 9% | 1 | 18% | 2 | 55% | 6 | 100% | 11 |

26 Additionally, twelve (12) respondents reported receiving substandard care. Five (5) respondents reported dissatisfaction with pain management. Three (3) respondents found that dentists were too quick to extract teeth. Two (2) respondents described navigating medical issues that they understood to be urgent—and in one (1) case was reportedly deemed urgent by a community doctor—but that the facility’s providers did not consider to be urgent. Finally, one (1) provider stated that he was dissatisfied with a specific provider.

Long Waiting Times for Services

Thirty-three percent (33%, 43/131) of all people interviewed in general population brought up wait times and described the system as slow in their respective interviews. These respondents explained that wait times affected their ability to get medication (13 instances) and undergo needed surgeries (3 instances). Five (5) respondents stated that it is difficult to get timely care for issues that are not considered urgent by providers.

- ▶ “If it’s not life-threatening they don’t care, they send you back... Some things I’m waiting until I get home to address...”
- ▶ “I had gum issues and was scheduled for a dental visit, but they pushed me out to deal with an emergency. They won’t reschedule the visit.”
- ▶ “[There are] things they take care of right away and things they take a long time [to get to].”
- ▶ “I was told a month ago my wisdom tooth needed to be pulled before it breaks the tooth next to it. Now the tooth next to it has cracked also. Still haven’t had a response for my request for medical care.”
- ▶ “I’m on the waiting list for fillings and it’s been two months.”

The executive team and medical staff shared relevant information during their respective meetings with CANY representatives. Both noted that staffing was a challenge. Medical staff described these challenges in more detail; they suggested that the Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) program roll out put a strain on their staff. At the time of CANY’s visit, there were 84 people receiving MAT services. Additionally, one (1) of the doctors CANY representatives met with stated the need for another nurse or physician’s assistant.

Mental Health Care

7 Reported experiences of mental health treatment in general population units, the SHU, and GCR were mostly positive, however, most people interviewed were not on the OMH caseload.

Wyoming has a Level 6 OMH designation, which means that no OMH staff are assigned to the facility. People who need mental health services are referred to services at Attica, a Level 1 facility with full-time OMH staff who can provide treatment to patients with major mental health disorders. Wyoming and Orleans are the only Level 6 medium security prisons that CANY visited between January 2022 and May 2023. Albion and Mid-State are Level 1 facilities, Marcy is a Level 2 facility, and Ulster is a Level 3 facility.

No respondents in general population or in SHU, PC, or contraband watch (0%, 0/77) reported being on the OMH caseload (See Table 6). This finding is unsurprising given Wyoming’s OMH designation. Six (6) people CANY spoke with in Wyoming expressed an interest in seeking OMH services. Three (3) of these respondents wanted mental health care but were also hesitant about receiving services.

Table 6. Mental Health

| | Responses | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|
| | YES | | NO | | N/A | | TOTAL | |
| | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | Percent | Count |
| General Population | | | | | | | | |
| Are you on the OMH caseload? | 0% | 0 | 100% | 73 | | | 100% | 73 |
| Are you getting the mental health programs you need? | 0% | 0 | 6% | 4 | 94% | 59 | 100% | 63 |
| Have you attempted to hurt yourself in this prison? | 0% | 0 | 100% | 44 | | | 100% | 44 |
| SHU | | | | | | | | |
| Are you on the OMH caseload? | 0% | 0 | 100% | 4 | | | 100% | 4 |
| Are you getting the mental health programs you need? | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 100% | 3 | 100% | 3 |
| Do you have unaddressed mental health needs? | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | | | 0% | 0 |
| Have you attempted to hurt yourself in this prison? | 0% | 0 | 100% | 0 | | | 100% | 0 |

Interest in OMH Services

Six (6) respondent talked about seeking mental health services in their interviews. Their reasons for seeking care varied. For example, one of these respondents was receiving OMH services at his prior facility, wanted to continue receiving those services, and did not know why or how he ended up at a Level 6 facility. Another two (2) respondents described wanting support as they navigate challenging life events, like grieving the loss of a child. Meanwhile, two (2) separate respondents wanted services to help them cope with the stressors brought on by incarceration. As one respondent put it, “I probably should [be on the caseload] – this place is crazy.”

Hesitancy about Seeking OMH Services

Half of the respondents who expressed a desire for mental health care also had hesitations about pursuing care.

- One (1) respondent stated that he stopped taking his medication to have greater access to programs, asserting that his prescription was at odds with some eligibility requirements.
- One (1) respondent was troubled by an experience he had when he sought care to manage his stress. He described being sent to Attica, where staff attempted to put him in a safety smock.
- One (1) respondent’s son had recently died in a county jail. He said he wanted to talk to someone but did not want to risk being put on suicide watch.

Programming

8 A higher proportion of respondents report being able to access necessary academic and vocational programs in Wyoming compared to other medium security prisons.

Reports of being able to access academic and vocational programs are higher in Wyoming compared to other medium security prisons. Eighty-five (85%, 94/110) of respondents in general population in Wyoming report being able to enroll in the academic and vocational programs they need, compared to 70% (44/63) in Albion, 65% (26/40) in Mid-State, 57% (31/54) in Marcy, and 53% (16/30) in Ulster.²⁷ Additionally, many of these respondents described having positive experiences in programs (23 instances.)

- ▶ “Programs are good I’m in electrical and GED”
- ▶ “I’m in GED and computers...teachers for GED and computer are good...”

Although two respondents in SHU reported being afforded the requisite amount of out-of-cell time and programming, no respondents in SHU units described participating in such programs.

Table 7. Programs and Recreation

| | Responses | | | | | |
|---|-----------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|
| | YES | | NO | | TOTAL | |
| | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | Percent | Count |
| General Population | | | | | | |
| Do you have access to the academic and vocational programs you need? | 85% | 94 | 15% | 16 | 100% | 110 |
| SHU | | | | | | |
| Do you have at least three hours of out of cell programming per day? | 33% | 2 | 67% | 4 | 100% | 6 |
| Do you have at least one hour of out of cell congregate recreation per day? | 40% | 2 | 60% | 3 | 100% | 5 |

²⁷ Seventy-five percent (75%, 6/8) of respondents in general population in Orleans report having access to the academic and vocational program they need.

Staff-Incarcerated Individual Interactions

9 Reports of racialized abuse carried out by staff are higher in Wyoming compared to most other medium security prisons. Several Black respondents made reports of discrimination against their chosen hairstyle, asserting that this discrimination negatively impacted their ability to access services. CANY representatives also heard several reports of staff’s mistreatment of young people—most young people in Wyoming are Black.²⁸

Reports of staff engaging in racialized abuse are higher in Wyoming compared to most medium security prisons. Marcy is the only exception. Fifty-eight percent (58%, 65/113) of respondents in general population in Wyoming report having seen or experienced racialized abuse by staff, compared to 67% (37/55) in Marcy, 43% (26/60) in Albion, 25% (9/36) in Ulster, and 22% (8/36) in Mid-State.²⁹

Depictions of racialized abuse came up frequently in CANY’s interviews. When asked to describe instances of such abuse, most respondents cited cases in which staff used slurs (19 instances) or discriminated against Black people due to their hairstyle (20 instances). When asked about staff behavior more generally, fifteen (15) respondents alleged that young people, the majority of whom are Black, are commonly targeted by staff.

Table 8. Staff-Incarcerated People Interactions

| | Responses | | | | | |
|--|-----------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|
| | YES | | NO | | TOTAL | |
| | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | Percent | Count |
| General Population | | | | | | |
| Have you seen or experienced verbal, physical, or sexual abuse by staff at this prison? | 53% | 63 | 47% | 55 | 100% | 118 |
| Have you seen or experienced racialized abuse by staff at this prison? | 58% | 65 | 42% | 48 | 100% | 113 |
| SHU | | | | | | |
| Have you seen or experienced verbal, physical, or sexual abuse by staff at this prison? | 50% | 4 | 50% | 4 | 100% | 8 |
| Have you seen or experienced racialized abuse by staff at this prison? | 17% | 1 | 83% | 5 | 100% | 6 |

28 Sixty-seven percent (67%, 48/72) of people between the ages of 18 and 21 at Wyoming are Black as of May 1st.

29. Thirty-eight percent (38%, 3/8) of respondents in general population in Orleans report having seen or experience racialized abuse by staff.

Nineteen (19) respondents claimed that they had seen staff direct slurs at others or at themselves. Four (4) of these respondents stated that they had been called the n-word.

- ▶ “Black inmate dropped bread. CO told him to bend down and pick it up, ‘cause you all are GOOD at picking!”
- ▶ “They call us monkey.”

Reports of Hair-Based Discrimination and Access to Services

Eighteen (18) respondents stated that discriminate against Black people with certain hairstyles. Some of these respondents provided specific examples, explaining that staff will prohibit them from going to the yard or mess hall because of their hair.

