

Update to the BOV Annual Report 2020



Franklin County Detention Center  
Farmington, Maine  
Sheriff Scott Nichols

**Franklin County Detention Center**  
**121 County Way**  
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**Preface**

We would like to thank the Franklin County Board of Visitors for their professionalism, time and dedication to improving the Franklin County Detention Center through their expertise in the fields of technology, medical, mental health and other areas. We take the recommendations made by the board seriously. Many of the recommendations for improvements have been implemented. Others will be considered based on urgency and budget restraints.

Included in this report are the area resources for inmates upon their release from the Franklin County Detention Center. A packet will be given to each of the following as a guide; Clearwater Counseling & Consultation, (whom provided us with this guide), DHHS ICM Bill Hall, Maine Pre-trial Brandi Thomas.

This will also be of topic during our next Programs meeting and will be available to anyone that requests a copy.

Contributing to this effort to provide the best possible environment for both staff and the inmate population are the following;

Sheriff Scott Nichols, Major Douglas Blauvelt, Lieutenant John Donald, Maintenance Manager John Welch, Cook Supervisor Lorna Nichols Classification Officer Victoria Parker, All Corrections Officers, Medical Department MedPro, Clearwater Counseling & Consultation Andrea Bradford and Dalene Sinskie, Education Director Sue Knight, Maine Pre-trial Brandi Thomas, DHHS Intensive Case Manager Bill Hall.

### Recommendations

#### Recruitment

1. We have in the past and will continue in the future attend job fairs promoting a Corrections career. The suggested Colleges have been contacted to place ads on their web page when available.
2. Franklin County is in the upper middle pay scale for corrections officer pay. Good benefits and retirement packages are available.
3. We have a long-term ad for Corrections Officers on the MCJA website.

#### Retention

1. All of the recommended training is covered through FCDC annual training that meets the MDOC Standards and the MCJA mandatory continuing education training. In addition to that training, new officers attend the MCJA Basic Corrections Training Program. This five (5) week program covers many topics.  
(See Attachment 1).  
Franklin County Correctional staff have five (5) certified dedicated instructors that volunteer to teach at the MCJA BCTP.
2. Maintaining adequate staffing is a nationwide problem due to the nature of the job. We all wear multiple hats to assist each other in any way possible. This respect for each other not only happens here in Franklin County but extends to other nearby counties and state facilities.
3. Franklin County recognizes Officers of the Quarter and Officer of the year. These officers are chosen by their peers and the names are presented to administration. Sheriff Nichols prepares certificates and plaques for the receiving officers. There have been other lifesaving awards presented to Corrections staff due to their outstanding efforts and attention to details.
4. In the last 4-5 years Jail Command staff has made the physical and mental health and wellbeing of its officers a priority, as it had been largely ignored and left up to the individual. The stress the job puts on the life of an officer is something that many do not anticipate or plan for.
5. We heartily recommend responsibly taking earned time off, planning vacations in advance, and regular exercise. No Limits Fitness is an excellent, 24 hour gym located in Farmington that offers significant discounts for Corrections Officers. We recommend it highly to all staff.

6. Critical incident debriefings are something that Sheriff Nichols made available to Corrections staff. The mental health of the Corrections division was not of concern to previous administrations. The LT is also available for any officer, at any time, for a closed door venting session.
7. **Infrastructure and Technology**

