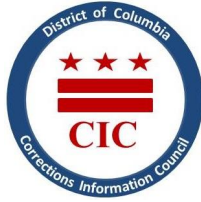


District of Columbia
Corrections Information Council



FCI MCDOWELL

Inspection Report



FCI McDowell

(photo by Federal Bureau of Prisons)

October 17, 2019



District of Columbia Corrections Information Council

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About the District of Columbia Corrections Information Council

The District of Columbia Corrections Information Council (CIC) is an independent oversight body mandated by the United States Congress and the Council of the District of Columbia to inspect, monitor, and report on the conditions of confinement in correctional facilities where inmates from the District of Columbia are incarcerated. This includes facilities operated by the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP), the District of Columbia Department of Corrections (DOC), and private contractors.

The CIC reports its observations and recommendations to the District of Columbia Representative in the United States Congress, the Mayor of the District of Columbia, the Council of the District of Columbia, the District of Columbia Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice, the Director of the BOP, the Director of the DOC, and the community.

Although the CIC does not handle individual complaints or provide legal representation or advice, individuals are still encouraged to contact the CIC. Reports, concerns, and general information from incarcerated DC residents and the public are very important to the CIC, and they greatly inform our inspection schedule, recommendations, and reports. However, unless expressly permitted by the individuals or required by law, names and identifying information of inmates, corrections staff not in leadership, and members of the general public will be kept anonymous and confidential.

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Executive Summary

Facility Profile

Dates of Inspection: December 12-13, 2018
Location: Welch, West Virginia
Distance from DC: 352 miles
Year of Activation: 2010

Security Level: Medium, with minimum camp
Rated Capacity: 1,295
Average Daily Population 2018: 1,244

Total Population (December 2018)

Population: 1,240
Average Age: 37.5 years
Average Sentence: 157 months

DC Population (December 2018)

Population: 117 (9% of facility population)
Average Age: 35.7 years
Average Sentence: 176 months

Key Findings

The CIC made the following key findings about the conditions of confinement at FCI McDowell:

- At the time of the CIC's inspection, FCI McDowell was on lockdown in response to an incident in which a large quantity of contraband (primarily cell phones) was thrown over the exterior fence into the recreation yard. Executive staff was very forthcoming about the incident and their ongoing efforts to regain control of the contraband and prevent similar incidents in the future.
- Inmates reported frequent lockdowns and associated issues with hygiene, food, education, and communication with family members. The documentation regarding the number of lockdowns in the past fiscal year did not appear to include recent lockdowns.
- An individual informed the CIC that he had recently pushed the emergency button in his cell in response to his cellmate experiencing acute medical distress. The individual reported that no staff responded for over two hours, and then both inmates were sent to the SHU as a result of requesting help.
- The facility has a robust vocational technology program including Masonry, Carpentry, and Electrical Wiring. 82 inmates currently participate in the four month-long program, including 12 DC individuals. Facility staff is preparing to start a program in concrete grinding and polishing, and is also pursuing a program in solar panel assembly.
- Per the warden, the facility has implemented a priority pass-through process to allow inmates with parolable life sentences placement in vocational programming with the support of their unit team.
- The facility has a unique recycling plant program which employs 55 inmates including six DC individuals, and has won three EPA green challenge awards.
- DC inmates reported discriminatory treatment by staff, including being called "DC Blacks" or "007"¹ by staff, and told that they cause too much trouble and do not know how to obey orders. One inmate expressed that DC individuals are stereotyped as being aggressive and gang members solely because they are from DC, while another indicated that it is harder for individuals from DC to get into programming or get facility jobs.
- Eight individuals mentioned problems with being charged a co-pay for visits in which they were not seen by a medical provider, or were seen but received no treatment beyond being told to buy painkillers from commissary.
- Psychology programming at this facility includes anger management groups, a non-residential drug addiction program, and individual therapy as needed. The facility does not offer residential drug addiction programming, or the Life Connections Program.

¹ "007" refers to the last three digits of the federal inmate register number assigned by the BOP and US Marshals Service. DC Code offenders usually have register numbers ending in 007 or 016.

- Most of the DC inmates the CIC met with mentioned concerns regarding the water quality, in particular contamination with the bacterium *H. pylori*. Staff noted that the facility is on the same public water supply as the City of Welch, West Virginia and that this water is safe to drink. The CIC was unable to verify reports of *H. pylori* contamination. Research suggests that there is not currently a reliable method for testing a water supply for the presence of this contaminant.
- Staff noted the challenges of processing mail while working to reduce introduction of contraband drugs through the mail. Inmates reported long delays in receiving mail, and frequent rejections of mail despite compliance with mail procedures.
- At the time of the inspection three housing units were closed; per staff, the spaces were not needed. One of the empty units (Unit C4) had been set up as a programming space where admission and orientation and re-entry preparation programming were held.

CIC Recommendations

Based on the inspection of FCI McDowell, the CIC makes the following recommendations:

- Executive staff should consider possibilities for locking down only the necessary portion of the facility in response to significant incidents, and should continue programs, work, and recreation during lockdowns.
- Executive staff should implement mandatory antiracism training for all personnel. This training should occur at least annually and ideally should occur quarterly.
- Facility staff should ensure that all grievance forms are readily available to inmates, and should not interfere with inmates' use of the administrative remedy process.
- Executive staff should create opportunities to engage directly with inmates and respond to their concerns.
- Executive staff should encourage medical staff to provide appropriate medication to inmates who are seen at sick call.
- Facility medical staff should clearly communicate diagnoses and treatment plans to inmates, and should ensure that all planned diagnostic and follow-up care is completed as promptly as possible.
- The Bureau should ensure that the facility has sufficient medical staff to respond promptly to the needs of the population, including acute and chronic medical concerns.
- Facility staff should continue to encourage and support inmate-led programming.
- The BOP should ensure that the facility has sufficient staff to allow all inmates meaningful access to education and re-entry programming.
- The BOP should re-consider the decision to eliminate the position of Re-entry Affairs Coordinator at FCI McDowell.
- The facility should identify and contract with a certified laboratory serving the area to perform comprehensive water testing on the facility water source to ensure adequate water quality. The type and frequency of the water testing should only be determined by the outside testing entity.
- Facility staff should consider directly addressing the inmate population regarding their concerns, including provision of water quality test results.
- Facility staff should ensure that all inmates have access to the most current mail policies.
- The BOP should ensure that the facility is sufficiently staffed to process mail in a timely manner, particularly legal and special mail. This includes promptly notifying inmates of rejected mail.
- Facility staff should always respond promptly to emergency medical alerts to ensure the safety of inmates.
- Facility staff should ensure the barbershop is open during sufficient and predictable hours in order to allow inmates a reasonable opportunity to get their hair cut.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	2
Introduction.....	5
Facility Overview	6
CIC Findings.....	10
I. Lockdowns.....	10
II. Staff Treatment	10
III. Medical Care	11
IV. Education and Programming.....	12
V. Water.....	13
VI. Other Issues.....	13
A. Mail.....	13
B. Hygiene.....	14
Appendix A: Methodology	
Appendix B: Inmate Survey Responses	
Appendix C: BOP Response	

Introduction

Federal Correctional Institution McDowell (FCI McDowell) is a medium-security federal prison for male offenders located in southeastern West Virginia. The facility also has a nearby minimum-security federal prison camp.

The rated capacity of the facility is 1,295 inmates. At the time of the CIC inspection, there were a total of 1,240 inmates incarcerated at the facility, including 117 DC Code offenders. The camp has a total capacity of 65 inmates, and one DC inmate was at the camp at the time of inspection.

The CIC inspected FCI McDowell on December 12 and 13, 2018. The inspection of the facility included an opening session with the warden and executive staff, a facility tour, informal conversations with staff working in different facility departments, confidential interviews with inmates, and document review. During the tour, CIC staff members were escorted by staff including the warden, an associate warden, the executive assistant, and a sergeant. Report findings are based on facility documents collected prior to the inspection, staff comments and reflections made during the inspection, and inmate feedback gathered through survey responses and interviews. For a full explanation of the report methodology, see Appendix A.

Facility Overview

As part of the FCI McDowell inspection, the CIC toured a majority of the facility and talked to staff in each area. The units and departments toured, brief descriptions of units and departments, relevant characteristics, and DC specific information can be found in the chart below.

Figure 1: FCI McDowell Inspection Summary

Unit / Department	Overview	Additional details	DC specific
General Population Housing Units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total of 12 general population housing units, divided into three two-story buildings with four units each • 64 double-bunked cells per unit • Each unit has six telephones, four computers, and a reentry room with information and resources 	At the time of the inspection, three units were closed. Staff explained the spaces were not needed. One empty unit (Unit C4) had been set up as a programming space where admission and orientation presentations were held.	One inmate noted that Unit C4 was rarely used for programming. Several inmates noted that due to the recent lockdown, showers were not being cleaned regularly.
Special Housing Unit (SHU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population at time of inspection: 160 • DC population at time of inspection: 15 • In administrative segregation: 118 (including eight DC inmates) • In disciplinary segregation: four (including one DC inmate) 	Medical staff comes through daily to conduct rounds and pass medication. Mental health staff does weekly rounds.	Several individuals mentioned that when taken to the SHU, their property was thrown away, including clothing items purchased from commissary.
Medical / Dental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care Level 1 • 42 DC inmates designated as chronic care • Lab tests are sent to FMC Butner if routine, or LabCorp if urgent. • No onsite pharmacy (requests are filled at FMC Lexington and sent via FedEx) • 15 minutes to nearest hospital 	Individuals designated as medical care level 1 are generally healthy and have limited medical needs. ² A small number of inmates at the facility have a higher care level, including seven inmates currently being treated for Hepatitis C. A contract dentist comes to the facility once per week.	<i>See CIC Findings for information about DC inmates' experiences with medical and dental care at FCI McDowell.</i>
Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care Level 1 • Inmate companion team assists with suicide watch when appropriate • No RDAP;³ inmates needing this program are transferred out • Staff conducts weekly rounds in 	Individuals designated as mental health care level (MHCL)1 are generally healthy but may have stable mental health conditions that can be managed by clinician evaluation every six months. ⁴ Psychology programming at this facility includes anger	<i>See Appendix B for relevant survey responses and inmate comments.</i>

² Example conditions include medication-controlled diabetes, epilepsy, and emphysema. For additional information on Medical Care Levels, see DC Corrections Information Council, CIC Information Sheet: BOP – Medical Care Levels (May 17, 2017), <https://cic.dc.gov/page/cic-info-sheets>.

³ The Residential Drug Abuse Program (RDAP) is a voluntary treatment program available to inmates with a documented alcohol or substance abuse problem. For additional information, see Federal Bureau of Prisons, U.S. Department of Justice, Program Statement No. 5330.11, CN-1, Psychology Treatment Programs (Apr. 25, 2016), https://www.bop.gov/policy/progstat/5330_011.pdf.

⁴ For additional information, see DC Corrections Information Council, CIC Information Sheet: BOP – Mental Health Care Levels (May 17, 2017), <https://cic.dc.gov/page/cic-info-sheets>.

	SHU	management groups, a non-residential drug addiction program, and individual therapy as needed. Staff reported five MHCL 2 inmates.	
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY 2018 GED enrollment: 127 • FY 2018 GED completion: seven • Four GED teachers, one education specialist, and one education technician. • Special education levels 1-3 • One ESL class, and one GED class in Spanish • 14 computers for GED testing • Computer literacy program was suspended while the facility updated versions 	Staff reported the law library is open 12 hours a day, six days a week.	<i>See CIC Findings for information about DC inmates' experiences with education at FCI McDowell.</i>
Vocational Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program capacity: 90 inmates • Current enrollment: 82 • DC enrollment: 12 • Inmates must have GED prior to starting classes • Programs last four months 	Inmates complete a prerequisite class and then proceed to masonry, carpentry, or electrical programs. Facility staff is preparing to start a program in concrete grinding and polishing, and is also pursuing a program in solar panel assembly.	<i>See CIC Findings for information about DC inmates' experiences with vocational technology at FCI McDowell.</i>
Recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity: 55 inmates (+10 from camp) • DC enrollment: six inmates • Turnover of about five participants per month • Inmates submit a cop-out to the program supervisor to indicate interest 	The recycling plant occupies a space approximately 150 ft ² , and recycles institutional waste with an efficiency rate of 70%. The facility has won three EPA Federal Green Challenge awards.	The CIC spoke with an inmate participating in the program who had a positive experience. Another inmate noted that it "gives guys jobs to do," but that he was not interested in the program.
Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indoor and outdoor recreation • Health resource area • Hobby craft program 	<p>CIC observed a large outdoor recreation space with five basketball courts, two handball courts, and two tracks. The indoor recreation space included a gym with basketball hoops, a room with foosball and air hockey tables, a cardio room for spin classes, and rooms for art classes and music.</p> <p>Staff stated that rec was open every day, with outside recreation available if staffing and weather permitted.</p>	Several inmates reported that outdoor recreation was frequently closed, and that the indoor recreation space was too small for the number of inmates. More than half of the 54 inmates surveyed reported being unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with recreation.