- ▶ “Staff gives lots of Black men problems about their hair—especially young guys and those who look vulnerable...”
- ▶ “Officers harass me...pull me out of mess hall for no reason. Might be the hair...”

One (1) respondent explained that the facility requires people to pull their hair back in the yard and mess hall, but that the hair ties available to him often break.³⁰ The executive team alluded to the policy that outlines this requirement in the visit debrief—they said they were unaware of any discrimination based on hairstyle and were under the impression that their hair policies adhere to Directive No. 4914, DOCCS’ grooming directive.³¹ Upon discussing the issue with CANY representatives, the executive team committed to looking into the matter and addressing it with Wyoming’s security supervisors.

Reports of Physical Abuse in Specific Areas

Reports of physical abuse came up frequently in CANY’s interviews with incarcerated people (55 instances). Seven (7) respondents housed in various housing blocks alleged that staff physically abuse incarcerated people in a particular vestibule. Another three (3) alluded to “back” units, describing them as more violent, and suggesting that CANY representatives visit them.

- ▶ “Young people are targeted. They’re taken behind the door where they can’t be seen. Anybody who stands up for them gets penalized.”
- ▶ “Staff take them through the double doorway where we can’t see—the inmate tells us later what happened to them.”
- ▶ “COs in the back housing units are more violent, like they got something to prove.”

CANY representatives raised these concerns to the executive team at the debrief. Considering these

³⁰ Relatedly, one (1) respondent noted that the commissary does not carry products for Black hair.

³¹ Directive 4914 states that, unless an incarcerated individual possessed a religious exemption, they can wear only cornrow braids—box braids and twists are prohibited. The directive also specifies that incarcerated people with dreadlocks past their shoulders must tie them back or wear them in an approved religious hair covering. Members of the ILC pointed out that the hair directive had changed in 2021 and that box braids and twists were prohibited because of gang-related activity.

allegations, the First Deputy Superintendent proposed that he would reiterate to sergeants the need to be present on the walkways and other locations of concern and restate their responsibility to oversee officers’ interactions with incarcerated individuals.

Young People

Fifteen (15) respondents claimed that young people endure the most staff abuse. These respondents suggested that young people, and young Black men in particular, are likely to experience discrimination based on hairstyle or physical violence from staff.

- ▶ “Worst jail I ever been in...more respect in [a] max between COs and inmates than here...more police brutality against the young Black men...”
- ▶ “The guards fuck with the kids here...I keep my head down...”

Grievances³²

10 Few respondents report filing grievances. Respondents frequently characterized the grievance process as illegitimate, regardless of whether they had engaged with the system or not.

Reports of engagement with the grievance process are lowest at Wyoming compared to most medium security prisons; Mid-State is the only facility that trails Wyoming. Twenty-eight percent (28%, 33/119) of respondents in Wyoming report filing grievances while in their current prison, compared to 22% (10/45) in Mid-State, 39% (26/66) in Marcy, 43% (16/37) in Ulster, and 57% (37/65) in Albion.³³

DOCCS’ latest semi-annual report examining the grievance program shows that incarcerated people across the prison system filed a total of 10,584 grievances in the first half of 2022. Eighty-three (83) of these grievances were filed in Wyoming. Wyoming accounts for roughly 3% of the state prison population and 1% of grievances filed systemwide. Most grievances filed at Wyoming during this period were related to (1) “Facility Operations” (n=27) and (2) “Executive Direction” (n=24).³⁴

Table 9. Grievances in General Population Units

32 CANY recently published a report examining the grievance process in New York State. The report is available on CANY’s website.

33 Thirteen percent (13%, 1/8) of respondents in general population in Orleans report having filed a grievance while in Orleans.

34 “Facility Operations” grievances filed by incarcerated people in the first half of 2022 fall into the following subcategories: “Housing – Internal Block Affairs” (n=6), “Special Housing Units” (n=1), “Tier I & II Policy & Procedure” (n=1), “Tier III Policy & Procedure” (n=2), “Property” (n=5), “Package Room” (n=9), and “Rules and Regulations” (n=3). “Executive Direction” grievances filed during the same period fall into: “Incarcerated Grievance Program” (n=2), “Inter-Facility Transfers” (n=1), “Staff Conduct” (n=7), “Sexual Harassment” (n=1), and “Miscellaneous” (n=13).

Low Engagement with the Grievance Process

| Questions | Responses | | | | | |
|--|-----------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|
| | YES | | NO | | TOTAL | |
| | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | Percent | Count |
| Have you filed a grievance at this prison? | 28% | 33 | 72% | 86 | 100% | 119 |
| If yes, has your grievance been resolved? | 38% | 10 | 62% | 16 | 100% | 26 |
| Is the grievance process fair? | 12% | 5 | 88% | 37 | 100% | 42 |

| | 2 DAYS | | 1 WEEK | | 2 WEEKS | | 1 MONTH | | >1 MONTH | | NO RESPONSE | | TOTAL | |
|--|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|----------|-------|-------------|-------|---------|-------|
| | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | Percent | Count |
| If you filed a grievance at this prison, how long did it take to get a response? | 10% | 3 | 23% | 7 | 10% | 3 | 10% | 3 | 20% | 6 | 27% | 8 | 100% | 30 |

Seventy-two percent (72%, 86/119) of respondents in general population in Wyoming indicate that they had not initiated the grievance process while incarcerated in Wyoming. Thirty (30) of these respondents contextualized their lack of engagement with the grievance process: 18 claimed they did not want to risk being retaliated against, seven (7) stated they had no need to file a grievance, four (4) expressed a lack of confidence in the system, and one (1) said he is unable to file grievances because he cannot write well. One CANY representative’s notes read: “I don’t write well, that’s why. I would feel comfortable doing so if I could write.”

- ▶ “They retaliate against people.”
- ▶ “Don’t want the retaliation that comes after a grievance.”

During the visit debrief, CANY representatives brought up people’s reported fear of retaliation, highlighting a case in which an individual was reportedly pressured into signing-off on an official grievance decision. The executive team asserted that they monitor allegations of retaliation by staff and refer them to the Office of Special Investigations (OSI). The executive team also stated that an individual had manipulated the grievance process by spreading misinformation, like that grievances were being thrown out. Leadership was under the impression that they had “addressed the concern.”

Dissatisfaction with Grievance Process

Respondents who reportedly had initiated the grievance process in Wyoming echoed some of the concerns voiced by peers who had not initiated the grievance process. Twenty-eight (28) respondents that reported filing grievances in Wyoming elaborated on the experience. Most of these respondents (61%, 17/28) expressed dissatisfaction with the process—they either took issue with specific decisions or resolutions, found the process to be cumbersome, or described it as one-sided.

- ▶ “Waste of time...sergeant says they don’t give a fuck...everybody

[who works here] here is family.”

- ▶ “They [security staff] get the heads up that a grievance was filed..”

Discipline

11 Respondents describe the disciplinary system as unfair, arbitrary, and disproportionately harsh.

A relatively small share of respondents in general population units in Wyoming describe the disciplinary process as fair. Twenty-two percent (22%, 11/50) of respondents in Wyoming report that the disciplinary system is fair, compared to 6% (2/33) in Marcy, 19% (7/30) in Albion, 30% (3/10) in Mid-State, and 35% (6/17) in Ulster.³⁵

CANY representatives talked to 32 people in general population units who had been subject to discipline in Wyoming.³⁶ Twenty-four (24) of these respondents elaborated on their disciplinary tickets and/or sanctions, most of these respondents (67%, 16/24) described receiving loss of privilege sanctions.³⁷ Three (3) respondents described “unofficial” punishment, claiming they were mandated to stay in their cube for extended amounts of time.

³⁵ One (1) respondent in general population in Orleans answered this question, this respondent described the disciplinary system as fair.

³⁶ Twenty-eight percent (28%, 32/115) of respondents had been subject to discipline in Wyoming, compared to 19% (7/36) in Ulster, 39% (18/46) in Marcy, 19% (8/42) in Mid-State, and 58% (34/59) in Albion.

³⁷ During the visit debrief, the executive team noted that number of Tier II tickets, or tickets that result in a loss of privilege sanctions, have increased since the implementation of HALT, which introduced changes to DOCCS’ disciplinary criteria.

Table 10. Discipline

| | Responses | | | | | |
|---|-----------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|
| | YES | | NO | | TOTAL | |
| | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | Percent | Count |
| General Population | | | | | | |
| Have you been subject to discipline at this prison? | 28% | 32 | 72% | 83 | 100% | 115 |
| Is the disciplinary system fair? | 22% | 11 | 78% | 39 | 100% | 50 |
| SHU | | | | | | |
| Have you received additional disciplinary tickets while in SHU? | 13% | 1 | 88% | 7 | 100% | 8 |
| Have you received additional disciplinary confinement time and/or additional punishment in the SHU (e.g. loss of privileges)? | 0% | 0 | 100% | 7 | 100% | 7 |

Perceptions of Unfairness and/or Arbitrariness

Most people who received disciplinary tickets and/or sanctions (59%, 19/32) characterized the disciplinary process as unfair, arbitrary, and/or disproportionately harsh.