#### Building

1. The facility has limited space in general. The Medical room is definitely small quarters. This is the only space within the secure facility where Corrections can safely escort inmates without going through the Public lobby. We have tried to identify another space for medical records. Having spoken with the administrator for our current medical provider, having a separate room for medical records would be burdensome at best. The medical staff would still have to have computer access and a desk in the exam room. The other option is to expand the building to create a larger medical room. This is being explored by our maintenance manager. The expense will be substantial. I hope to have a quote available at the time of this report. A. E. Hodsdon Consultant Engineer has been contacted. (See Attachment 2) The entire inside of the facility has been painted by the Maintenance manager, Administrative staff and inmate workers over the past few months as the population has been limited during the pandemic (See Attachment 3)
2. We currently have a multi-purpose room for which we can and currently use as a conference room. We use the current library for meetings, Inmate programs, training, interviews etc. Pre-Covid, we have also used the conference room at dispatch.
3. Maine Pre-trial and DHHS ICM share a large room which seems to work out well as the often share a common goal to provide inmates with services upon their release from custody. Coordination between the two is critical. Having Maine Pre-trial and DHHS ICM in the building reduces the cost of the services having not to be charged rental space. This room is also our Video Arraignment room where Maine Pre-trial attends the arraignments of inmates that are in need of a contract ordered by the Court system.
4. We have four (4) visitations areas for inmates to visit with their families. This allows for four (4) inmates to visit every half hour for three hours each evening, Sunday through Friday and one weekend day Saturday. This plan exceeds the MDOC Mandatory Standard (J.10) for visitation.  
*J.10. The Administrator should establish a visiting schedule which includes opportunities for at least two hours each week for general population inmates to visit with family and friends, to include at least one weekend day and one evening during the week. The facility should provide for special visits outside of visiting hours when necessary.*

FCDC does not allow contact visits. More comfortable visiting areas are not feasible. The area for visitation needs to be made of surfaces that are easily disinfected and maintained with security in mind at all times.

5. There is no available indoor recreation area. Without expanding the facility, the next best solution is to have a roof built over the recreation areas. We have two recreational areas. One for female inmates and one for male inmates. This idea is being explored by the Maintenance Manager. A. E. Hodsdon Consultant Engineer has been contacted. I hope to have a quote to include with this report. (See Attachment 4)
6. Other Building needs are the following. Chiller for climate control will need to be replaced ASAP. We have a quote from our HVAC contractor for 53,000.00 (See Attachment 5) Grease traps in the kitchen have deteriorated beyond repair and are in need of replacement. We have a quote for \$3,355.72 and are in the process of scheduling the work. (See Attachment 6)
7. The duct work is in need of cleaning to improve efficiency of the system as a whole. A quote of 3,690.00 is attached to this report. (See Attachment 7)

#### Record Keeping

1. Over the past 37 years there have been multiple Jail Record Management Systems used. As each system was replaced with a newer, better version from a new company, the previous system was not accessible anymore. This left the paper records as the only way to retrieve the old data. I agree that a provision should be made to digitize all the records with an additional back up. This will require additional staffing and software to process the thousands of files currently on shelving. I have contacted Franklin County IT department for a quote on the cost to digitalize the records and the computer equipment that would be needed to accomplish this task. Quote is for \$2766.94 plus setup, connection adapters, and training. Full digital records will also still require hardcopy backup for when the system inevitably fails.  
(See Attachment 8)

An email has been sent to our medical provider asking if the Medical software we are currently using is compatible with community and hospital practices.

### Security System

1. There is no question that the Control room is in dire need of upgrading to maintain security of the facility. FCDC Maintenance Manager is getting a quote to upgrade the facilities security system. Upgrading the security system will eliminate some of the exposed wires in the Control room. A quote attached to this report. (See Attachment 9). The last quote from approximately three years ago was in excess of \$100K.

On the wish list is upgrading all of the security cameras to PTZ function. In the past few years we have upgraded the camera system to include the addition of 10 new stationary recording security cameras. Due to the cost and budget restraints, this is what we decided to purchase. We do have PTZ features on key outside cameras. We are currently seeking Grants for security and ergonomic upgrades.

### Staff and Inmate Furnishings

1. There is one piece of exercise equipment in the outside recreation yard for the inmates to use as well as a basketball hoop. The inmates have a football and basketball and Hacky sack available to them as well. The padding on the arm rest of the one piece of exercise equipment does need to be replaced. This piece of exercise equipment is old but still very functional. The arm padding would be nearly impossible to find a replacement for. At the request of the inmates we can upgrade the equipment and purchase a new machine for them. Correctional grade equipment is necessary and expensive. We must also bear in mind security and durability concerns.  
(See Attachment 10)
2. All inmates have the option to exchange bedding on a weekly basis. The mattresses are Correctional grade mattresses with built in pillows to save on the purchase of pillows and pillowcases and sanitation of each between uses. We have repair kits for mattresses that have been damaged by the inmate population. We just bought 10 new mattresses in February, 2019. Inmates with chronic back problems are issued two mattresses when medically necessary and by medical recommendation only.
3. Bathroom fixtures are repaired as needed. The Facility Maintenance Manager has spare parts on hand to fix any leaks or problems that occur. The Showers are the most challenging to maintain due to the almost constant use. The walls of the showers are made concrete block. Even with drying, sanding,