Reentry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Release Preparation Program held in converted housing unit • No reentry affairs coordinator 	<p>The warden informed CIC that the reentry affairs coordinator left, and the position was eliminated by the BOP.</p> <p>The warden stated that each unit has a reentry room with resources for inmates to access and encouraged the CIC to send materials for DC inmates.</p> <p>The facility has a “JOBview 2nd Chance” kiosk, updated every 30 days with jobs open to returning citizens, who can search by release area and print out application information.</p>	<p>DC individuals reported that there was not enough staff to run reentry programs, and so inmates run them. An individual also reported that reentry resources were not available on the housing units.</p>
Religious Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two chapels – one large, one smaller • 12 active faith traditions • Full-time staff includes one chaplain (Protestant) and one open position. • Religious volunteers include a Catholic priest every other month, a deacon every other week, two student rabbis in the summer, and two Jehovah’s Witness practitioners 	<p>Each faith tradition has one worship time per week. The chaplain intends to add an additional study period for each faith tradition once there is a second chaplain.</p> <p>The chaplain stated that inmates can submit curriculums for reentry programs in the chapel space.</p>	<p>The chaplain was interested in developing a tele-sermon program where religious leaders could appear by video chat. The CIC plans to connect local religious leaders with the chaplain.</p> <p>One inmate reported difficulty accessing the chapel and was told that a reentry curriculum would take three months to get approved.</p>
Visitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits allowed on weekends and federal holidays • SHU inmates can have non-contact visits in two-hour blocks • Two attorney-client rooms are available • Small hotel two miles away; the next closest accommodation is one hour away in Beckley, West Virginia, with no connecting bus service 	<p>The facility uses an Ion Spectrometry Device to check visitors for drugs. Staff reported nine visitors flagged out of approximately 300 scans in the prior three months. Staff also reported that an individual would only be turned away based on two consecutive scans with the same reading, and that staff considered exceptions based on the distance of travel and might allow a non-contact visit if possible.</p>	<p>DC inmates were mostly concerned with the distance for visitors, and their inability to contact family to inform them of facility lockdowns before they made the trip.</p>

In addition to the physical inspection, the FCI McDowell staff provided the CIC with a number of facility documents, a full list of which can be found in Appendix A. The documents included logs for the Administrative Remedy Program, also known as the grievance process, during 2017.⁵ See the chart below for the number of grievance requests or appeals submitted, rejected, filed, answered, and granted.

Figure 2: Summary of FCI McDowell Administrative Remedy Program, 2017

Level of Remedy Request or Appeal	Number Submitted	Number Rejected	Number Filed	Number Answered	Number Granted	Issues of Granted Grievances
<i>Request at facility level (BP-9)</i>	164	68	96	87	2	UDC/RRC Actions
<i>Appeal to Regional Office (BP-10)</i>	174	109	65	61	4	UDC/RRC Actions; Classification Matters; DHO/CDC Appeals
<i>Appeal to Central Office (BP-11)</i>	47	24	23	21	2	Jail time credit; sentence computation

⁵ For more information about the Administrative Remedy Program, see DC Corrections Information Council, CIC Information Sheet: FBOP – Administrative Remedy Program (Nov. 15, 2017), <https://cic.dc.gov/page/cic-info-sheets>.

CIC Findings

I. Lockdowns

Documents provided by the BOP in advance of the CIC's visit indicate that FCI McDowell had been locked down three times in the prior 12 months—in December 2017, June 2018, and September 2018. However, the documented lockdown periods did not match the time periods reported by staff and inmates at the facility during the CIC inspection. Facility staff and inmates informed the CIC that the facility had been locked down continuously since November 13, 2018, but the previous documents provided to the CIC showed no lockdowns during the month of November 2018. One inmate also reported that the facility was released from lockdown in October 2018, which was also not recorded in the provided documents.

At the time of the CIC's inspection, FCI McDowell had been on lockdown for over 30 days. Approximately one month prior to the CIC's visit, outside individuals threw several bags over the exterior fence into the recreation yard. The bags contained a large number of cell phones, as well as some tobacco and marijuana. During the inspection, the executive staff shared that they had recovered the tobacco and marijuana and many of the cell phones, but believed a number of cell phones were still hidden in the facility. They expected to keep the facility locked down until all contraband was recovered. The executive staff showed CIC staff the surveillance video of the incident, and explained their process for locating the remainder of the contraband. The warden explained that a similar incident occurred earlier in the year, and as a result, she requested and the facility received approval for installation of a thermal fence to alert staff to incidents like this more quickly. The executive staff discussed other plans to reduce the amount of contraband in the facility, including replacing the footlockers and pegboards in individual cells with models that eliminated identified hiding places for contraband. The lockdown was lifted on December 18, 2018.

Many inmates informed the CIC that the recent lockdown was a major source of frustration. Inmates reported that they had been locked in their cells all day, and were only allowed out for showers during the past month. According to their reports, they were also allowed out of their cells for 30 minute periods the day before the inspection. Inmates reported eating primarily cold bag lunches for that month, with a hot meal once every three days. They expressed concerns that the lockdown interrupted their education and programming progress, and prevented them from having outdoor recreation.

Recommendations:

The executive staff should consider possibilities for locking down only the necessary portion of the facility in response to incidents, such as fights between inmates on the same unit, or assaults on officers.

The executive staff should work to limit the duration of facility lockdowns.

The executive staff should consider options for continuing programming, work assignments, and recreation during lockdowns.

II. Staff Treatment

Many inmates who spoke with the CIC stated that they had been discriminated against and verbally harassed by staff at FCI McDowell. One inmate expressed that DC individuals are stereotyped as being aggressive and gang members solely because they are from DC, while another indicated that it is harder for individuals from DC to get into programming or get facility jobs. A staff member in the vocational program told the CIC that he was willing to have two or three guys from DC in his program at once, but at six or seven they "get rowdy." DC inmates also mentioned being called "DC Blacks" or "007"⁶ by staff, and were told that they cause too much trouble and do not know how to obey orders. One individual noted that white inmates were not typically patted down when exiting the dining hall, while black and Hispanic individuals were routinely patted down.

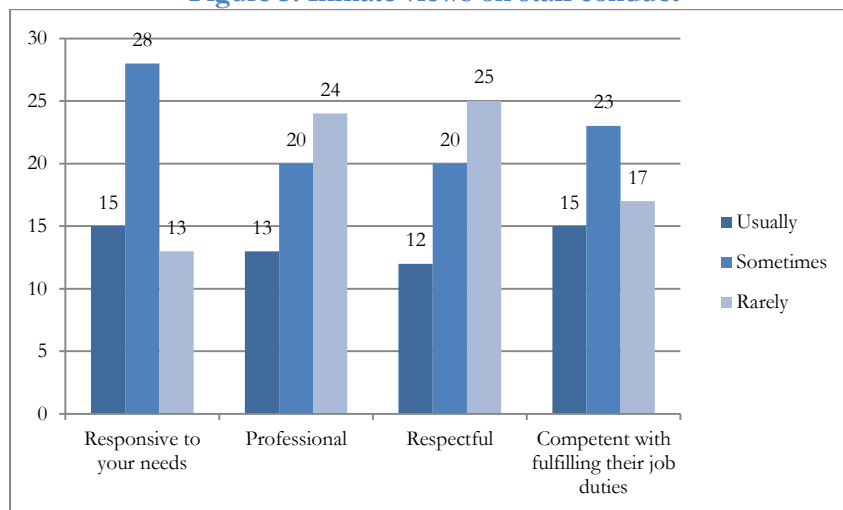
Several individuals who spoke with the CIC mentioned having staff interfere with their access to grievance forms. One inmate stated that he requested a BP-8 (informal grievance) form from his case manager and she said no and began

⁶ *Supra*, footnote 1.

laughing at him. Several inmates stated that they had to inform staff why they wanted a grievance form before they would be given one, and that staff sometimes refused to provide the forms. Other inmates stated that grievances are frequently lost, not taken seriously, or not addressed in a timely manner or sometimes at all. Several inmates also mentioned their fear of retaliation for filing grievances, noting that by filing a grievance they would “make enemies” or be subject to a cell search.

Twenty-five percent of survey respondents indicated that their unit team was “usually” responsive to their needs, and another fifty percent of survey respondent said their unit team was “sometimes” responsive to their needs.

Figure 3: Inmate views on staff conduct



Five inmates indicated that they had trouble getting their unit team to help with concerns about their security and custody classification points, which affects the type of facility to which inmates are designated.

The inmates who spoke with the CIC expressed concern that the facility is understaffed and disorganized. One inmate stated that FCI McDowell is “the most disorganized place I’ve ever been,” while other inmates said that “nothing is consistent, moves don’t happen at consistent times,” and that staff “change[s] rules as you go along.” Two individuals noted that they rarely see the executive staff.

Two individuals indicated in their survey responses that they had experienced physical violence from facility staff, but did not elaborate. No inmates reported in interviews or survey responses that they had been physically assaulted or harassed by other inmates at FCI McDowell.

Recommendations:

Executive staff should ensure that the Administrative Remedy Program at the facility is implemented in compliance with Program Statement 1330.18, in particular that counselors are providing appropriate forms when requested, and that unit managers are ensuring that inmates receive all relevant notices.

The executive staff should create opportunities to engage directly with inmates and respond to their concerns, such as regular rounds and regular presence at meals.

III. Medical Care

FCI McDowell has 12 full-time medical staff members, and five contract staff members, including three physician assistants who are on-call afterhours. The facility contains a trauma room where individuals can be treated for acute conditions prior to or in place of being transferred to a hospital. The medical area also contains a suicide watch room, a dry cell, and an isolation room where individuals can be placed prior to transfer to a hospital or a facility with a higher care level. Medical staff informed the CIC that the facility has a program to provide over-the-counter medication to indigent inmates who cannot afford to purchase medication from commissary.

Eleven inmates indicated that they were satisfied with the quality of medical care. Eight individuals mentioned problems with being charged co-pays for visits in which they were not seen by a medical provider, or were seen but received no treatment beyond being told to buy pain medication from commissary. Thirteen inmates described requesting medical attention for issues ranging from cysts to stomach ailments to eye infections but receiving no response to multiple cop-outs. Five inmates told the CIC that medical staff told them that they needed diagnostic tests (e.g., CAT scans, sonograms, or X-rays) or visits with specialists (e.g., orthopedists, gastroenterologists), but they did not receive further call-outs for the specified care. Two inmates mentioned that they had not been seen for chronic care issues since arriving at FCI McDowell.

One individual mentioned an incident in which he pushed the emergency button in his cell in response to his cellmate experiencing acute medical distress. The individual reported that no staff responded for over two hours, and when officers did respond, they said the cellmate was “faking” his medical issue and sent both inmates to the SHU.

Recommendations:

The executive staff should encourage medical staff to provide any recommended over-the-counter medication to inmates who are seen at sick call, so that inmates are not charged fees at both sick call and commissary.

The facility medical staff should clearly communicate diagnoses and treatment plans to inmates, and should ensure that all planned diagnostic and follow-up care is completed as promptly as possible.

Facility staff should always respond promptly to emergency medical alerts in order to ensure the safety of inmates.

IV. Education and Programming

Facility staff informed the CIC during the inspection that 16 individuals from DC were enrolled in Adult Basic Education (ABE) or General Education Development (GED) courses, five had completed an education program, and ten were on the waitlist for a program. Four inmates from DC were enrolled in correspondence classes. In addition, 12 DC inmates were participating in vocational programming, while 52 were on the waitlist.

Several individuals from DC reported that there was insufficient education and programming. They shared that the classes offered were not ones they wanted, and that classes they value and in which they had been participating were cancelled. One individual stated, “If you’re not in vocational tech, there’s nothing.” Another individual noted that computers are limited because inmates break them, and two inmates expressed that the education staff talked down to inmates.

DC inmates had a variety of opinions on the vocational technology program. One individual said that FCI McDowell was the best institution in which he had been for vocational programming, and another said that he had completed the carpentry, masonry, and electrical programs, but would have no use for them in society. A third individual said that vocational programming at FCI McDowell was “the bare minimum.” Two individuals who participated in apprenticeships noted that the teaching was good but the program was primarily self-study and lacked sufficient hands-on practice.

The warden informed the CIC that the facility had implemented a priority pass-through process to allow inmates with parolable life sentences placement into vocational technical programming with the support of their unit team. Several DC inmates with life sentences told the CIC that they were not able to access the programming because staff was prioritizing people with less time left on their sentence. The warden also noted the difficulty of getting volunteers to come to the facility in order to provide educational and other programming because of the remote location of the facility, and because potential volunteers often choose to spend time working in the surrounding community rather than coming to FCI McDowell. The warden commented that she would like the facility to have the Life Connections Program, which is a faith-based, voluntary reentry program for individuals within two to three years of their release date.⁷

Recommendations:

⁷ For additional information, see Federal Bureau of Prisons, U.S. Department of Justice, Program Statement No. 003-2013 (5325), Life Connections Program (Mar. 23, 2013), https://www.bop.gov/policy/om/003_2013.pdf.