- ▶ “You could be not guilty, but you still guilty in their eyes.”
- ▶ “This was a frivolous ticket...claimed I refused program while in honor dorms, but I was trying to get to program committee... put me in SHU. Was supposed to go back to honor dorm after but they didn’t...my excellent disciplinary record should have been considered in this case.”

These concerns were not limited to the subset of respondents who had interacted with the disciplinary system. Most respondents (78%, 39/50) characterized the disciplinary system as unfair. Those who had not been subjected to discipline themselves based their assessments of the disciplinary system on the experience of others. These respondents often pointed to the seemingly biased and informal punishments affecting their peers. For example, one respondent reportedly saw staff give someone a disciplinary ticket for allegedly using a microwave, even though the recipient of that ticket had not used the microwave. Another respondent characterized disciplinary tickets as tools staff use to control incarcerated people, stating that the younger people in the facility get tickets constantly.

Material Conditions and Environmental Issues

12 Respondents were satisfied with some material and environmental conditions, like the state of their living quarters. However, temperature controls were frequently characterized as inadequate.

The share of respondents who report having access to clean water and adequate temperature controls is relatively high across most medium security prisons. Seventy-seven (77%, 85/110) of respondents in general population in Wyoming report having access to clean water outside the commissary compared to 87% (33/38) in Mid-State, 83% (49/59) in Albion, 59% (30/34) in Ulster, and 27% (18/66) in Albion, an outlier.³⁸ Meanwhile, 53% (54/101) of respondents in general population in Wyoming describe the facility’s temperature controls as adequate compared to 76% (28/37) in Mid-State, 70% (24/30) in Ulster, and 42% (23/55) in Marcy.³⁹ CANY representatives found most fixtures in the facility’s living areas to be in good working order during the visit. These observations aligned with the experiences of 54 respondents who characterized their living quarters were adequate.

Additionally, most respondents (1) reported having access to clean drinking water outside the commissary and (2) found Wyoming’s temperature controls to be adequate (see Table 11.) However, the share of respondents who affirmed that temperature controls were adequate in Wyoming is lower compared to most other medium security prisons.

Table 11. Material Conditions and Environmental Issues in General Population Units

| Questions | Responses | | | | | |
|---|-----------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|
| | YES | | NO | | TOTAL | |
| | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | Percent | Count |
| Do you have access to clean drinking water outside of the commissary? | 77% | 85 | 23% | 25 | 100% | 110 |
| Does this prison have adequate temperature controls for each season? | 53% | 54 | 47% | 47 | 100% | 101 |

Temperature Controls

Most respondents at Wyoming—53% (54/101)—characterized the facility’s temperature controls as adequate. Nine (9) of these respondents later qualified their answers. Some of these respondents clarified that the temperature controls were fine relative to other prisons, explaining that they were accustomed to the temperatures being a little “off.” Others reported that, while the controls themselves were functional, they were either turned on or off at inopportune times in each season, which resulted in uncomfortable temperatures. Relatedly, CANY representatives noted that the heat was still on in May.

³⁸ Eighty percent (80%, 4/5) of respondents in general population in Orleans report having access to clean water outside the commissary.

³⁹ CANY representatives asked people in Albion and Orleans two questions about temperature controls: (1) during winter, do you have adequate heat inside? and (2) During summer, is it adequately cool inside?

Concerns about temperature controls were not limited to this subset of respondents. Across CANY's interviews, a total of 54 respondents characterized the facility's temperature control systems as not seasonally appropriate.

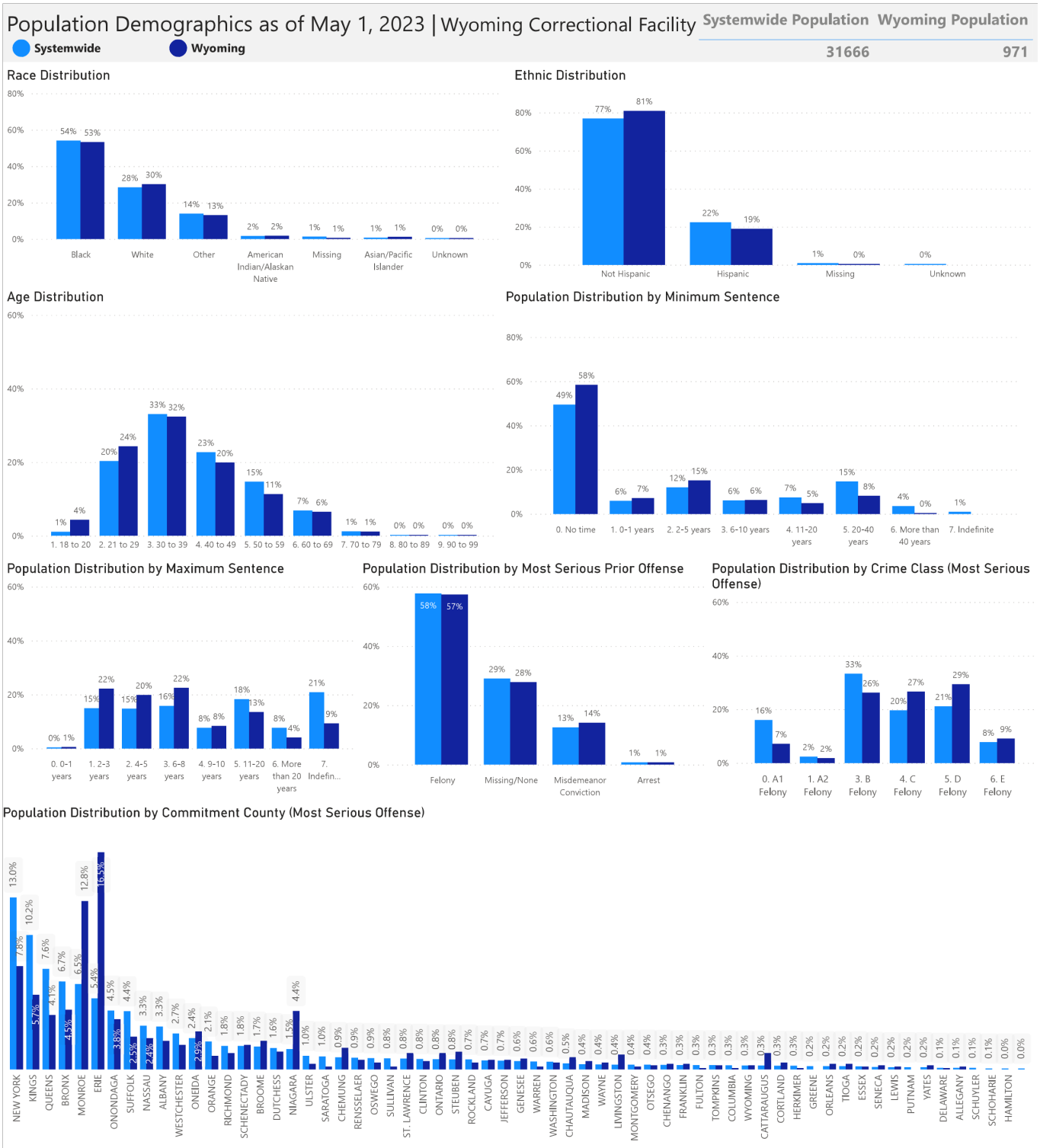
- ▶ “Freezing in winter, it was real bad a few days.”
- ▶ “When it's cold out, heat goes on late and shuts off early.”
- ▶ “Fans don't do nothing...if it's 90 outside it's 100 in here.”
- ▶ “Scorching hot in the summertime...too cold sometimes—wait too long to put heat on.”

Conclusion

This report was provided to DOCCS for a 60-day review period prior to publication to provide an opportunity to respond. The response and the report are published jointly. To view other reports, please visit the reports page. Recent reports issued by CANY include post-visit briefs on Ulster and Eastern, as well as a report examining the grievance system.

CANY thanks the Executive team and staff of the NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision and incarcerated individuals for their knowledge and assistance in supporting the visit. CANY also acknowledges and thanks CANY representatives who contributed to this report and monitoring visit.

