



U.S. Department of Justice

Federal Bureau of Prisons

Washington, DC 20534

March 31, 2020

Donald Isaac, Executive Director
DC Corrections Information Council
1400 I Street, NW
Suite 400
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Issac:

This letter is in response to the draft inspection report received on March 2, 2020, regarding the August 14-15, 2019, visit to the Secure Female Facility (SFF) Hazelton. The Bureau of Prisons recognizes the value of the Corrections Information Council (CIC) inspections of its facilities and the voice it provides the D.C. Superior Court inmates. We hope to continue working closely to improve the Bureau facilities and raise awareness with regard to those inmates' needs.

The Bureau is committed to ensuring the safety and security of our staff, the public and all inmates in our population. Allegations of misconduct are thoroughly investigated and based on the findings, appropriate action is taken, if necessary.

I offer the following responses to the statements and recommendations in the report:

- 1. The draft report recommends:** Eliminate or limit the use of "mass punishment." The women interviewed stated that a current practice is to punish all inmates for the infractions of a few. Examples of mass punishment include lowering the limit on spending for commissary; eating on the units rather than in the dining hall; mail restrictions, including photocopying letters and photographs; and unit level "lockdowns."

Response: The decision to restrict eating areas, spending limits, and securing an institution is one that is never taken lightly. It is only done when absolutely necessary to maintain the safe and secure running of the institution. The primary objective is to investigate what necessitated an event and to determine how best to prevent it from happening in the future. The need for a type of restriction will always be dictated by the nature, duration and magnitude of each situation. The goal remains to return to normal

operating procedures as expeditiously as possible following the conclusion of any necessitating event.

As for mail restrictions, the Correctional Systems staff process all mail on a daily basis and ensure it is delivered the same day. In attempt to reduce the amount of contraband introduced through the mailroom, parameters have been implemented to ensure the safety and security of the institution for inmates and staff. For example, photographs printed on paper (as opposed to photograph paper) are photocopied. In addition greeting cards, colored paper and scented paper are no longer allowed; as well as colored/painted pictures, as the aforementioned have all contributed to the introduction of contraband and affects the orderly operation of the institution. Inmates were notified via TRULINCS prior to the implementation of this measure and advised to inform their friends and family of this change.

- 2. The draft report recommends:** Increase programming opportunities, such as the Resolve Program, and prioritize efforts to reduce lengthy waiting lists. The women interviewed spoke about the lack of programming. Seven women specifically noted that they were not participating in any programs due to a lack of availability and a desire for additional programs. Three DC women are participating in the Resolve Program, which focuses on women's trauma; however, there is a long waiting list.

Response: SFF Hazelton is in compliance with Program Statement 5300.21, Education, Training and Leisure Time Program Standards, and recently added a number of programs to assist inmates with their transition back into society. This includes, the First Step Act recognized National Parenting from Prison Program Phase I and Phase II. Additionally, beginning June 2020, SFF Hazelton will introduce the Female Integrated Treatment (FIT) program to its institution. It will accommodate 240 inmates into the program. The FIT program is a unit-based therapeutic program, which addresses the specific needs of women. The FIT Program integrates treatment for trauma, substance abuse, and mental health, while also focusing on work and family-related issues, ultimately preparing women for a successful transition into society.

- 3. The draft report recommends:** Eliminate triple bunking. As of October 22, 2019, 343 of the 502 inmates were tripled bunked.

Response: As of November 26, 2019, a memorandum approving a population of 384 inmates for SFF Hazelton-General Population was approved by the Correctional Programs Assistant Director. This cap will enable the facility to discontinue the use of triple bunks.

- 4. The draft report recommends:** Shorten lengthy wait times for medical and dental care by increasing medical and dental staff. Medical and Dental Services: The women and staff reported excessive waiting periods and limited staff for medical and dental care. The medical and dental staff rotate amongst the facilities within the Hazelton complex.

Response: SFF ensures medical and dental care is triaged in order of emergency, and the most serious clinical problems are addressed first. We are always seeking to recruit medical and dental professionals, but have historically had difficulty filling these positions. Nonetheless, we have increased our dental staff to nearly the recommended numbers. We usually have dental staff on-site at each facility most days of the week. We have had more challenges filling the medical staff positions, especially physicians. We have one staff physician and one contract physician for the entire complex. Multiple avenues are being utilized to recruit more physicians and mid-level providers. We have renovated our sick-call process to maximize the available staff and address patient concerns, as soon as possible.

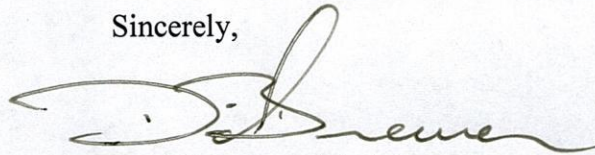
5. **The draft report recommends:** Mandate that all corrections officers receive training focused on gender specific mental health and trauma. Assure that staffing responsibilities are filled by officers who have undergone trainings relative to the populations with whom they are working. Staffing is based upon the needs of the Hazelton complex, rather than the needs of the inmates at the SFF. Correctional officers can be reassigned at any time without prior training on the specific needs of the population.

Response: Every officer at FCC Hazelton has undergone Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) trainings relative to the populations with whom they are working. TIC training is an organizational structure and treatment framework that involves understanding, recognizing, and responding to the effects of all types of trauma. The Trauma-Informed Correctional Care training is provided to every new staff member prior to working any housing unit, and it is also conducted annually during staff annual training.

I appreciate the opportunity to review and provide comments to your inspection report regarding SFF Hazelton.

Please contact me at (202) 353-3638, if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Brewer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

David Brewer, Administrator
Correctional Programs Branch