The BOP should ensure that the facility offers a sufficient variety and number of programs to allow all inmates meaningful access to job and life skills programming, as well as education. The programs offered should be responsive to the inmates' stated needs.

Facility staff should continue to encourage and support inmate-led programming.

V. Water

At the beginning of the tour, the warden mentioned that the CIC would likely hear complaints from inmates about the water at FCI McDowell. She stated that the facility uses the public water supply of the City of Welch, which is safe for inmates to drink. Interviews with inmates confirmed that many of them have concerns about the water quality. Specifically, many inmates said that the water was contaminated with the bacteria *Helicobacter pylori* (*H. pylori*). One inmate was able to specify that local news reports had mentioned *H. pylori*, but most other individuals with whom the CIC spoke could not specify how they had learned that *H. pylori* was a problem in the water at FCI McDowell. Several inmates said that the water was brown or tasted bad, while other inmates stated that the water made them queasy, made them use the bathroom a lot, or gave them headaches. A few inmates noted that staff always drinks bottled water, but if inmates want bottled water then they have to purchase it from commissary. Many inmates cannot afford to purchase water, and commissary was not available during the month prior to the CIC's visit due to the lockdown. Several inmates stated that they were trying to avoid drinking any water while on lockdown.

Approximately one-third of the adult population of North America is infected with *H. pylori*; however, only a minority of infected individuals develops symptoms. Symptoms can include stomach pain, stomach ulcers, and several types of stomach cancer.⁸ Individuals are typically tested for *H. pylori* infection upon displaying symptoms, but there is not a reliable method for testing whether water contains the bacteria.⁹ *H. pylori* is not a recognized contaminant under the EPA National Primary Drinking Water Regulations or the Secondary Drinking Water Standards.¹⁰ The CIC was unable to verify inmates' reports of *H. pylori* contamination in the McDowell County water supply or the water supply of the City of Welch, West Virginia.¹¹

Recommendations:

The facility staff should consider directly addressing the inmate population regarding their concerns, including providing accurate information on *H. pylori* and the steps taken by the facility to address inmate concerns.

VI. Other Issues

A. Mail

FCI McDowell had recently changed its mail policies, and staff commented on the challenges with processing mail. The warden mentioned that the facility was working to reduce the amount of illegal drugs entering the facility, and that one way

⁸ R. Araujo Boira & ML Hanninen. *Helicobacter pylori*. In: J.B. Rose and B. Jiménez-Cisneros (eds.) *Global Water Pathogen Project* (July 17, 2017), <https://www.waterpathogens.org/book/helicobacter-pylori>.

⁹ "Most attempts to isolate *H. pylori* from the aquatic environment have failed. Nonetheless, other methods based on molecular techniques have demonstrated that it does exist as potentially active cells in the aquatic environment. It is difficult to relate the presence of *H. pylori* with specific water characteristics. However, its presence has generally been related with fecal pollution, accordingly the most probable sources of the bacteria in the environment. Thus, adequate sanitary conditions are likely to pose benefits for reducing transmission of *H. pylori*." R. Araujo Boira & ML Hanninen. *Helicobacter pylori*. In: J.B. Rose and B. Jiménez-Cisneros (eds.) *Global Water Pathogen Project* (July 17, 2017), <https://www.waterpathogens.org/book/helicobacter-pylori> (citations omitted).

¹⁰ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, National Primary Drinking Water Regulations, <https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/national-primary-drinking-water-regulations>. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Secondary Drinking Water Standards: Guidance for Nuisance Chemicals, <https://www.epa.gov/dwstandardsregulations/secondary-drinking-water-standards-guidance-nuisance-chemicals>.

¹¹ The CIC searched news reports for the area and checked the EPA Safe Water Drinking Information System, as well as reaching out to the Water Department of the City of Welch. Search results for "Welch, City of" are available at https://ofmpub.epa.gov/enviro/sdw_report_v3.first_table?pws_id=WV3302421&state=WV&source=Ground%20water&population=2907&sys_num=0.

these drugs are entering the facility is through drug-soaked colored paper. As a result, the facility banned colored paper.¹² Staff stated that they were exploring other methods for allowing inmates to receive pictures or drawings from family members. They had explored scanning postal mail and sending it to inmates through the TRULINCS email system, but the system is not capable of loading PDF documents. Currently, inmates may receive a maximum of 25 photographs per mailing.

Inmates reported long delays before receiving mail and frequent rejections of mail, despite compliance with mail procedures. Several inmates noted that on units of over 100 inmates, only 10 to 25 pieces of mail were received per day. One inmate said that mail was sent back without any documentation of the reason for the rejection, while another individual reported receiving rejection slips six weeks after the mail was returned. One inmate mentioned that they were not allowed to send any mail around Thanksgiving while the facility was on lockdown. Another inmate noted that the complex mail policies and frequently returned mail strains family relationships. Three individuals who spoke with the CIC mentioned that legal mail is treated like regular mail and it is not opened in front of the inmate as required by policy.

Recommendations:

The BOP should ensure that the facility is processing mail in a timely manner and in accordance with the mail policy, particularly legal and special mail. This includes promptly notifying inmates of rejected mail.

Executive staff should ensure that the mail policy is clearly communicated to inmates, including timely notification of any updates.

B. Hygiene

More than half of survey respondents indicated that they regularly receive haircuts, and that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the cleanliness of their units.

Figure 4

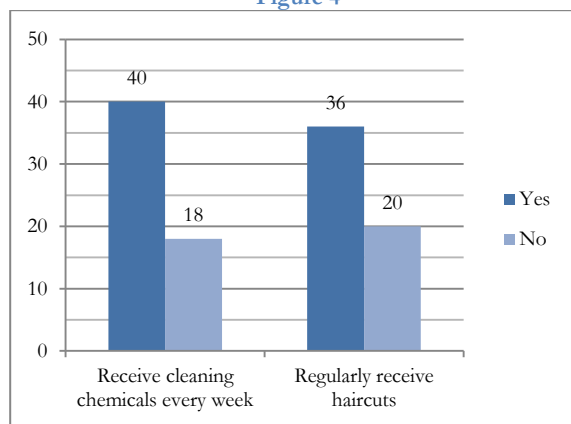
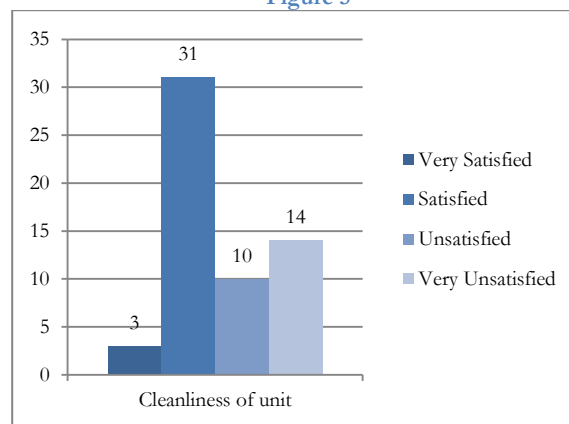


Figure 5



Two inmates mentioned that the barbershop is not regularly open, and another noted that access after dinner is very limited, which makes it hard for inmates who work or program during the day to get haircuts. Other concerns included insufficient soap, lack of toiletries available through commissary, insufficient cleaning supplies while on lockdown, and insufficient toilet paper.

Recommendation:

Facility staff should ensure the barbershop is open sufficient and predictable hours to allow inmates a reasonable opportunity to get their hair cut.

¹² Similar mail restrictions have been introduced at other BOP facilities. For additional information, see DC Corrections Information Council, CIC Information Sheet: Federal Bureau of Prisons – Facility Mail Policy Changes as of November 13, 2017, <https://cic.dc.gov/page/cic-info-sheets>.

Appendix A: Methodology

FCI McDowell Inspection Methodology

In accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Corrections Information Council (CIC) and the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP), the CIC requested to inspect FCI McDowell on November 8, 2018. The inspection request itinerary included a tour of all areas of the facility to which inmates have access, discussions with staff, confidential interviews with DC inmates, and document review and collection. Prior to the onsite inspection, the CIC communicated with DC inmates at FCI McDowell to notify them of the upcoming inspection and offer the opportunity to participate in a confidential interview with a member of the CIC.

Prior to the onsite portion of the inspection, per the inspection request, the BOP sent the following documents to the CIC, which are on file with the CIC:

- Roster of DC Inmates
- Significant Incidents (12/2017 – 11/2018)
- Prohibited Act Rates (12/2017 – 11/2018)
- FY 2018 Administrative Remedies Tracking Data for BP-9, BP-10, and BP-11
- Inmate Sentencing and Designation Fact Sheet (as of November 2018)
- DC Specific Inmate Sentencing and Designation Fact Sheet (as of November 2018)
- Inmate Demographics Fact Sheet (as of November 2018)
- DC Specific Inmate Demographics Fact Sheet (as of November 2018)
- 2018 Monthly Average Daily Populations
- FY 2018 Inmate Enrollment in Programs
- Summary of Urinalysis Results (12/01/2017 – 11/27/2018)
- Completed CIC pre-inspection information worksheet documenting DC inmates' involvement in facility programs

The CIC conducted an onsite inspection of FCI McDowell on December 12 and 13, 2018. The inspection process included an opening session with FCI McDowell executive staff, a tour of the facility grounds; interviews with DC inmates in general population and the Special Housing Unit (SHU); and onsite document review. Various executive staff escorted CIC staff during the tour portion of the inspection. The areas toured included recreation, visitation, education, vocational technology, the recycling center, the kitchen and dining hall, the medical and dental areas, the psychology offices, religious services, a general housing (Unit C2), and the repurposed housing (Unit C4).

Following the inspection, the survey responses and interview notes were compiled. The complete responses can be found in Appendix B. Open-ended responses were edited for clarity and to remove any identifying information.

The CIC provided the BOP with a draft version of the report for review of factual information and an opportunity to respond to follow-up questions and any other information in the report. The BOP response to the CIC draft report can be found attached to the end of this report.

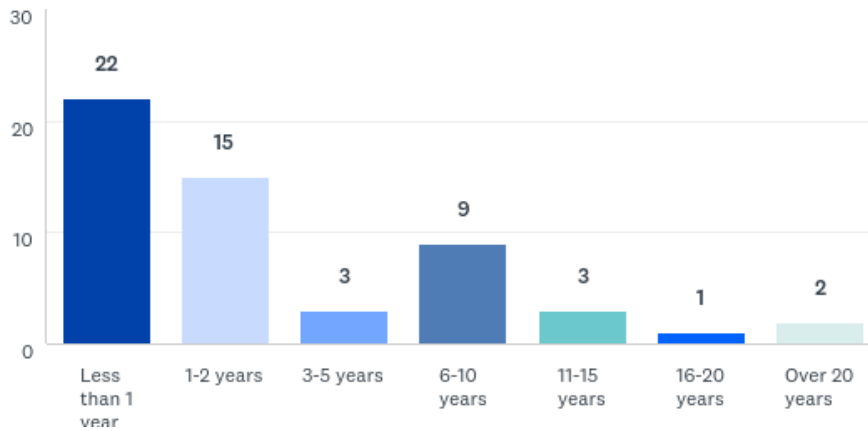
Appendix B: Inmate Survey Responses

FCI McDowell Inmate Survey Responses

61 Total Respondents¹³

How long have you been incarcerated at FCI McDowell?