Appendix A: Snapshot of Demographic Data



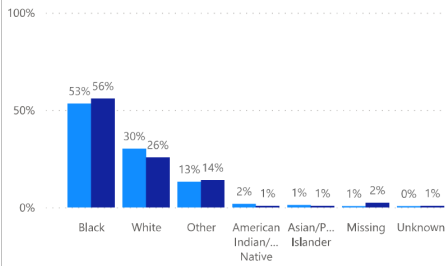
Population Demographics as of May 1, 2023 | Wyoming Correctional Facility

Wyoming Population Interview Sample

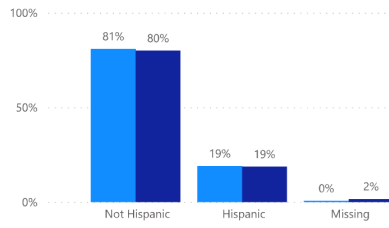
● Wyoming ● Incarcerated People Interviewed by CANY (valid DINS only)

971 129

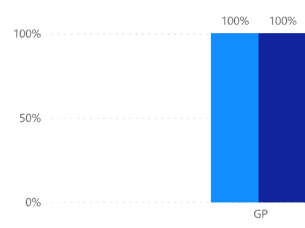
Race Distribution



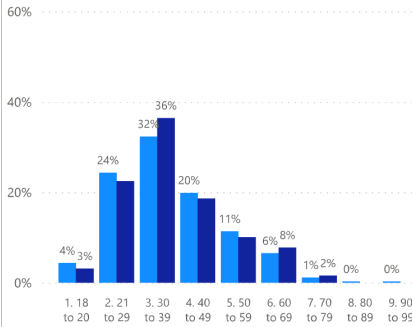
Ethnic Distribution



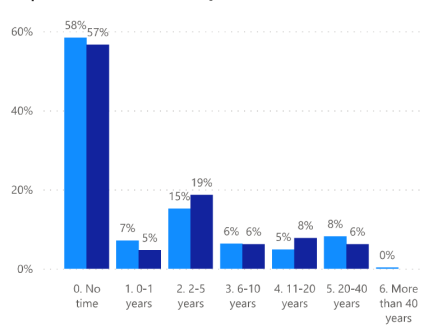
Population Distribution by Unit



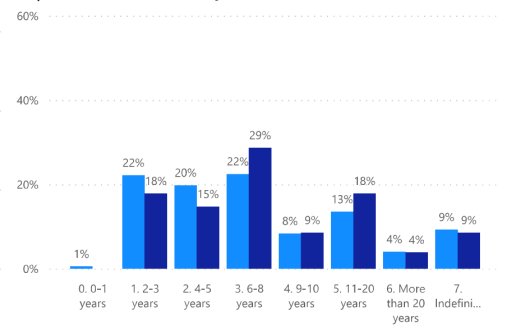
Age Distribution



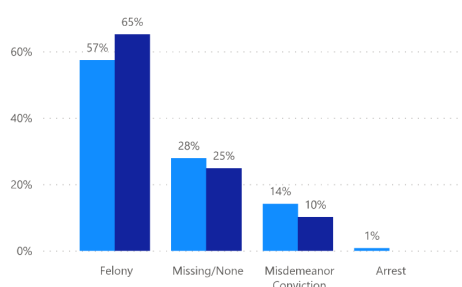
Population Distribution by Minimum Sentence



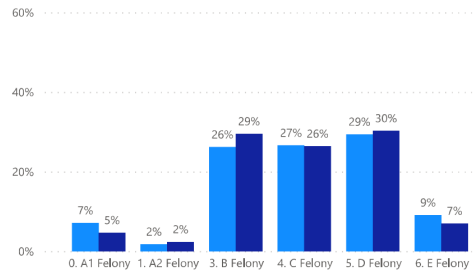
Population Distribution by Maximum Sentence



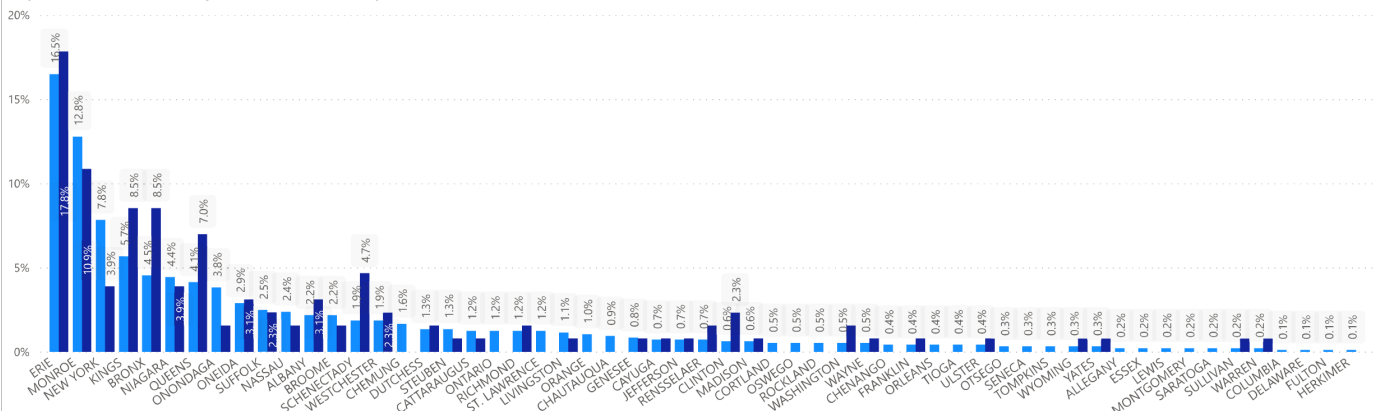
Population Distribution by Most Serious Prior Offense



Population Distribution by Crime Class (Most Serious Offense)

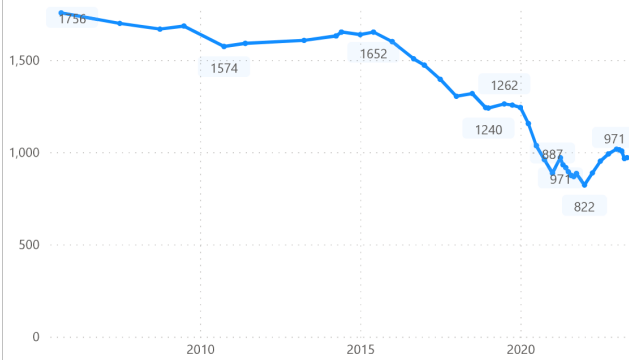


Population Distribution by Commitment County (Most Serious Offense)

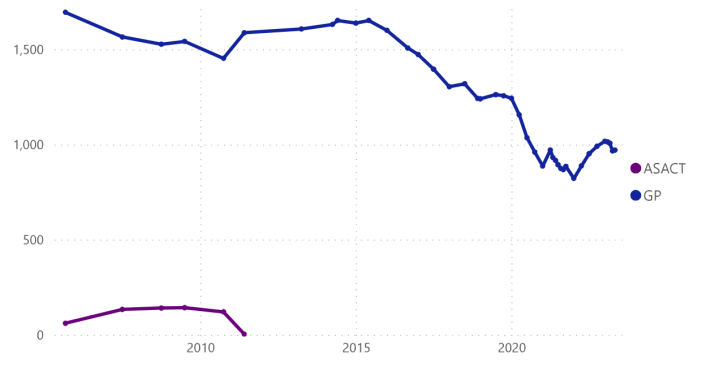


Population Demographics as of May 1, 2023 | Wyoming Correctional Facility

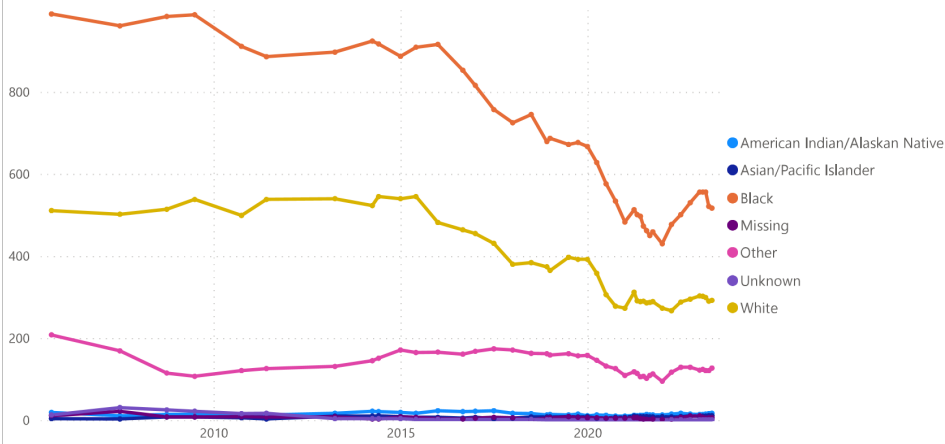
Incarcerated Population Over Time



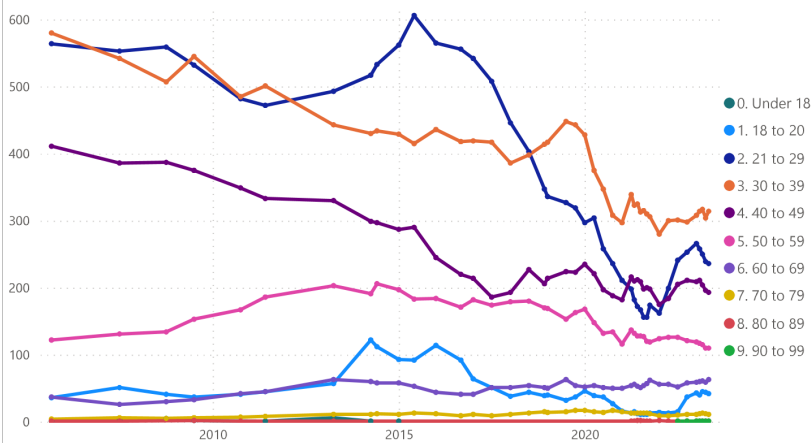
Incarcerated Population Over Time by Unit