painting and sealing, the paint on the walls of the shower will still peel. We have entertained putting stainless steel liners in the showers. Each shower would have to be custom fitted with security fixtures. Again the cost of this would be significant, and would have to be spread over several budgets.

4. The inmate population is issued two sets of clean laundry every other day. This exceeds the MDOC Mandatory standard (O.15) for laundry as it only requires clean laundry twice weekly.

*O.15. MANDATORY Laundry services shall be sufficient to allow for the following exchanges: a.) Clothing at least twice weekly; b.) Linen at least once weekly; c.) Towels at least twice weekly; d.) Blankets at least monthly, or before being reissued to another inmate; and e.) Clothing for inmates working in food services daily.*

5. New chairs have been purchased for the Control room to replace the aging chairs. Pre-trial provides their own furniture to use. The Medical department as a whole is being looked at for an upgrade.

### Education and Communication

1. There is funding available for books for the Library through the Inmate Benefit Fund. I met with both Sue and the Executive Director of Adult Education (Nancy) on Thursday 08/20/2020 and asked them for a report on what we could do better and at what cost it would take to implement any changes. The computer access has been upgraded as of two weeks ago to allow for online learning and job searches. We are also in the process of adding inmate tablets to the facility, which provide free access to educational materials, reading material, games, as well as serving as an additional phone in the cell block. The tablet program was delayed due to COVID and a frozen cable line caused by poor drainage, which is also being addressed.
2. Thirteen Maine counties have a contract with the same security based company. With 13 counties using the same system, a savings is offered. The cost associated with calling from a correctional facility is more than a regular household. The calls are recorded and stored. There are special non recorded numbers and hot line numbers that can be dialed. Any revenues generated by the phone calls are deposited into the Inmate Benefit Fund and used exclusively for the inmate population. We are in the process of providing special security tablets to the inmate population to use. The inmates will be able to make calls from their tablet as well as file requests, access educational materials, email letters and the list goes on. There will be no need for an additional phone in the cell block.
3. There are Visit rules posted in the Lobby and in the Visit rooms for visitors. We have an activity Officer that helps supervise the visits and monitors the rooms on camera as well as the control room Officer. (See Attachment 11)

### General

1. OSHA and Maine Department of Labor has been to the FCDC. All corrective actions were 100% completed in December of 2016. On January 17, 2019, the Town of Farmington Code Enforcement Officer as well as Captain Hardy of the Farmington Fire Department inspected the facility and found it to be in Compliance. On February 5, 2020 an inspection of the facility by the Maine Fire Marshalls office and determined the facility was in compliance with NFPA 101 Life Safety Code 2018 edition. This inspection takes place every two years.  
(See Attachment 12)

### Medical and MH Report

1. Medical Room is on the radar for a furniture upgrade to include a new desk. Budget restraints are a factor. There is no other place in the facility that we can house the Medical room within the secure facility. The contracted medical provider is responsible for the hiring of the nursing staff. They have been having the same trouble recruiting nursing staff due to the nature of the Correctional setting. There are now three nurses rotating on the schedule bringing some relief.
2. Groups are open to the entire inmate population as long as the inmate engages in the program. Programs have resumed fully as of the date of this report. I have contacted Somerset County Jail and have spoken to the Programs manager. Somerset offers the same basic programs as Franklin. We share the same educational teacher. The FCDC has improved the educational experience by custom designing a program for each inmate to maximize learning.
3. Staffing. Due to the budget we have been denied for years to add additional officers to the floor and transport. We have our MH, PT and DHHS ICM all in contact when someone is in need of services upon release, however there are many times an inmate is arrested and released within a very short period of time. We are trying to restart our monthly programs meetings to include; Education, Medical, Pre-trial, DHHS, administration, programs officers and Corrections Sergeants. This has been a past practice that has been unavailable due to the COVID pandemic.
4. MAT Program. This program is still evolving from its original plan. We are working with the MDOC, State Prison and County Jails to improve the MAT Program. (See Attachment 13) I have been in contact with Healthy Community Coalition of Franklin County for several months working on a training for inmates and we just completed our first Naloxone training program for the inmate population. This program covers some of the following. Overdose Prevention, Recognizing an Opioid Overdose, Responding, Dosage and administration, Care of individual and Laws. Pamphlets with contact information to receive Naloxone and a First aid bag upon release was given to the inmates for future reference. A monthly training has been scheduled for any inmate interested.