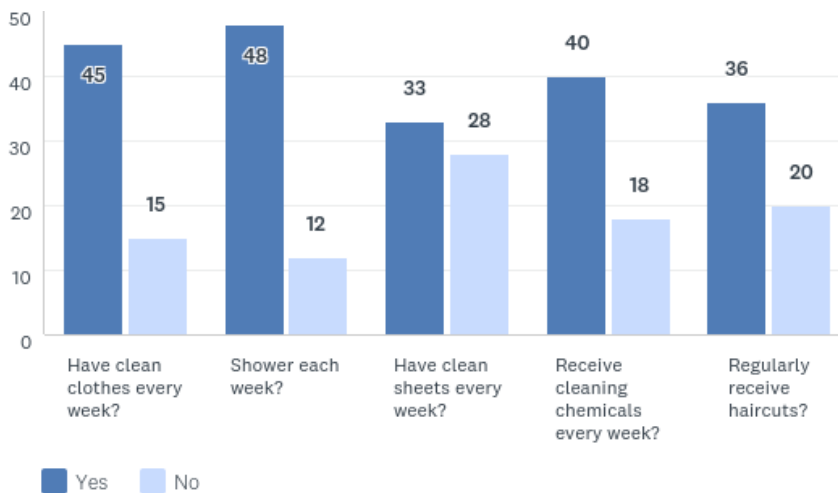
Answered: 55 Skipped: 6



Hygiene

Answered: 61 Skipped: 0

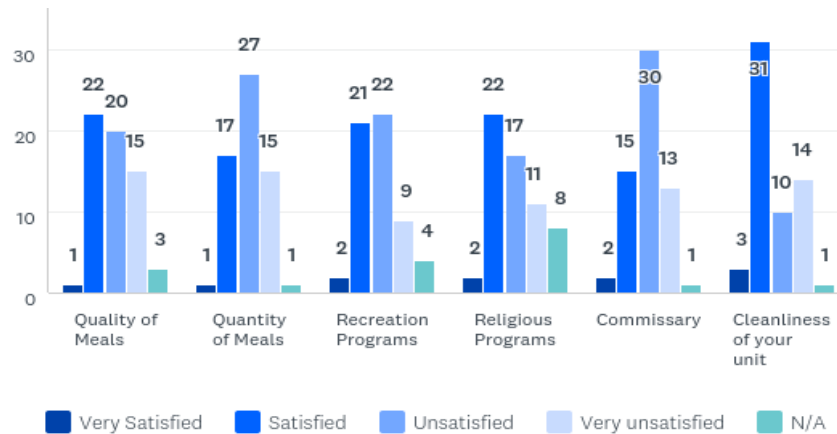
Are you normally able to:



¹³ Open-ended responses include information that was gathered from inmate surveys as well as interviews. Open-ended responses were edited to remove identifying information and were also edited for clarity.

How satisfied are you with:

Answered: 61 Skipped: 0



Please provide examples of why you are satisfied or unsatisfied with the previously discussed items:

Inmate Responses
The reason for recreation programs is because the yard is split in half.
Commissary always has many items out of stock. With religious services they'll lie to us about allowing us certain items for events and then at the last moment say no, meaning we end up with nothing or very little due to time constraints.
Meals are cooked well but portions are very small. There are really no good programs in education.
The staff eats wonderful, steaks etc. Constantly being fed the same meals; on lockdown periods we're being fed bologna sandwiches or box meals.
The quality of the food is poor, all breaded and processed food and mostly canned food.
Blankets get cleaned once a month, but perspiration makes these blankets strong before a weeks time in a month waiting period.
I'm unsatisfied with the way this facility feeds us, the food sometimes gets given to us on foam trays and just doesn't be enough for a daily meal. We inform the staff here of these things and they does nothing to fix or act like they care.
This space is inadequate to respond to unsatisfied remarks for religion commissary and rec department.
Better meals should be provided to non meat eaters. I have been given small clothes and have not seen my right size. They close the rec and staff are very disrespectful. The water is unsafe.
Showers: yes, but not on lockdown; haircuts: but we have to pay for them.
The dining hall is very unsanitary. I've seen mice all over the kitchen. The food is outdated. Fruit we receive are spoiled almost all the time.
I am unsatisfied with the cleanliness of the housing unit because I caught a staph infection twice by the showers.
Because of the water problem and how we living on lockdown.
The food is poorly cooked and sometimes cold due to the numerous lockdowns and the lack of care and concern from the officers.
The quality of the food for the most part is the best I've had in my 17 years in, but you'll leave he chow hall still hungry more times than not.
The food is bad on lockdown. It's cold and we don't get enough calories and stuff like that they give us bologna sandwiches everyday.
Commissary doesn't have more healthy items.
I believe that the conditions of the last couple institutions with the claim of the feds not having the funds makes the conditions worse.
Everything I said I was unsatisfied with is because the staff does not do their jobs and they are very unprofessional. They are racist. Staff just clearly disregard everything.
We are always on lockdown.
I wash my own clothes by hand.
The people here don't want us here. They say we are living too good here, so that's why they treat us bad.
We stay locked down for too long. Everything is going good I guess.
The food is okay it's just very small portions, you can only exchange sheets and blankets once a month, which in summertime it's hot because A/C doesn't work properly. Rec is basically always closed and can't get out to the big yard to catch fresh air.
Commissary doesn't have a variety of healthy cereal, nuts, etc also all cup soup are spicy chili, no substitute for people that don't like spicy.
Fruit - apples are very low quality, are sometime rotten. They never provide butter for hot cereal.

I've only been here a little over 2 months but these are my observations based upon experience from other institutions.
Lack of professionalism, people skills, understanding what needs to be done completed in a sensible manner. Staff basically shows a provocative attitude and biased approach to many concerns.
The food once had a cooked rat in it. Also rats run around in the dining hall the water is contaminated the units are always dirty where is tho you get sick the shower stay dirty.
We don't get showers daily, the water here is not good it make you sick. We've been on lockdown 30+ day. We are not allowed to talk to our family.
As for the meals a lot of times the portions aren't typically enough. As for recreations, there are things that we need for sports (like score boards) and they won't allow it to be bought. There should be more for this level prison.
The food tastes good but the size of the servings won't fill a five year-old.
Because it is unclean here.
I know that we are being served the lowest quality of food and I know that according to policy the correct amount of calories are not being met.
I am unsatisfied with the quality and the quantity of the meals because there isn't enough food and the food is horrible. Nine times out of ten I am satisfied with rec programs because I can stretch my legs and exercise. I am unsatisfied with commissary because the officers are disrespectful and they really don't have too much on the list because they took a lot of things off.
Too much to write.
It could be better.
Satisfied because whatever I marked is acceptable. Unsatisfied because its unacceptable and there is no consistence or professionalism.
When on lockdown there is no variety of meals, portion are for kindergarten kids not grown men. Commissary can be more diverse and healthy.
We don't always eat the same things that were served to the other units. The showers are dirty as well as the pods. I haven't heard of a recreation program since I been here.
Most times the food is not hot or well cooked, can hardly go to recreation due to the functioning of the institution. And can hardly go to my religious program (Jehovah's Witness) because of the chaplain's schedule.
No answer.
The food is always cold and half done. The commissary staff are disrespectful and the waiting area is a safety hazard.
Because of too many lockdowns can't accomplish nothing really.
I think they can put more food on our trays and feed us as men. The chapel needs TVs so we can go study and expand our mind.

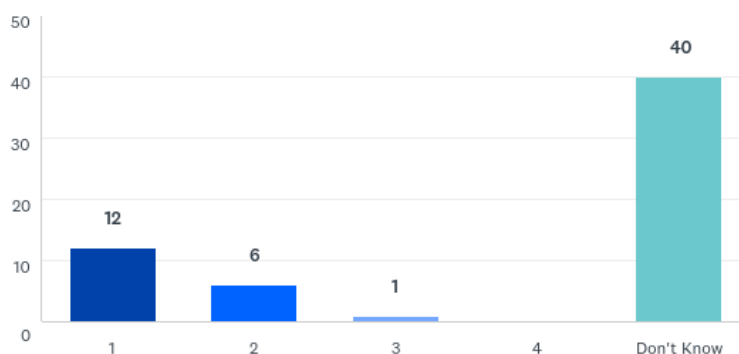
Is there anything else you would like to share about daily life at FCI McDowell?

Inmate Responses
The environment is very racist toward people of color. The white staff evidently haven't been raised among people of color.
The medical care is the worst.
There are mice running around in the chow hall while we're eating and running around in the light fixtures. Also they leave big roll around trash can by the table that DC inmates sit and eat. We bring this to the administration attention and they tell us that's a food service problem.
Staff are very disrespectful to DC guys. We would like the staff to better address the needs of DC guys that are still under the old law and have to be seen by the parole board. The water is unsafe to drink.
The respect level for inmates especially DC is very low and biased.
It's designed to break us and not help us.
My main concern is the blatant racism and the lack of ability to change prisons.
I've learned if you lay low and play slow you'll have an easier time of it. Even if you do have to sacrifice some of your self-respect.
The water's bad.
We're locked down for someone outside throwing something over the gate which wasn't our fault. We've been locked down for a month and will not come back out until Jan 2. We can't order hygiene, commissary has been closed ever since and they only sell us batteries.
The institution doesn't have reductions of points based on programming. They state the only way to leave here is to check in the hole.
Daily life here at FCI McDowell is very dreadful. COs try their best to make everyday life very hard for you by coming in your cells and taking things that you buy from commissary and throwing them in the trash.
Always on lockdown.
It's bad here. The water is bad. The staff is racist and they think that we are not real human men and they are very nasty when you write them up!
No heat, have not seen case manager to prepare for halfway, other programs. No juices (orange, apple).
I feel as though DC inmates are treated unfair compared with other inmates from different areas. The water is terrible and not

healthy to drink.
Education is seriously flawed.
The water here isn't good.
Very bad water. Non-drinkable. It is potable after a 3-5 minute boiling. Mail is scarce. Been here 6 months only received 3 pieces of mail. Took 3 months to access the e-mailing system. Was ill-advised and given misdirection several times and from several staff members.
DC inmates are treated different than other inmates.
I want to leave here ASAP, they treat us so bad the staff is racist, disrespectful, and we need help.
The staff does what they want to when they want to, not always as planned.
We are not in the best of care.
There isn't enough activity here. Everything here is inadequate.
There are some employees here who try to make a difference but then you have those who are disgruntled and disrespectful to the point of being confrontational trying to provoke you just to name a few Ms. Huffman, MS. Rife, and Jansen and last but not least Hacker.
It's just to petty, always on lockdown for the smallest things, ex. arguments between two people lock us down.
No consistence with the daily operation of this prison, except 4pm count. we jump from one foot to the next because of lack of consistence.
There can or should be more consideration of inmates sleeping at breakfast times. Some officers have no respect the way they do their jobs, obvious disrespectful noise of banging rolling cards down steps, throwing crates!
The way the COs talk to you here is really uncalled for. They get smart and talk to the inmates like we are beneath them. The cells are cold and when you address the COs they turn their backs and walk away.
Nothing here benefits me because under the Old Law, I am unable to receive programs because of my life sentence for which I am eligible for parole.

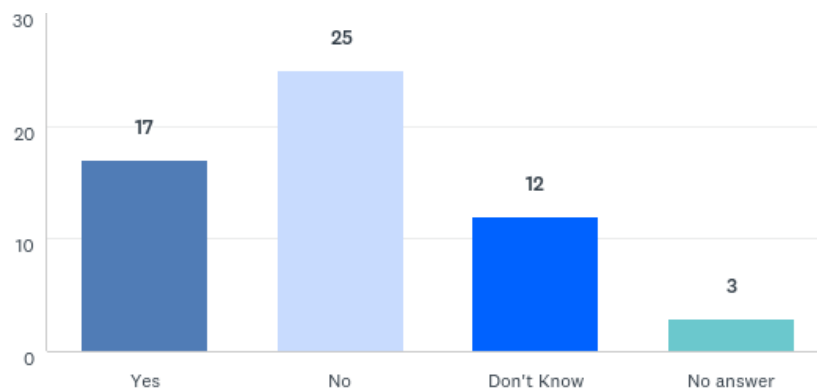
What is your Medical Care Level?

Answered: 59 Skipped: 2



Are you on the chronic caseload?

Answered: 57 Skipped: 4

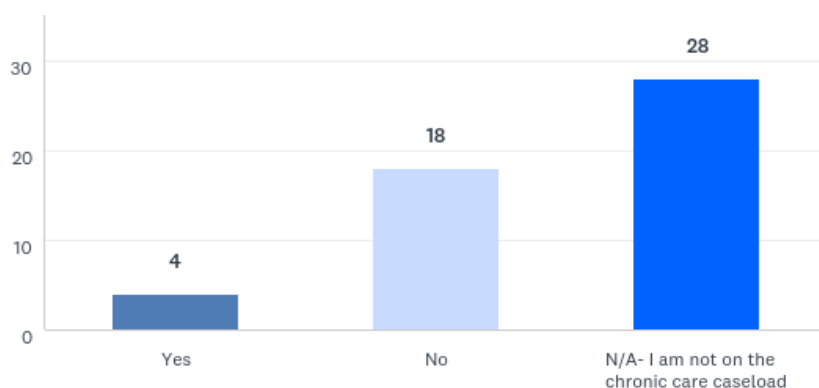


If you are on the chronic care caseload, please give the reason(s) why:

Inmate Responses
I was on the chronic care caseload because I lost my hearing in my left ear, I was told that they would do nothing to help me get it back, so I'm not on the chronic care caseload here.
Hep C.
I was not put on the chronic care because my PA Carruthers said I was getting too much money.
Because of high blood pressure.
Asthma
Blood pressure, asthma.
Bad outbreak on my head.
High blood pressure.
I have a very bad case of asthma.
High blood pressure.
I have Hep C.
Asthma, high blood pressure.
I have several back problems including a slip disc of my L-4 and L-5.
Depression
blood pressure
I have problem staying happy and can't stay still but when I'm in my classes I can but I can't go to them if we stay on lockdown.