Incarcerated Population Over Time by Race



Incarcerated Population Over Time by Age Range



Appendix B: Data Addendum

Wyoming General Population Quantitative Data Addendum

| Question | Yes | No | Total |
|--|-----|------|-------|
| 2m) If you have requested medical care, have you received a response? | 75 | 22 | 97 |
| | 77% | 23% | 100% |
| 2d) If you have requested dental care, have you received a response? | 54 | 25 | 79 |
| | 68% | 32% | 100% |
| 5) Do you have unaddressed medical or dental needs? | 48 | 48 | 96 |
| | 50% | 50% | 100% |
| 7) Are you on the OMH caseload? | 0 | 73 | 73 |
| | 0% | 100% | 100% |
| 10) Have you attempted to hurt yourself in this prison? | 0 | 44 | 44 |
| | 0% | 100% | 100% |
| 11) Have you experienced or witnessed an emergency medical or mental health situation in this prison? | 18 | 26 | 44 |
| | 41% | 59% | 100% |
| 12) Do you have access to the academic and vocational programs you need? | 94 | 16 | 110 |
| | 85% | 15% | 100% |
| 14) Have you seen or been personally subject to verbal, physical, or sexual abuse by staff at this prison? | 63 | 55 | 118 |
| | 53% | 47% | 100% |
| 15) Have you seen or experienced racialized abuse (slurs, stereotyping, discrimination) by staff at this prison? | 65 | 48 | 118 |
| | 53% | 47% | 100% |
| 17) Have you filed a grievance at this prison? | 33 | 86 | 119 |
| | 28% | 72% | 100% |
| 17c) If yes, has your grievance been resolved? | 10 | 16 | 26 |
| | 38% | 62% | 100% |
| 17d) Is the grievance process fair? | 5 | 37 | 42 |
| | 12% | 88% | 100% |
| 18) Have you been subject to discipline at this prison? | 32 | 83 | 115 |
| | 28% | 72% | 100% |
| 18b) Is the disciplinary system fair? | 11 | 39 | 50 |
| | 22% | 78% | 100% |

| Question | Yes | No | Total |
|--|-----|-----|-------|
| 20) Is the commissary adequately stocked with items on a regular basis? | 28 | 77 | 105 |
| | 27% | 73% | 100% |
| 21) Are you able to access items from packages in a timely manner? | 57 | 37 | 94 |
| | 61% | 39% | 100% |
| 23) Are you receiving three meals per day in adequate portions? | 86 | 19 | 105 |
| | 82% | 18% | 100% |
| 24) Do you have access to clean drinking water outside of the commissary? | 85 | 25 | 110 |
| | 77% | 23% | 100% |
| 25) Does this prison have adequate temperature controls for each season (i.e., cooling in the summer, heat in the winter)? | 54 | 47 | 101 |
| | 53% | 47% | 100% |
| 26) Are you able to make phone calls, either by using the phones or through a tablet? | 111 | 3 | 114 |
| | 97% | 3% | 100% |
| 26) Do you receive in-person visits? | 85 | 22 | 107 |
| | 79% | 21% | 100% |
| 28) Have you ever been locked inside your cell for more than 17 hours a day? | 1 | 91 | 82 |
| | 1% | 99% | 100% |

| Question | Yes | No | N/A | Total |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| 3m) If you have received medical care, was the level of care adequate? | 39 | 29 | 6 | 74 |
| | 53% | 39% | 8% | 100% |
| 3d) If you received dental care, was the level of care adequate? | 30 | 12 | 9 | 51 |
| | 59% | 24% | 18% | 100% |
| 4) Are you receiving medication as prescribed, including schedule and dosage? | 41 | 19 | 36 | 96 |
| | 43% | 20% | 38% | 100% |
| 8) If yes, are you getting the mental health programs you need? | 0 | 4 | 59 | 63 |
| | 0% | 6% | 94% | 100% |

| Question | 2 days | 1 week | 2 weeks | 1 month | Longer than 1 month | Total |
|--|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------------------|-------|
| 2a) (MEDICAL) If no, how long has your request been outstanding? | 2 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 10 |
| | 20% | 0% | 30% | 10% | 40% | 100% |
| 2a) (DENTAL) If no, how long has your request been outstanding? | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 11 |
| | 9% | 9% | 9% | 18% | 55% | 100% |
| 2b) (MEDICAL) If yes, how long did it take to get care? | 17 | 17 | 1 | 1 | 13 | 49 |
| | 35% | 35% | 2% | 2% | 27% | 100% |
| 2b) (DENTAL) If yes, how long did it take to get care? | 8 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 15 | 29 |
| | 28% | 17% | 0% | 3% | 52% | 100% |

| Question | 2 days | 1 week | 2 weeks | 1 month | Longer than 1 month | I have not received a response | Total |
|--|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------------------|--------------------------------|-------|
| 16b) (GRIEVANCE) If yes, how long did it take to get a response? | 3 | 7 | 3 | 3 | 6 | 8 | 30 |
| | 10% | 23% | 10% | 10% | 20% | 27% | 100% |

Wyoming Special Housing Unit, Protective Custody, and Contraband Watch Quantitative Data Addendum

| Question | Yes | No | Total |
|---|-----|-----|-------|
| 2) Have you been in a SHU or other form of isolated or solitary confinement for longer than 15 consecutive days? | 1 | 7 | 8 |
| | 13% | 88% | 100% |
| 4) Are you in this unit because of a disciplinary sentence? | 5 | 3 | 8 |
| | 63% | 38% | 100% |
| 8) Have you been in a SHU or other form of segregated confinement for a total of more than 20 days in the last 60 days? | 1 | 6 | 7 |
| | 14% | 86% | 100% |
| 10) Besides the SHU unit at Ulster, have you been in any other disciplinary units here or at other prisons? (If yes, choose all that apply from the following): | 4 | 3 | 7 |
| | 57% | 43% | 100% |
| 11) Were you medically evaluated on arrival? | 6 | 1 | 7 |
| | 86% | 14% | 100% |
| | 7 | 0 | 7 |

| Question | Yes | No | Total |
|---|------|------|-------|
| 12) Did you receive a suicide prevention screening on arrival? | 100% | 0% | 100% |
| 13) Did you receive clean clothing on arrival? | 4 | 3 | 7 |
| | 57% | 43% | 100% |
| 14) Did you undergo a mental health assessment within one day of your arrival? | 3 | 3 | 6 |
| | 50% | 50% | 100% |
| 15) Did you have a hearing where you were sentenced to this current bid in the SHU? | 4 | 2 | 6 |
| | 67% | 33% | 100% |
| 17) Were you told that you could have representation at your hearing by an attorney, paralegal, law student, or fellow incarcerated person? | 3 | 1 | 4 |
| | 75% | 25% | 100% |
| 18) Were you provided an opportunity to make a phone call to your family or an attorney, or to speak to a fellow incarcerated person, to request such representation? | 3 | 3 | 6 |
| | 50% | 50% | 100% |
| 21) Have you received additional disciplinary tickets while in SHU? | 1 | 7 | 8 |
| | 13% | 88% | 100% |
| 23) Have you received additional disciplinary confinement time and/or additional punishment (e.g., loss of privileges) in the SHU? | 0 | 7 | 7 |
| | 0% | 100% | 100% |
| 25) Do you have at least three hours of out of cell programming per day? (Can include individual or group programming) | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| | 33% | 67% | 100% |
| 26) Do you have at least one hour of out of cell congregational recreation per day (i.e., with other incarcerated people)? | 2 | 3 | 5 |
| | 40% | 60% | 100% |
| 34) Are you able to access phone calls, either through the tablet or other means while in the SHU? | 5 | 2 | 7 |
| | 71% | 29% | 100% |
| 36m) If you have requested medical care, have you received a response? | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| | 100% | 0% | 100% |
| 36d) If you have requested dental care, have you received a response? | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | 0% | 100% | 100% |
| 37) If you received medical care, was the level of care adequate? | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| | 50% | 50% | 100% |
| 37) If you received dental care, was the level of care adequate? | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| 39) Do you have unaddressed mental health needs? | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| | 67% | 33% | 100% |
| 41) Are you on the OMH caseload? | 0 | 4 | 4 |
| | 0% | 100% | 100% |

| Question | Yes | No | Total |
|--|-----|------|-------|
| 43) Do you have unaddressed mental health needs? | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| 45) Have you attempted to hurt yourself in this prison? | 0 | 7 | 7 |
| | 0% | 100% | 100% |
| 48) Have you seen or experienced verbal, physical, or sexual abuse by staff in the SHU? | 4 | 4 | 8 |
| | 50% | 50% | 100% |
| 50) Have you seen or experienced racialized abuse by staff (slurs, stereotyping, discrimination, etc.) in the SHU? | 1 | 5 | 6 |
| | 17% | 83% | 100% |
| 52) Have you heard about the HALT Solitary Confinement Act? | 7 | 1 | 8 |
| | 88% | 13% | 100% |

| Question | Yes | No | N/A | Total |
|---|-----|----|------|-------|
| 8) If yes, are you getting the mental health programs you need? | 0 | 0 | 3 | 3 |
| | 0% | 0% | 100% | 100% |

| Question | Before | After | Total |
|---|--------|-------|-------|
| 16) If yes, did that hearing happen before or after you were placed in SHU? | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| | 25% | 75% | 100% |

| Question | Residential Rehabilitation Unit (RRU) | Protective Custody | Administrative Segregation | Keeplock | Long-term Keeplock | Step-Down Program | Mental Health or Other Alternative to Solitary |
|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|----------|--------------------|-------------------|--|
| 10) Besides the SHU at Wyoming, have you been in any other disciplinary units here or at other prisons? If yes, choose all that apply from the following. | 4 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 0 |