### Inmate MH / Social Support

1. Group and individual therapies are currently part of the MH programs. These cover a multitude of self-managing evidence based practices.
2. Exercise equipment is limited. However the inmate population has an opportunity to go outside for a minimum of 1 hour daily (sometimes more) to run, walk, play basketball, use the body weight machine, throw the football etc.

3. FCDC exceeds the laundry exchange Mandatory standards set by the MDOC. If an inmate has been exposed to OC spray they are decontaminated with a shower and clean clothing is given. There may be other instances where exchanges of laundry are necessary and met by Corrections staff.
4. Visitation allows for children to visit a parent while incarcerated as long as they are accompanied by a guardian. Letters are allowed as long as there is not a no-contact in place. Nurturing Fathers was a program that was brought to the FCDC under a Federal grant through the Children's Task Force. I will see if that program is still available. During the pandemic resources have been limited.
5. The FCDC offers the Sentenced inmate population various work programs to help reduce the length of stay and give them an opportunity to be productive while incarcerated. Inmate Worker, Public Works, and Work Release are all part of this program. Each program has a set of rules and regulations associated with the program. (See Attachment 14)

Here is a short description of each program.

#### **Work Release**

Work release is a program by which the eligible inmate can work for his/her employer while still incarcerated. By doing so the inmate can assist with the support of dependents and pay the debt to society. To participate the inmate must meet the eligibility criteria and the employer must give us a letter of intent that answers several pre-determined questions. The inmate must turn over his endorsed payroll check so that such things as board, medical/dental expenses, ordered child support, fines and restitution can be paid. The inmate must provide for his/her own transportation to and from work and agree to abide by additional rules and regulations relating to work release.

#### **Public Works and Non-Profit Organization Work Projects**

Public Works and Non-Profit Organization Work Projects (also known as 2 for 1) are work projects through which the eligible inmate donates his/her labor to worthy projects. The inmate receives no pay but for every 16 hours worked, one day is removed from his/her sentence. To participate there must be a qualifying project, the inmate must meet the above eligibility criteria and agree to abide by additional rules and regulations relating to the project.

#### **Inmate Worker (Trustee)**

The Inmate Worker program allows a few eligible inmates the opportunity to assist with the cleaning, maintenance, grounds-keeping and laundry operations at the facility. The inmate worker receives no pay but may earn one extra day of good-time during the calendar month worked. In the event the inmate worker has been approved for public works he/she may also have one day removed from his/her sentence for 16 hours worked. To participate there must be a need for an inmate worker, the inmate must meet the above eligibility criteria and agree to abide by additional rules and regulations relating to inmate workers.

As an inmate you must understand that your eligibility for these programs is affected by your behavior. Violations of rules and regulations will make you ineligible to participate.

6. Connections to the resources outside of our custody are provided by DHHS, ICM Bill Hall. He has helped an unprecedented number of inmates connect with housing needs and many other needs they may have. Corrections, MH, and Medical will refer inmates to Bill on a regular basis. Corrections staff regularly refers inmates to Bill Hall when they perceive that the inmate could use outside services. The Appendix the BOV has provided us has been to the Inmate Handbook and uploaded to the county website.

(See Attachment 15)

7. The Sheriff has worked diligently to provide adequate PPE to all, including the medical department. We have not had to do without PPE during this continuing pandemic.