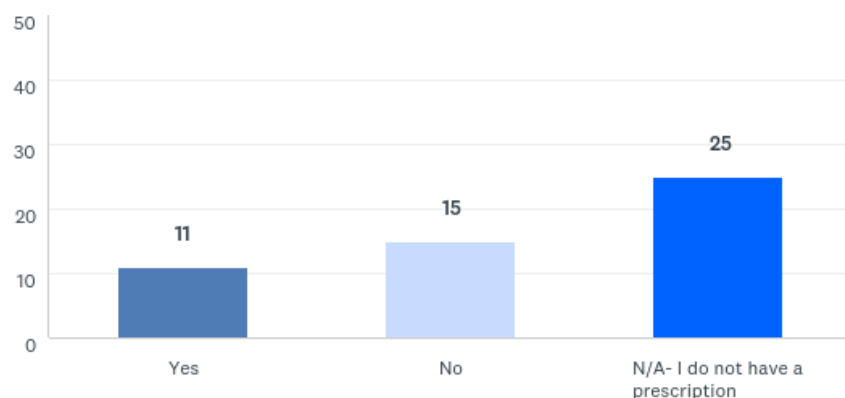
If you are on the chronic care caseload, are you generally receiving timely follow-ups?

Answered: 50 Skipped: 11



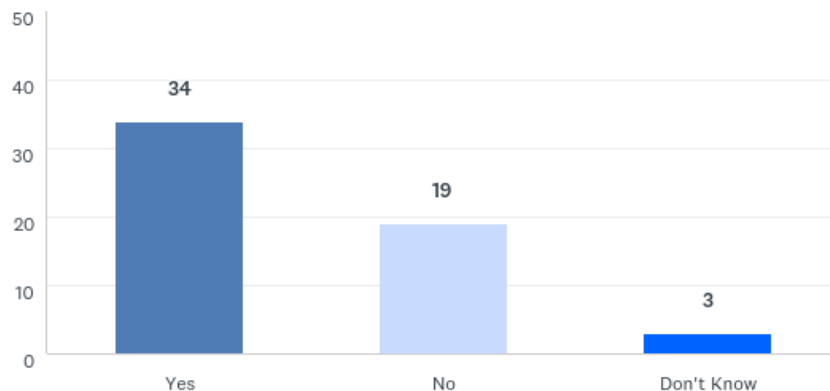
If you have a medication prescription, do you feel you receive medications in a timely manner?

Answered: 51 Skipped: 10



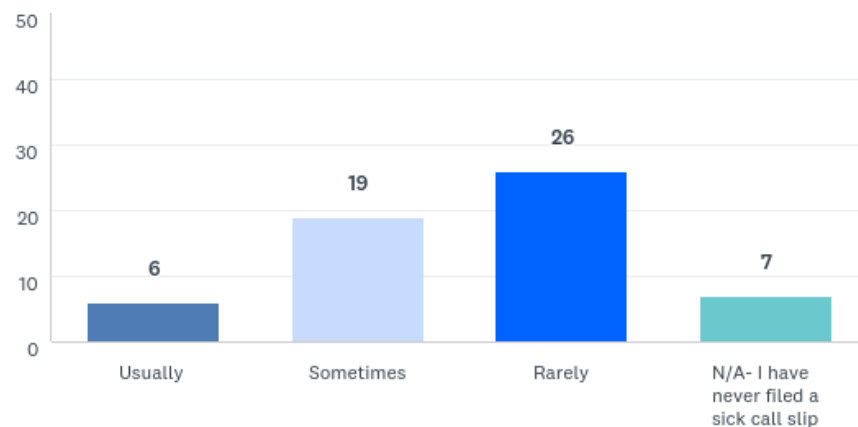
Do you normally have access to sick call slips?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 5



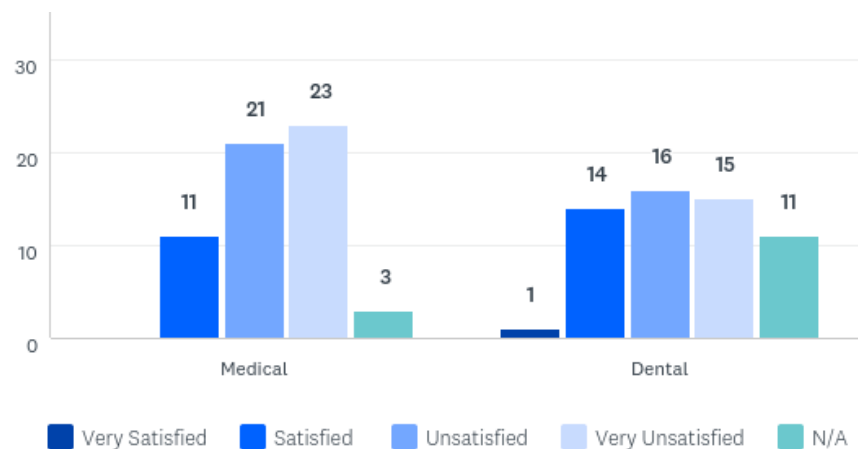
Does Health Services respond to sick call slips within 48 hours?

Answered: 58 Skipped: 3



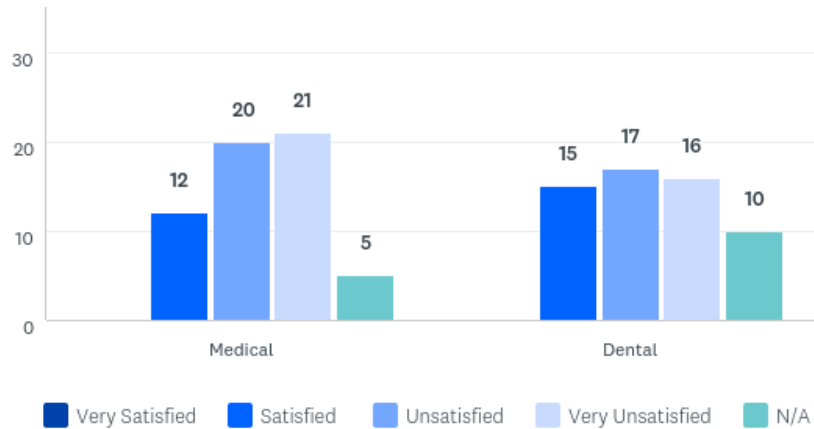
Overall, how satisfied are you with the QUALITY of care provided by the following:

Answered: 58 Skipped: 3



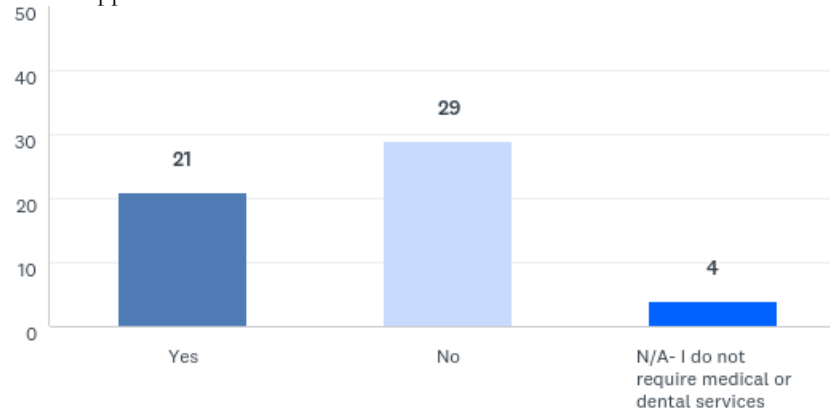
Overall, how satisfied are you with the WAIT TIMES to see the following:

Answered: 59 Skipped: 2



Do you feel you have adequate access to medical and dental services?

Answered: 54 Skipped: 7



Is there anything else you would like to share about medical or dental care at FCI McDowell?

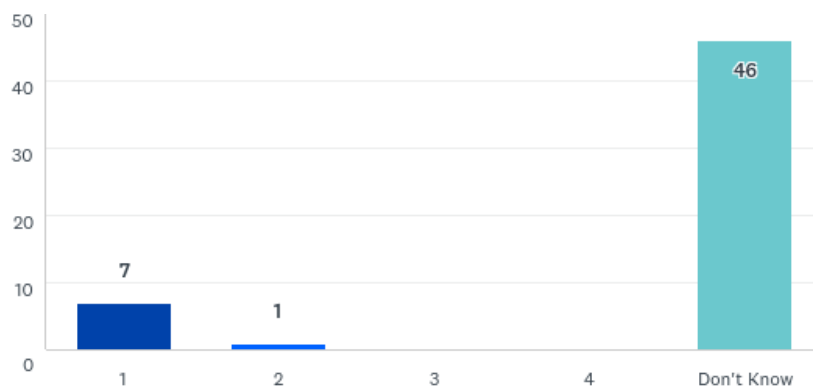
Inmate Responses

I currently have a lump in my chest and I have been complaining for about two months they still haven't done anything outside of sick call.
My eyeglasses prescription, after getting an eye exam, I didn't receive my glasses until approximately 10 months later; also they charge me a copay for sick call of two dollars.
The medical staff here do not act as healers, they could do a lot better. I understand that they deal with a lot of bad people also, so that might be the reason.
They don't care.
These people who operates the medical department is extremely uncaring and lazy.
The medical don't do anything but tell you to go to commissary and self medicate.
I'm currently on a handicap situation in which I'm mobile-agile but not fast enough to function adequately with the environment on an all the time basis.
These people here doesn't take medical care seriously at all.
They should not be taking out co-payments from DC guys. Under the DC revitalization act all medical and so-forth is paid for under contract from DOC. They should stop wanting to pull our teeth.
Why do DC inmates have to pay for medical if we have a contract with FBOP. DC inmates supposed to be able to get free medical.
I rarely see the health admin, when I need to speak to her about issues with medical. When I does she does care about the problems I bring to her.
If you have a medical issue they take a very long time to see you.
I dislocated my shoulder about three months ago, and I'm supposed to have therapy but haven't been yet.
When I first got here I needed mental health a doctor told me he was going to come.
It takes a serious act for medical to even consider your issue you're complaining about. You may have to fall out for them to take

you serious.
You have to constantly contact medical for them to see you when it is very serious issues you need to see them on and it takes at least three weeks to see somebody. You will die before you see medical about your issue. Dental is the same. I been diagnosed with B-12 deficiency and I'm supposed to get B-12 injections. I told medical about this more than once and I still have not been seen for this and it's been over a year since I told them.
They charge us for medical!
You can go to sick call and when you sign up they might tell you to go back to your unit you will be put on the sick call list.
The medical staff here don't do no work. Some of the PA have very nasty attitudes and not trying to treat you! It takes 18 months to get your teeth clean and that's bad. All they want is your \$2 that's why they tell you to come back!
I've had problems with my shoulders for the past 2 years 5 months was put into see the orthopedic still haven't heard or seen anyone. I got blood in my stool and was placed on the list to go out and see a gastro doc and a colon doc and it's been 5 months or more and still have not heard anything. As for the dentist I had my teeth cleaned in May and asked to be placed on the list to have my teeth cleaned again in a year. I was told I have to wait until my dental work was done before I could be placed on the list. It has been 7 months still work has not been done, nor have I been placed on the list to have my teeth cleaned again.
I want to ask you that being a DC inmate, do we have to pay for medical services?
\$2 fee, no actual assistance to issue. Teeth cleaned submission been 6 months since initial request.
I've pulled or tore my MCL and put in a slip and went to medical and they've yet to do anything about it.
When you sick here they tell you to buy items from commissary, they barely help you.
They need a better system on how they operate and some better staff members, you can really feel that they don't give a fuck about you.
I've only seen dental once since I've been on this compound.
I put in sick call about my bowel movement never been seen.
No consistence, med department may be open, it may not.
I believe dental should be willing to provide other options than just pulling your teeth as the answer to every concern.
They don't never respond to cop-outs or sick calls.

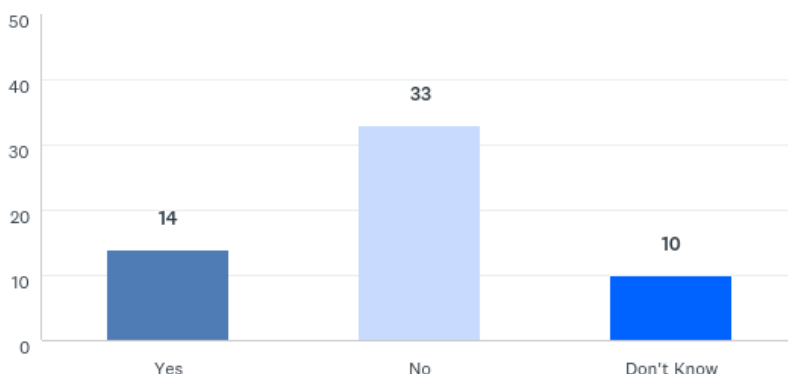
What is your designated Mental Health Care Level?

Answered: 54 Skipped: 7



Have you ever been diagnosed with a mental health issue, at this facility or elsewhere?