*Respondents were able to select more than one options

| Question | 21 and younger | 55 and older | Pregnant | Postpartum | With a mental health need | With a disability |
|--|----------------|--------------|----------|------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 19) Are you a member of any of the following populations? (Check all that apply) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |

*Respondents were able to select more than one options

| Question | Hand shackles | Ankle shackles | Cages | RESTART chairs | Waist chains | No restraints |
|--|---------------|----------------|-------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| 30) During programs, are any of these restraints used: | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

*Respondents were able to select more than one options

| Question | Black or African American | Puerto Rican and Dominican | White | Total |
|---|---------------------------|----------------------------|-------|-------|
| 56) Please describe your racial identity. | 7 | 1 | 1 | 9 |
| | 78% | 11% | 11% | 100% |

| Question | Male | Total |
|--|------|-------|
| 66) In your own words, please describe your gender identity. | 9 | 9 |
| | 100% | 100% |



Corrections and Community Supervision

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

DANIEL F. MARTUSCELLO III
Acting Commissioner

The Correctional Association of New York's (CANY) visited Wyoming Correctional Facility on May 8th and 9th of 2023 and issued a draft report. The Department responds to the draft report as follows:

Programming

The New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) welcomes the positive feedback received regarding the quality of programming and vast opportunities at Wyoming Correctional Facility. This is one example of the efforts being taken state-wide that provide life-changing academic, vocational, and rehabilitative programs, highlighting opportunities that are not often seen behind prison walls, which has made the Department a national leader in corrections. As noted in the report, Wyoming Correctional Facility has a large academic and vocational staff who provide enhanced academic and vocational programming at four different daily modules. In addition to the programs listed in the report, Wyoming Correctional Facility offers floor covering and bilingual programs.

Basic Provisions of Services

Commissary - Commissary is a privilege that provides incarcerated individuals with the opportunity to supplement DOCCS provided meals, clothing, and other provisions to maintain cleanliness, health, and morale. Commissary vendors are selected via a competitive bid process in compliance with New York State Finance Law. All food items are sold at cost. DOCCS is aware of the effects of inflation on commissary items. Unfortunately, commissary vendors have been subject to the same inflationary pressures and product availability issues that have impacted the economy.

In accordance with contracting requirements, as our staff are notified of documented item price changes by the vendor (due to manufacturer increases, increased shipping/freight costs, etc.), it is incumbent upon staff to update our for-sale prices accordingly so that we are not selling items at a loss. Also, when staff are notified of instances where items are no longer available, alternative vendors are sought for the specific items effected.

At the time of the CANY visit certain commissary items were difficult to obtain due to supply chain issues with the vendors. Temporary limitations were implemented as a way of making the distribution of those items more equitable. The Facility has added fresh fruits and vegetables to its available list.

Additionally, the business office staff at Wyoming Correctional Facility will impose limits on certain items to help maintain availability to the entire population. This action has significantly improved product availability. There are generally 2-3 items out-of-stock from a list of 100 or more items. If items stay on the out-of-stock list for more than a week, another vendor is utilized.

Packages - Directive #4911, "Packages & Articles Sent to Facilities," outlines procedures for processing, issuing, having item discrepancies reviewed and returning packages, as well as a listing of allowable items that can be received by incarcerated individuals through the package room. Wyoming Correctional Facility package room has consistent staff coverage. Incarcerated individuals are

encouraged to file a claim for any item(s) declared missing/damaged in accordance with Directive #2733, "Incarcerated Individual Personal Property Claim." Claims are then investigated per Department policy and the incarcerated individual is notified of the determination.

All packages received with appropriate items are processed and distributed in a timely fashion. There are times that a package may be delayed because of the volume of packages received at the same time. Unauthorized items are appropriately documented and returned. Regarding missing items, generally that is due to vendor operations and logistics. Out of 210 grievances filed at the Facility for 2023, 13 were related to the package room. In addition to filing a grievance, incarcerated individuals can lodge complaints to the area Sergeant.

Nutrition

DOCCS strives to provide a variety of foods on all available menus and takes into consideration visual appeal, nutritional requirements, preference, and religious requirements. Food is randomly sampled monthly at the Office of Nutritional Services to ensure quality and consistency. For example, fresh produce is delivered two days per week and inspected to ensure quality. Wyoming Correctional Facility staff and I/Is are thoroughly trained on the safe handling of all food. The food that is served at Wyoming CF follows a statewide 8-week cycle menu. This menu is created within the Nutritional Service office and approved by a registered dietician. The nutritional values and portions are adequate for healthy adult individuals.

Special menus are created to address medical, allergic, and religious requirements. Religious meal participation is handled pursuant to Directive #4202 "Religious Programs and Practices" and the DOCCS Religious Menu, which is published annually. Special dietary meals, religious meals, holiday meals, organization sponsored meals and special event meals all contribute to the unique variety of meals available.

Members of the Incarcerated Liaison Committee (ILC) are polled quarterly on menu items they like; menu items they don't like and can even offer menu items they would like instead. This quarterly report is also filled out by the Food Service Administrator, and Superintendent. Once signed by all parties, it is forwarded to the Correctional Food Nutritional Services Director and then to the Food Production Center. This process allows the population to share items they prefer, items they do not prefer, and items they would like to add to the menu.

Phone Calls and Tablets

Incarcerated individuals have access to telephones and tablets in accordance with Directive #4423, "Incarcerated Individual Telephones," and Directive #4425, "Incarcerated Individual Tablet Program." Individuals have two opportunities each day to go to the yard and access the phones. Recreation yard staff monitor phone usage in order to ensure equitable access for all and to limit unauthorized groups from influencing their usage. Any instances of abuse are addressed immediately. There is sufficient time during the yard periods for the incarcerated population to access the phones. In addition to the yard phones, the incarcerated population is afforded emergency phone calls when needed. Incarcerated individuals within a Special Housing Unit (SHU) have the ability to make calls through the tablets.

The Department recognizes the importance of the population being able to communicate with family and friends at reasonable rates. Accordingly, the Department has recently extended our current incarcerated phone contract and renegotiated the rates associated with the phone program. This

process has reduced the total cost per minute for a domestic call from \$.0399 per minute to \$.035 per minute and provides each incarcerated individual with two free 15-minute calls per week. Additionally, the Department has entered into a new tablet contract that has resulted in additional cost reductions. This includes reducing the price of a single stamp from \$.20 per stamp to \$.15 per stamp for single purchases, with stamp bundles being similarly reduced from \$.15 to \$.12 per stamp, for a bundle of 100 stamps. Each incarcerated individual with access to a general confinement tablet and kiosk now receives eight (8) free stamps per month to use for secure messaging. The Department has successfully negotiated up to 15,000 free stamps annually that are allocated equitably to college prison programs and other educational providers. This allows educational providers to send and receive secure messages at no cost. A new reduced-price fee structure for online/phone money transfers has been negotiated for each amount category. Of course, there continues to be no cost for depositing funds via the conventional visitor deposit lockbox located at each correctional facility or by money order/personal check mailed to the JPay lockbox address.

The Department has also successfully negotiated the deployment of Wi-Fi technology that will allow for the installation of a phone application on all general population tablets, as well as the ability to send and receive secure messages and access additional services without connecting to the kiosk. The Department plans to bring this process with a pilot program and then move forward with installation in the remainder of the facilities.

Material Conditions and Environmental Issues

Temperatures at the facility have generally ranged within the appropriate winter and summer comfort zones, ventilation is provided through a combination of operable windows and mechanical ventilation. During periods of extreme outdoor temperatures, fans are provided in various locations, including housing units within the facility, to provide further comfort of the occupants. Temperature-controlled showers are available in all housing units at the facility.

Wyoming Correctional Facility is currently being upgraded to New York Power Authority (NYPA) standards, which are anticipated to expand the temperature controls in multiple areas. Maintenance staff continuously respond to all temperature complaints and adjust settings accordingly.

A capital project to re-surface the shower room is on facility planning's capital project schedule and is prioritized. In the interim, maintenance staff continually ensures repairs are made to the floor, wall, and plumbing fixtures. All areas are inspected on a weekly basis, and deficiencies are addressed promptly and appropriately.

Professionalism

Allegations of unprofessional conduct by staff is taken very seriously. DOCCS has a zero tolerance for violence or discrimination within our facilities and anyone engaged in misconduct will be disciplined, and if warranted, incidents will be referred for outside prosecution. DOCCS utilizes the Office of Special Investigations (OSI) to investigate allegations of staff misconduct and complaints of sexual abuse. Furthermore, allegations made regarding discrimination or racialized abuse are delegated to the Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) for review. When facts indicate that staff have acted unprofessionally, the matter is forwarded to the Department's Bureau of Labor Relations for appropriate disciplinary measures. Facilities must also be in compliance with all Prison Rape Elimination Act standards, which are audited on a regular basis.

Additionally, DOCCS has invested millions of dollars to implement pilot programs to improve safety within its facilities that includes deployment of body-worn cameras and accompanying policies for their use. In addition, the Department is currently working to upgrade our existing body-worn cameras and significantly expand the deployment of these devices in all facilities, including Wyoming Correctional Facility.

The Department is committed to holding staff to the highest standards of public service. The Department takes pride in the degree of fairness, professionalism, integrity, and transparency expected of our staff in providing excellent service. As such, all allegations of an employee not meeting those standards are investigated thoroughly and are taken very seriously. The Department has several safeguards in place to prevent and report misconduct. The incarcerated population has been educated on the many avenues to report allegations of misconduct and incidents of abusive behavior directly to facility staff and OSI, as well as outside agencies. The Facility Executive Team conducts daily rounds to observe facility operations and speak with staff and the incarcerated population by engaging with them directly. This assists the Executive Team in ensuring that the Department's policies are administered in a fair, equitable, and consistent manner and to spot any other issues of concern that hasn't been reported.

OSI serves as the Department's investigative body. The primary mission of OSI is to advance the mission and statutory mandates of the Department; vigorously pursue justice through fair, thorough, and impartial investigations; and foster accountability, integrity, and safety within the Department. The incarcerated population may write to any facility supervisory staff to report complaints. All complaints that are received by the facility are documented and investigated. This includes staff communications with incarcerated individuals. The incarcerated population have unrestricted access to OSI via the hotline and can report all alleged abuse.

As part of its functions, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) reviews and monitors Incarcerated Individual Programs and Services for Fairness and Equity, as well as respond timely to complaints with allegations of discrimination. It is the policy of DOCCS to eliminate, mitigate, and respond to racial disparities to ensure a fair and equitable distribution of benefits and burdens in the placement of incarcerated individuals in housing unit assignments, institutional work assignments, and programs. ODI takes all allegations of racial slurs and misconduct seriously gives each incident the necessary time for a thorough review. The Department is committed to maintaining a respectful, positive and productive environment for the population under our care and supervision. Furthermore, all oral and written communications by employees to incarcerated individuals shall be accomplished in a professional, courteous, and dignified manner. As such, conduct or language which violates the Employees' Manuals or fails to comply with direct orders it contains could result in administrative and/or disciplinary action. Any administrative processes associated with incarcerated individual who may be subject to discipline and grievances are conducted fairly and in an impartial manner, to ensure that decisions are not influenced by stereotypes or bias based on their membership in a protected class, which include: age, race, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, marital or familial status, veteran's status, or criminal convictions history. To note, all staff must receive implicit bias training on an annual basis.

Population's perception of discrimination by staff may be related the enforcement of Directive #4914 "Incarcerated Individual Grooming Standards." The grooming standards require all incarcerated individuals' hair to be neatly groomed and clean at all times to support appropriate hygiene and ensure staff is able to accurately identify all individuals. Individuals who are not appropriately attired or groomed or who are not in compliance with Directive #4914 have, at times, been told to return to their dorms to get into compliance. Once in compliance, they may return. To note, much of Wyoming

Correctional Facilities population is younger. Their custodial adjustment may also be a cause for misperception of bias in the enforcement of policy. As part of the rehabilitation mission of the Department, accountability teaches the population the need for discipline, respect, and the importance of developing a principled work ethic.

As discussed previously, the body worn camera systems bolster the efforts of investigators through objective and evidence-based examinations. Any substantiated case of misconduct by an employee is referred to the Department's Bureau of Labor Relations for consideration of disciplinary action, which may include termination of the employee. In addition, any misconduct, where there is evidence of criminality, will be referred to outside law enforcement authorities for potential criminal charges. The Department maintains a zero-tolerance policy regarding verbal or physical abuse.

It should be noted that the referenced 141 incarcerated individuals interviewed represent approximately 15% of the total population of Wyoming Correctional Facility at the time of the CANY visit. This is not an accurate depiction of the macro relationship between staff and the incarcerated population. There are thousands of daily interactions, in which staff maintain fairness, professionalism, and integrity when providing essential services.

Unusual Incidents - All Unusual Incidents and Uses of Force are documented and reviewed by executive staff. Any concern that an application of force is inconsistent with Department policy is referred to OSI for examination. Further, all staff involved in an incident are required to provide written documentation of their involvement in the incident and supervisors are required to provide written documentation of their independent investigation of the incident. All video footage that is available is made part of the record along with any photographs of the incident to include incarcerated individuals and staff. Since the inception of Humane Alternatives to Long Term (HALT) Solitary Confinement Law, assaults on staff by incarcerated individuals have dramatically increased. Moreover, assaultive behavior amongst the incarcerated population has also increased. This behavior is directly related to gang activity, owed debts, and may be used as a tool by the incarcerated population to be transferred to another facility.

The safety and well-being of staff and incarcerated individuals is our top priority. Despite the overall rise in prison violence, which resulted in higher Unusual Incidents throughout the State, higher than average Unusual Incidents at Wyoming Correctional Facility can be attributed to the larger presence of a younger population. A review of the Unusual Incidents at Wyoming Correctional Facility highlights the higher amounts of drug/alcohol contraband discovered and seized when compared to the system overall. These seizures at Wyoming Correctional Facility prevented the illicit substances from getting to the population, preventing abuse, overdose, violence, and nefarious activities that are not consistent with the Department's mission. The attentiveness and dedication of staff who work to thwart the introduction of contraband is commended.

Regarding deaths, the official cause of all I/I deaths is determined and released by the Medical Examiner's Office pursuant to County Law §§ 671, 674, whereby state coroners and medical examiners determine the cause of death. Any death that appears to not be from natural causes or a known medical condition is thoroughly investigated by New York State Police and OSI Investigations. Additionally, all deaths within the Department are reviewed by the State Commission of Correction. A review of the Unusual Incidents established that the referenced 2022 was in fact memorialized with an Unusual Incident Report.

Regarding fires, they are rare occurrences in DOCCS. Wyoming Correctional Facility had one reportable fire in 2023 in a utility room. No incarcerated individuals were present or needed to be evacuated. The fire was put out with a fire extinguisher and the equipment was replaced the same day.

Staffing - The Department has filled the critical role at Wyoming Correctional Facility of Deputy Superintendent of Security and is in the process of appointing a Captain at the facility. Additionally, the Department, like many law enforcement agencies across the country, is experiencing challenges in its recruitment of staff. The Department is focused on recruiting and training those individuals interested in working for the Department. The Albany Training Academy continually holds Correction Officer Trainee Recruit classes, and the Department works swiftly to place qualified candidates into the training program. The Department partnered with the Department of Civil Service to move the Correction Officer Trainee examination process to one of continuous recruitment, allowing the Department to better respond to our workforce needs.

Individuals who complete the Correction Officer Trainee application can expect to be canvassed within two to four weeks of their submission. Those who are interested in continuing the process are then screened to determine if they meet the qualifications. Once qualified, incoming recruits are placed in a Recruit Class, which are currently running on an approximately monthly basis. In 2023, there have been seven Recruit Class graduations, which have ranged from 19-58 graduates per class.

Regarding the hiring of programing and education staff, in 2023, the Facility hired an Supervising Offender Rehabilitation Coordinator (SORC), an Offender Rehabilitation Coordination (ORC), a Recreation Program Leader, three academic teacher positions, and two office assistant positions have been filled. The Facility continues to recruit for other civilian staff positions.

Visitation

Appropriate participation in the visitor program provides incarcerated individuals with opportunities to maintain relationships with friends and relatives and to promote better community adjustment upon release. Contact with persons from the community provides incarcerated individuals with emotional support in adjusting to the custodial environment. With that in mind, we ensure that the space is accommodating and suitable for visits. Any issues that require attention regarding interactions with staff are shared and reviewed by the appropriate office. Wyoming Correctional Facility has a bright, clean, and inviting space for family and friends to connect with the incarcerated individuals. Wyoming visitation programs runs weekends and holidays between the hours of 8:15a.m. to 3:15p.m. The scheduled is posted on the DOCCS website. Additionally, in an effort to facilitate further opportunities to maintain relationships, Wyoming Correctional Facility also offers video visitation as an alternative for those visitors who cannot physically visit in person.