Answered: 57 Skipped: 4

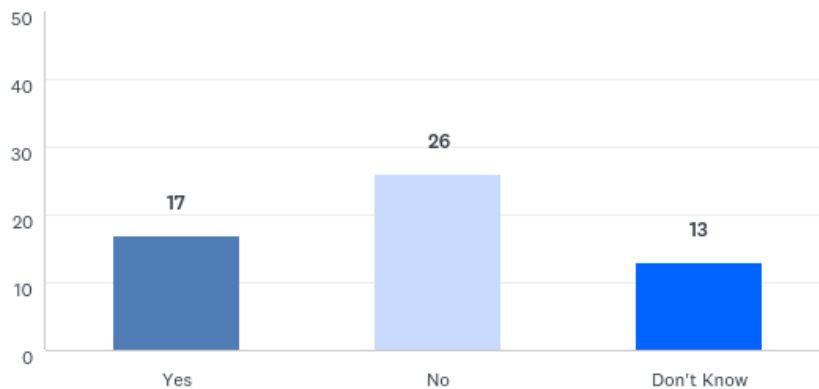


If you have been diagnosed with a mental health issues, please give the reason(s) why:

Inmate Responses
Walter Reed Hospital.
Because I got bad acid reflux and my chest.
Yes in 2004.
Depression.
Anxiety attacks, panic attacks.
Anger issues.
Depression.
I am a mental person.
I been mental health my whole life. I have an IEP in every school I went to. I always been bipolar and ADHD and being on lockdown ain't helping it at all.
Mental issues

Did you have a mental health evaluation when arriving at FCI McDowell?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 5

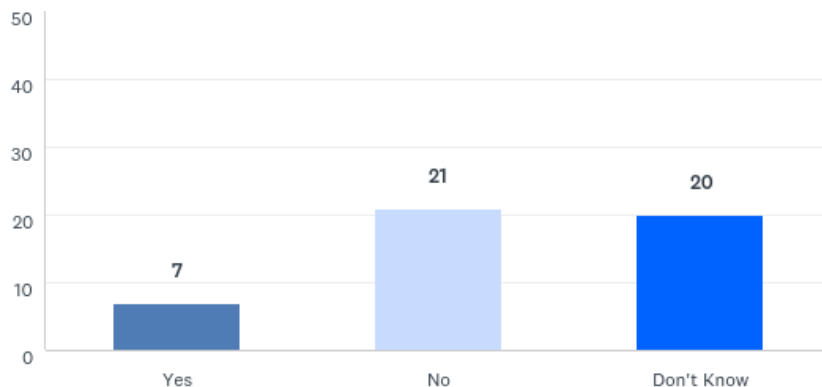


If you did have a mental health evaluation, please describe:

Inmate Responses
Yes, I have overcome my depression, I mean I grew up and realize I have the tools within myself to help cope with my depression.
He asked me about my history and if I ever felt like killing myself.
I'm a YRA offender. They told me that I had those conditions then.
I think they asked was I suicidal.
Blood, to see how healthy I was.
Well when I returned to the institution from a write in which I was denied my appeal, a psychologist called me over and asked me a lot of questions about how I was feeling.
We talked.
I have one with every prison I went to and they check and see if I still need my meds but that when I first got here.
Can't really remember.

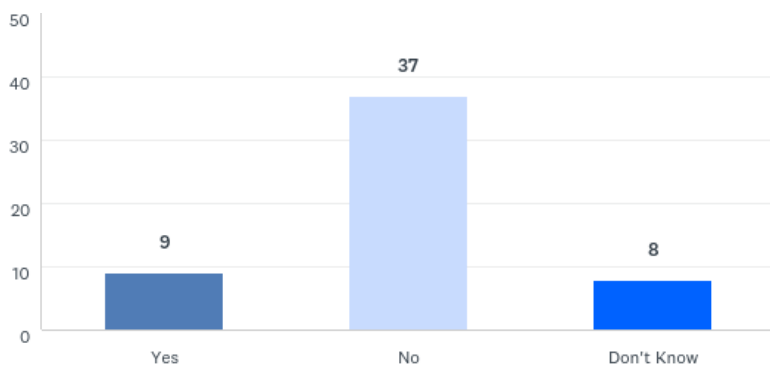
Did your mental health diagnosis change when you arrived at FCI McDowell?

Answered: 48 Skipped: 13



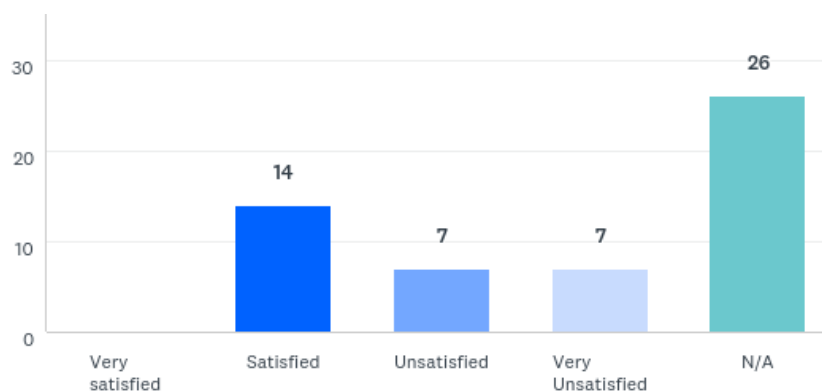
Are you currently receiving psychotropic medication?

Answered: 54 Skipped: 7



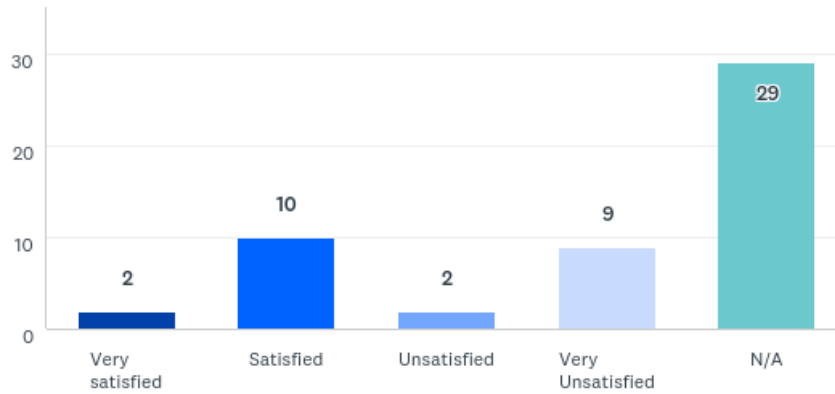
Overall, how satisfied are you with the QUALITY of mental health care?

Answered: 54 Skipped: 7



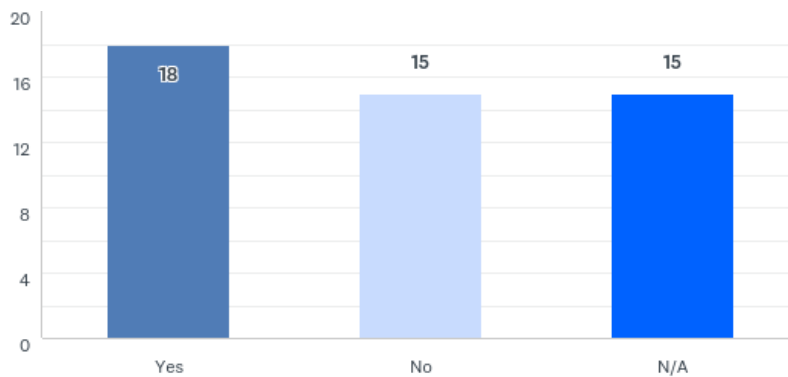
Overall, how satisfied with the WAIT TIMES to see mental health services?

Answered: 52 Skipped: 9



Do you feel you have adequate access to mental health services?

Answered: 48 Skipped: 13



Is there anything else you would like to share about mental health care at FCI McDowell?

Inmate Responses

They don't offer almost any programs, maybe two a year, not including drug programs. I was penalized at the parole board for not being enrolled in programs for mental health services that don't even exist.

Mental health is good here, they have open house 5 days a week.

Because I really need that medication that they give me.

I never seen them since I been down here.

The staff there are pleasant. Honestly they may be a little scared.

They'll have us waiting until forever before being seen.

They don't check up on you at all.

They don't really care.

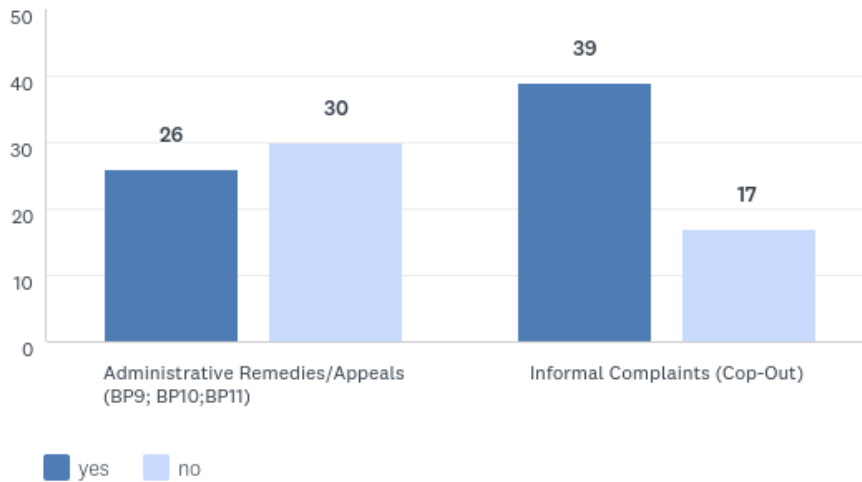
Yes, the inmate suicide cadre program is a joke and a scam.

They were very prompt at evaluating me for the RDAP drug program.

They don't care here they just label me as crazy and forget about me.

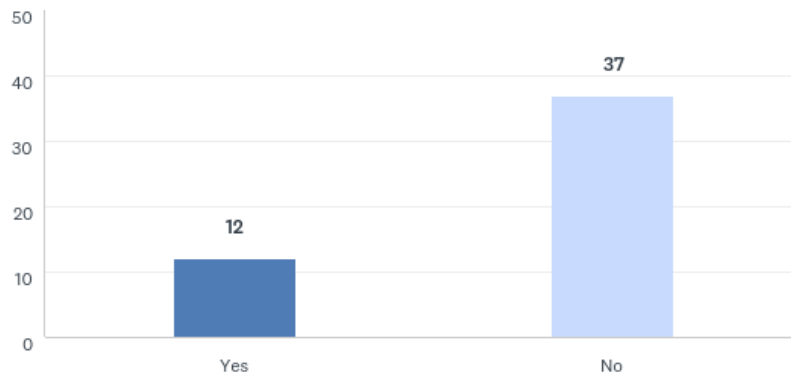
Do you normally have access to the following:

Answered: 56 Skipped: 5



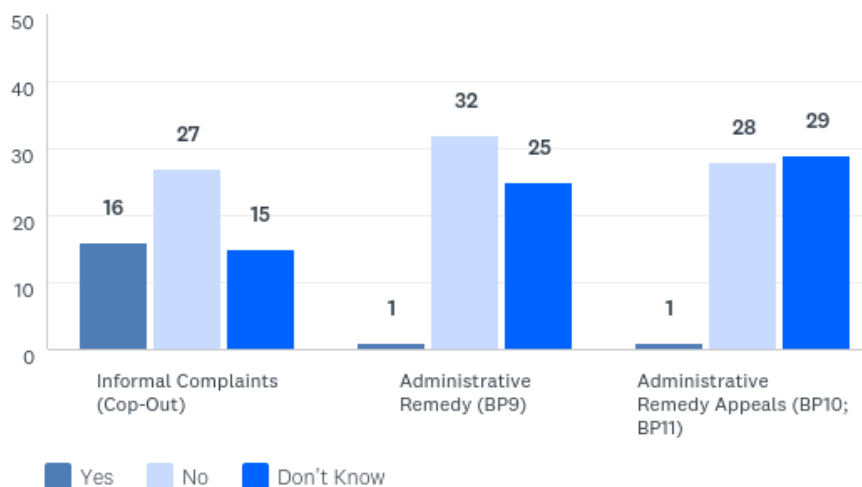
Have you ever used the administrative remedy process at FCI McDowell?

Answered: 49 Skipped: 12



Do you feel that the following are generally dealt with fairly at FCI McDowell?

Answered: 58 Skipped: 3

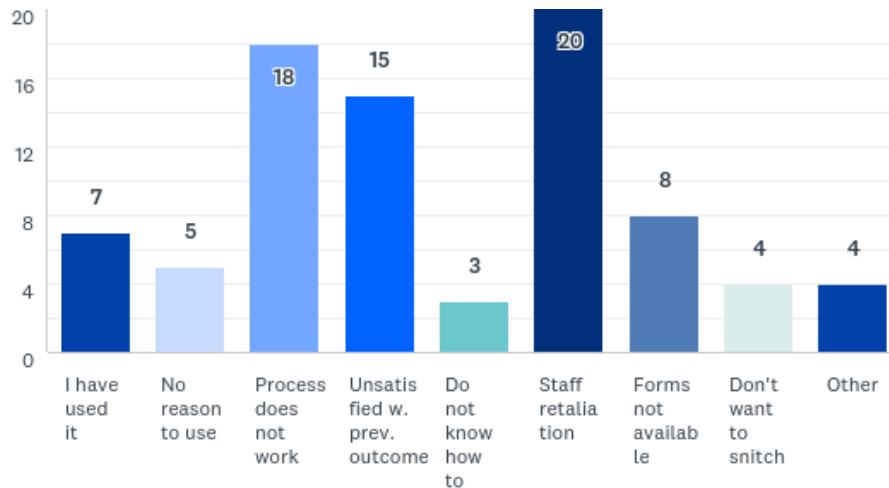


Why do you feel the above items are fair or unfair?

Inmate Responses
I have low points with a management variable and I don't think I should be down here.
Responses and times are normally fairly quick and comprehensive.
They have the good old boys system here, if you write a staff member up, depending on who it is be prepared for backlash (your situation must be worth it.)
Not the level of the cop out if it's in house you no luck.
You have to inform staff why you want such forms before you're given one. The members of this racist administration sticks together, period.
Request forms, cop-outs should always be in abundance for inmates request when needed.
They are very unprofessional and one-sided here.
Because they never respond to it in a timely manner, and it's never taken seriously, so there is really no point in doing an administrative remedy. The administration here lets these officers say and do whatever they want to do.
If dealt with in a professional manner. The process is fair.
I have heard guys have been having issues. It's unfair that we have to buy water to drink being that the water is unsafe to drink in our cell.
Its staff word over inmate here no matter what?
Because this facility is based on a family as of COs so the professional style of prison is out the window.
I feel as though they are unfair because staff become really concerned when BP 8-11 are requested and sometimes refuse to give them out.
The Warden will NEVER respond to any BP-9 in a timely manner she has 20 days to respond, the average to she will respond is around 60 days and always with a rejection.
For any type of write-up from staff they are the ones that give out the sentences so it's really unfair.
I said I don't know because I haven't used the process here at McDowell yet. But from the way of how they run the institution and from the other inmates it's poor, really poor.
When trying to file BP-8s or any grievances the staff never turns them in or they lose it and your grievances will never go through and that's unfair.
No chance of getting it right or being treated fairly!
Because you got to go through hell and hot water to get them forms.
Because when you write up staff they tell the person you wrote up then they shake your cell down and take your things you pay for and throw them away. It's not fair.
They never fairly and honestly address certain issues dealing with inmate custody issues.
I feel that in that regard, this institution is unprofessional, because no one shows up to main line nor does anyone seem prepared to address grievances.
Staff failed to print out request. Lack of people skills, more training required, unprofessional.
The cop-outs sometimes go unanswered.
Everything they do here is on the (timer?) They barely help you here, we need help.
Most informal complaints are handled swiftly and unbiased especially when dealing with my counselor or recreation staff.
Because they're there if you need them.
Unfair.
The officers never really investigate to see if there was any wrongdoing by staff. I'm speaking on how I've seen others complaints dealt with.
Most of the times the counselor will shoot you down before you even file. Nothing is going to happen. You're only going to make enemies and I believe my officers no matter what that good old boy stuff is happening here.
Unfair because of the "good ol' boys" mentality here. If I file or attempt to file a grievance then I'm a target. How else can I solve or begin to solve a problem?
I filled out a complaint about how they are feeding us during locked down and no one came to talk to me about it.
They are unfair because the case manager is never around and I have been here for four years and they (unit team) have never had an open house to deal with inmates issues.
They don't answer cop-outs.
They need to step their process up faster.

If you have chosen not to use the administrative remedy process, why not? (check all that apply)

Answered: 23 Skipped: 4



Is there anything else you would like to share about the administrative remedy process at FCI McDowell?

Inmate Responses

It's just no point in using it here. These people don't care and it's not going to follow-up on your remedy, the warden gives a careless response.

Been here two months, haven't seen my unit.

Staff retaliation here is at an all time high! There's no one to complain to because the warden is afraid of inmate. If you surveyed the entire yard you'd find that at least half don't know what she looks like.

Because by the time you file you've already done the time for the shot. Then the staff target your cell.

Usually all federal institutions are biased to DC inmates and never treat them fair.

Staff throw forms away when you give them to them. The process goes unanswered. Then when you go check on it they say they can't find your form.

The staff here retaliate against you and they take your stuff and don't do their job, don't give you what you got coming and they will mess up your paperwork or tell other inmates your case and put your life in danger!

Because when I came here to McDowell it seems that my care provider was trying to help me, which I came from another institution where I did go through the process of filing. However I was trying to have patience still my issues haven't been addressed.

Please train! Please train! Better advise staff on how to inculcate people skills. Less provocation! (Failed to receive forms due to staff.)

We need help please, I hate it here, help me.

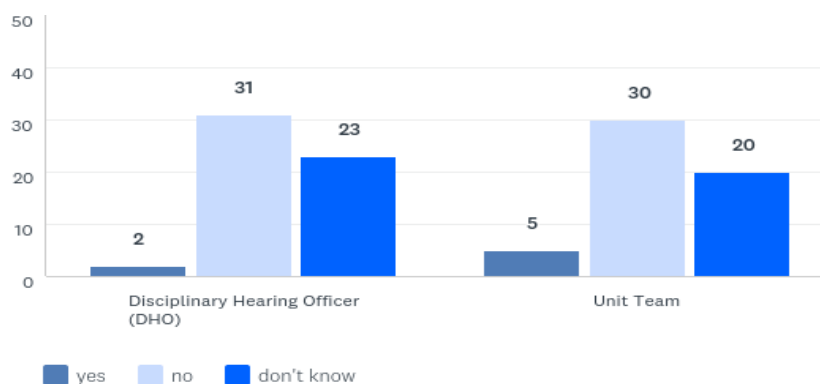
I don't believe just my single filing will make a difference.

Resentment. They actually get angry that you reported their misconduct and disrespectful behavior, if we speak to them the way they speak to us we're going to the SHU.

No one is being held accountable so the process is a joke if one was to utilize it. (Did not use because I was browbeaten not to.)

Overall, do you feel that the disciplinary decisions are fair from the following:

Answered: 56 Skipped: 5

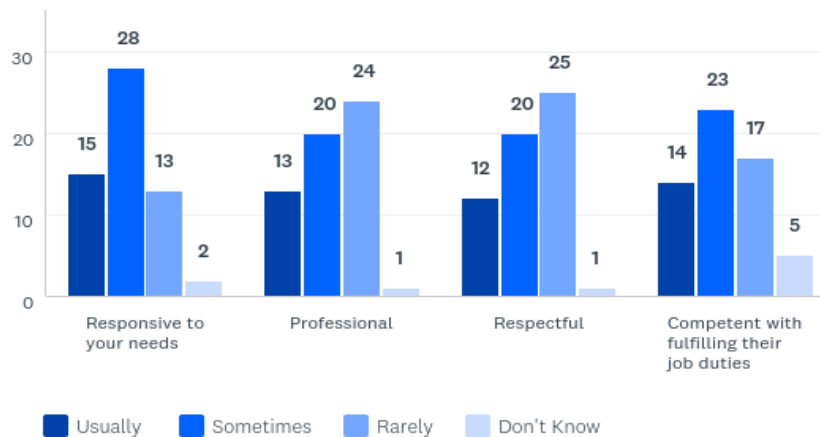


Is there anything else you would like to share about disciplinary decisions at FCI McDowell?

Inmate Responses
They use that here to intimidate people, especially if you are trying to leave to a better jail.
Yes it not fair.
Staff don't care whether or not you're innocent, they're simply going to convict you.
First time disciplinary decisions sometimes too harsh for penalties.
The DHO here is unfair at all times! She sees things on shots that's wrote that are not right and still finds you guilty on the shot. She says things in DHO hearing like somebody's got to take the fall, or I don't care, you're guilty!
Again staff word over inmate we never have a fair chance.
Staff finds you guilty and they don't investigate the incident.
They do what they want here.
When you catch a shot they do you wrong and you don't get your appeal until your time is up. The DHO officer talk very nasty to you and she is very unfair.
Better train the officers and staff at McDowell.
It feels that the police here leans more towards the white inmates.
They lockdown for unnecessary reasons.
We are on lockdown now for reasons unknown.
They are excessive and you are punished more than at more violent facilities.
Because of where we are from we are guilty anyway and the appeals are never in your favor.
Yes, I just got here at the institutions and the counselor here gave me an incident report based off of trying to get an incident report to stick on my cellie, because we both share the living quarters. I haven't even got my property yet.

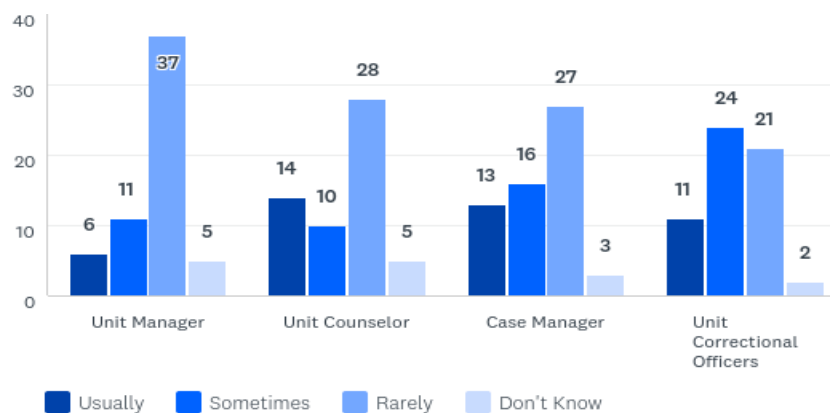
Are your housing unit officers generally:

Answered: 59 Skipped: 2



Do you feel that the following are helpful?

Answered: 59 Skipped: 2

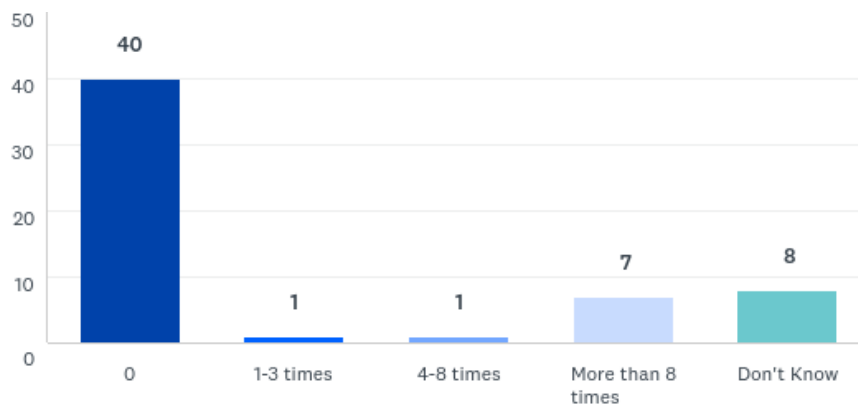


Is there anything else you would like to share about staff at FCI McDowell?

Inmate Responses
They are very unprofessional and unqualified here.
Our unit manager isn't ever here!
Unit managers and so forth do not know how to address the needs of old law DC guys and do not like putting DC guys in for transfers to low institutions.
They are disrespectful.
Some okay, most don't know how to talk to the inmates.
The respect level especially for DC inmates is low.
Some of the COs are disrespectful.
They're very racist.
They are racist staff here, and they not only hate black people, but Mexicans too.
Staff do not help you at all with any issues.
Have not seen case manager, counselor to talk about programs, transitional housing, halfway house options.
They don't do open house and they barely come to work.
Better training immediately.
The case manager is usually not here. And when you program to get your points low they don't take the points off for you.
Most are helpful and approachable.
They do what they want to, when they want to.
They are no good.
A lot of these people are rarely seen so there's very limited contact.
No consistency.
There are some respectful officers, but there are more disrespectful officers that treat you and talk to you less than.
I've been trying to get my visitation list complete so my family can come visit but it's still sitting on the counselor's desk as we speak.
They are very hateful and disrespectful.

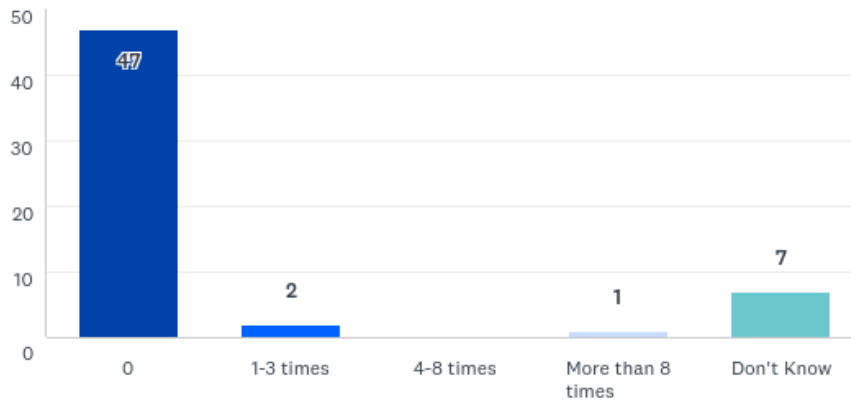
How many times have you been placed in ambulatory restraints at FCI McDowell?