Medical

With regards to accessibility of healthcare services, access to emergency medical care is available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Scheduled sick call is available four days a week along with on-site clinical services five days a week. An incarcerated individual can request emergency sick call at any time during the day or night. When incarcerated individuals are transferred to Wyoming Correctional Facility, medical reviews with each incarcerated individual the sick call procedures, emergency sick call procedures, medication refill processing, how to access providers, and appointment processing so that the incarcerated individual is well informed and educated.

In response to concerns about wait times for medical care, it should be noted that specialty care appointments are scheduled with community providers, not DOCCS providers. Appointments are prioritized and scheduled based on medical urgency. It not possible to respond to general medical concerns as treatment and scheduling of providers is unique to each individual. Without identifying the individuals with a specific concern, we are not able comment on whether the wait times were appropriate for the medical condition. Additionally, if an Incarcerated Individual is identified, their health information is considered confidential, and its release is protected by the Federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, the New York State Public Health Law, and Department policies. Privacy requirements do not allow the disclosure of specific health information without the Incarcerated Individual's written authorization. All requests for Incarcerated Individual health information, as well as inquiries regarding treatment, require authorization before the release of any information.

Notwithstanding, the Facility is committed to providing quality health care that serves the "needs" of incarcerated individuals. A divergence occurs when an individual gets what they "need" and that need diverges from what they want. The Department requests CANY to encourage the incarcerated individuals who they are in contact with to utilize this system to request, at any time, and to be placed on a sick call to discuss their treatment with their facility provider.

Wyoming has two full-time physicians and ongoing recruitment efforts for the Nurse Practitioner vacancy. The dental staffing consists of two full-time dentists and one dental hygienist. Dental appointments are triaged, and callouts are scheduled based on urgency. After hours emergent dental issues are seen by Medical for assessment and appropriate treatment. Outside dental referrals are scheduled as needed. As previously mentioned regarding health care concerns, it is challenging to examine and respond to general dental concerns as treatment and scheduling is unique to each individual.

Regarding the Medication Addiction Treatment (MAT), as of December 8, 2023, Wyoming Correctional Facility had 113 incarcerated on being treated with MAT medication options. The MAT program is growing every month. The healthcare and security staff in all DOCCS facilities receive initial and ongoing training to respond to healthcare emergencies. Staff are trained on a variety of elements including, but not limited to, the recognition of signs and symptoms and knowledge of actions required in potential emergencies; administration of first aid, CPR and AED; and administration of Narcan to unresponsive persons. Additionally, to ensure staff can respond to a healthcare emergency anywhere in a facility within three minutes of being notified, each facility is required to conduct an annual emergency response drill on each shift.

Mental Health

The Department partners with the New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH) in providing special programs along a continuum of care for incarcerated individuals with a mental illness. Referrals to OMH can come from staff, other incarcerated individuals or by the incarcerated individuals themselves. When a referral is made, the individual will be scheduled to be seen by OMH Any incarcerated individual in need of OMH services are sent to an appropriate facility in a timely fashion. Anyone in duress is immediately referred for OMH intervention. All dorms, common areas (libraries, transitional services, chapels, etc.) have posters encouraging the population to speak to staff if they are having a mental health crisis or need to speak to OMH.

Grievances

The Incarcerated Grievance Program (IGP) is designed to provide each incarcerated individual with an orderly, fair, simple, and expedited method for resolving their concerns. While incarcerated individuals are still expected to resolve problems on their own, through informal communication with staff, the IGP provides a formal structure to help incarcerated individuals peacefully address issues. This process also allows the Department the opportunity to correct problems internally, identify issues in need of administrative attention, and clarify policies and procedures. The IGP is a non-adversarial process designed to allow staff and incarcerated individuals the opportunity to mediate resolutions to problems in the facility. In addition to addressing formal grievances, IGP staff also interact with incarcerated individuals through non-calendared contacts, which assists them in resolving problems without a formal grievance being filed.

The grievance procedure is initiated by the incarcerated individual. If an incarcerated individual is unable to resolve the problem through informal channels, the individual may file a written grievance within twenty-one calendar days of the incident in question (exceptions may be granted up to 45 days). The incarcerated grievance resolution committee (IGRC) has sixteen calendar days in which to attempt to informally resolve the complaint or hold a hearing. The IGRC is comprised of two voting incarcerated individuals, two voting staff members, and a non-voting chairperson, that can either be an incarcerated individual, staff member, or outside volunteer associated with the facility's program. The incarcerated individual has seven calendar days from the receipt of the IGRC's written response to appeal to the facility Superintendent. The Superintendent has up to twenty calendar days (25 calendar days for staff conduct complaints) to render a decision. If the incarcerated individual wishes to appeal further, the individual has seven calendar days from the receipt of the Superintendent's decision to appeal to the Central Office Review Committee (CORC). CORC is comprised of Central Office staff who review grievance appeals on behalf of the Commissioner. CORC is the final level of administrative review for grievances filed through the IGP mechanism.

Each grievance that is filed is resolved with a resolution. During the 2023 calendar year, a total of 234 grievances were filed on behalf of the population at Wyoming Correctional Facility. Any complaints, of which there were none, would have been thoroughly investigated. Typically, grievance clerks, who are members of the incarcerated population, are the individuals tasked with approaching the grievant to "sign off", only if there a resolution is agreed upon by the grievant. A grievant is not able to retaliate for filing a grievance. Any allegation of retaliation is referred to OSI for appropriate examination and action, as previously discussed.

Discipline

Incarcerated individuals in a correctional facility are expected to abide by certain rules of conduct which are established to protect them from potential harm, either as a result of injury to their person or loss or damage of their property. Rules of conduct also serve to establish standards for behavior, which are both reasonable and consistent. Disciplinary action is one of many essential elements in correctional treatment. When applied reasonably and fairly, it not only assists in protection of the health, safety, and security of all persons within a correctional facility, but also is a positive factor in rehabilitation of incarcerated individuals and the morale of the facility.

Persons vested with responsibility for disciplinary measures in facilities of the Department are expected to consider each situation individually. The control of incarcerated individual activities, including disciplinary action, must be administered in a completely fair, impersonal, and impartial manner and must be as consistent as possible. Disciplinary measures should not be overly severe and must never be arbitrary or capricious, or administered for the purpose of retaliation or revenge. Therefore, it is DOCCS policy that any administrative processes associated with incarcerated individuals who may be

subject to discipline and grievances are conducted fairly, to ensure that decisions are not influenced by stereotypes or bias based on age, race, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, veteran's status, or non-violent political views.

SHU confinement guidelines are in compliance with the HALT. The guidelines reflect the elimination of "Keeplock," the elimination of prehearing confinement and confinement sanctions for Tier II incidents, and reduced confinement penalties for certain Tier III proceedings. Such sanctions are less restrictive than being confined to a Special Housing Unit (SHU). Review Officers are expected to utilize the lowest appropriate tier level designation. Additionally, Hearing Officers must ensure they are progressive with the imposition of sanctions, dependent on articulable facts for the specific incident and circumstances at issue.

When an incarcerated individual is subject to a Superintendent's Hearing, they are permitted to be represented by an attorney, law student, paralegal, or incarcerated individual contingent upon the representative satisfying the requirements established by the Department's objective criteria. To ensure incarcerated individuals have the ability to contact their representative, direction have been issued to all facilities to accomplish this in an efficient and timely manner.

If an incarcerated individual believes a hearing was conducted unfairly or in violation of HALT, they are able to appeal its decision in accordance with Department policy dependent on the Tier level of the hearing.

The safety of staff and incarcerated individuals continues to be of primary importance to the Department. As such, the Department has closely monitored the activities within our RRUs and alternative units, monitored program participation, along with key violence indicators, and engaged Superintendents, staff, and the incarcerated population. Careful steps have been taken to methodically perform individualized assessments to determine if an individual should be restrained while participating in out-of-cell programming, consistent with HALT. Incarcerated individuals within RRU are escorted and programming unrestrained, unless, an individual assessment is performed that determines restraints are required due to a significant and unreasonable risk to the safety and security of other incarcerated individuals or staff.

In conclusion, Wyoming Correctional Facility staff continually demonstrate the ability to maintain care, custody, and the well-being of the individuals sentenced to State imprisonment. Wyoming Correctional Facility enhances the quality of the New York State criminal justice system by protecting lives, preserving peace, maintaining order, and enhancing public safety by having incarcerated persons return home less likely to revert to criminal behavior.

May 8-9, 2023

Monitoring Visit to Wyoming Correctional Facility

Post-Visit Briefing
Correctional Association of New York

Post Office Box 793
Brooklyn, NY 11207
212-254-5700 (We accept collect calls)
info@correctionalassociation.org
www.correctionalassociation.org