Answered: 57 Skipped: 4



How many times have you been placed in four-point restraints at FCI McDowell?

Answered: 57 Skipped: 4



If you have been placed in restraints at FCI McDowell, what is the maximum time you have spent in restraints at one time? (Ambulatory or four-point)

Inmate Responses
45 minutes.
One hour

If you have been placed in restraints at FCI McDowell, do you have any injuries from use and application of restraints? If so, please describe:

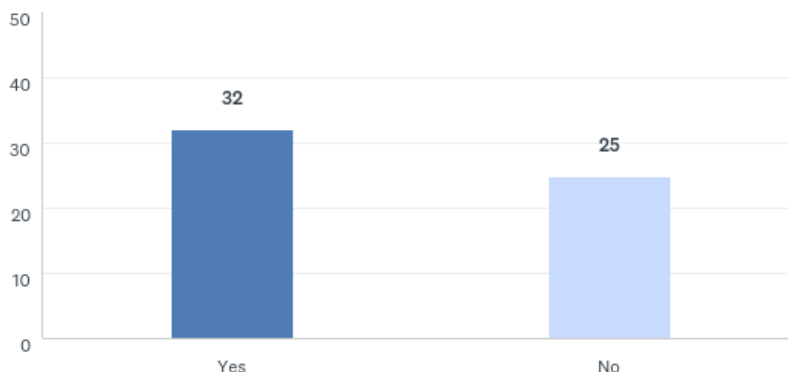
Inmate Responses
No.
None.
I have no injuries from the use of restraints, they use them on lockdown during showers.
At the time just discoloration, but it went away after a few days.
No injuries.
They leave you in restraints for long periods of time here, I hate it here.

If you have been placed in restraints at FCI McDowell, did staff provide the opportunity to use the toilet? Please describe:

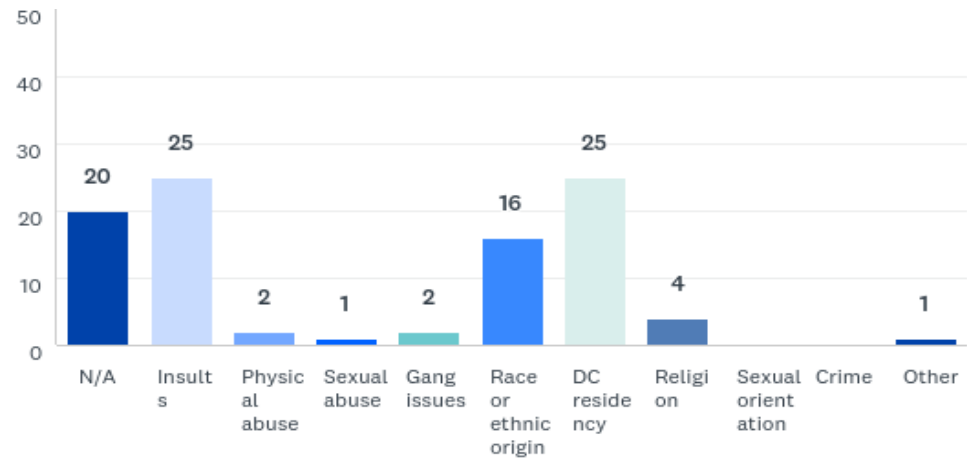
Inmate Responses
No.
No, not for the hour.
No they never gave me the opportunity to use the toilet.
Four-point - no I wasn't asked to go to the bathroom on my hospital visit.

Have you ever been harassed, threatened, or abused by staff at FCI McDowell?

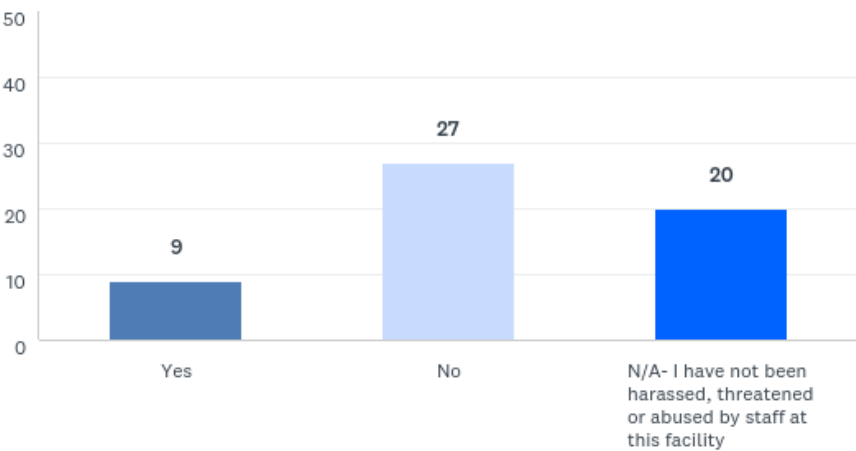
Answered: 57 Skipped: 4



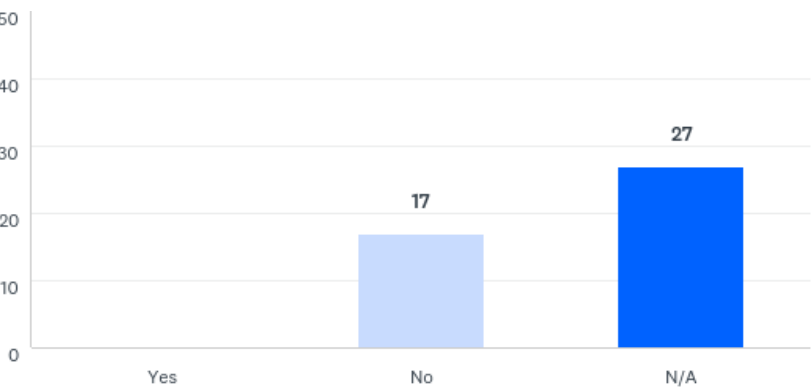
If yes, what did it involve? (check all that apply)
 Answered: 52 Skipped: 9



If you have been harassed, threatened, or abused by staff at FCI McDowell, did you report it?
 Answered: 56 Skipped: 5



If yes, are you satisfied with how it was handled?
 Answered: 44 Skipped: 17



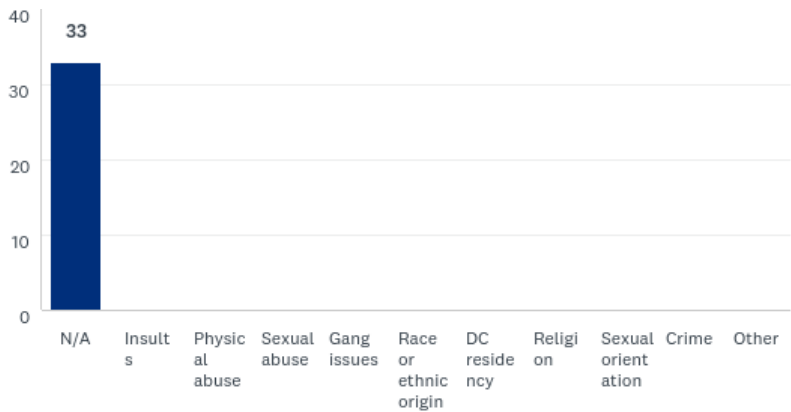
Have you ever been harassed, threatened or abused by other inmates at FCI McDowell?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 5



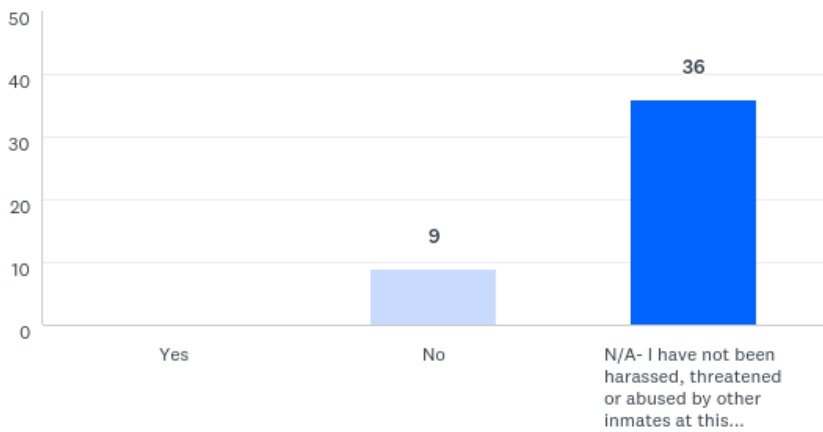
If yes, what did it involve? (check all that apply)

Answered: 33 Skipped: 28



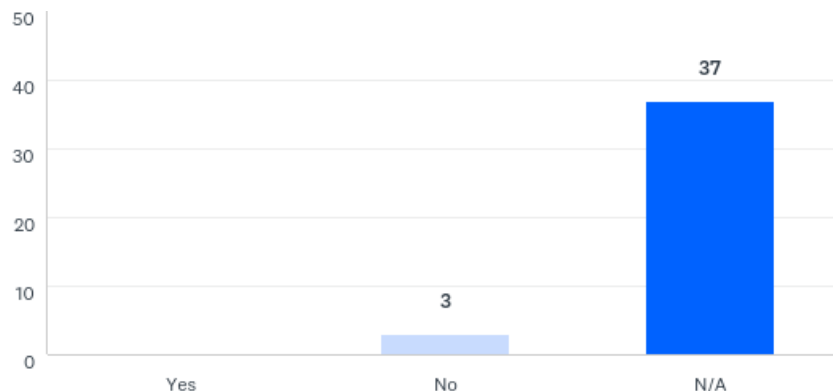
If you have been harassed, threatened or abused by other inmates at FCI McDowell, did you report it?

Answered: 45 Skipped: 16



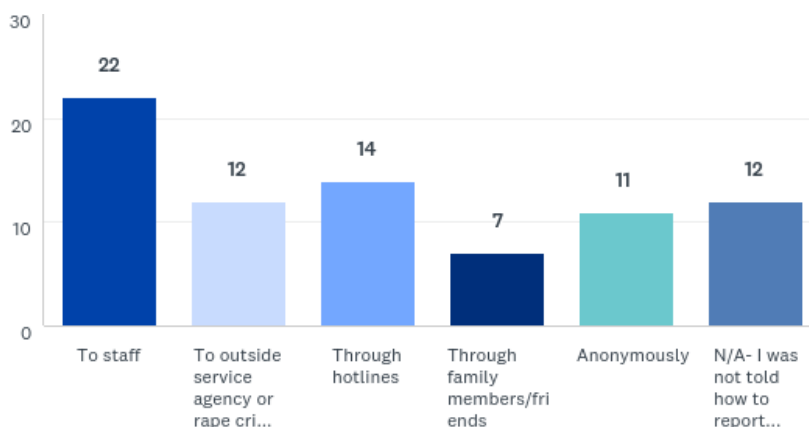
If yes, are you satisfied with how it was handled?

Answered: 40 Skipped: 21



Were you told that you could report sexual abuse in the following ways:

Answered: 36 Skipped: 25

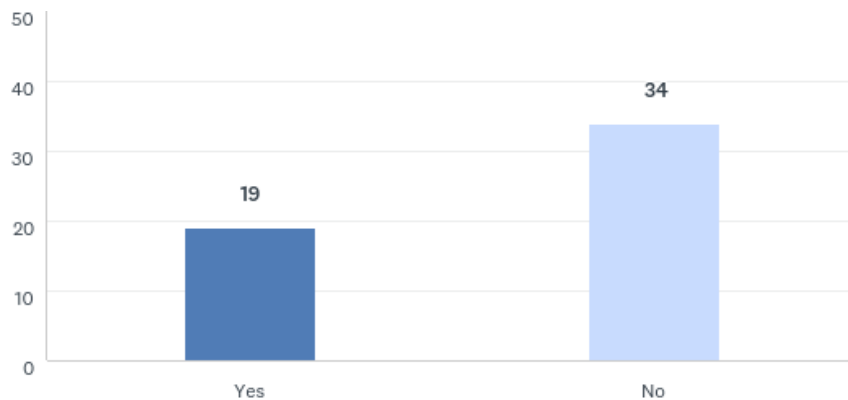


Is there anything else you would like to share about institutional safety at FCI McDowell?

Inmate Responses
Not very violent.
The staff here are extremely racist and they don't hide it. But this is rural WV. But they are extremely disrespectful too and if you complain they tell you to let it go because staff have bad days. If you respond they put you in the SHU and throw away the majority of your property and tell you to file a tort claim! This happens to every minority that goes to the SHU. Just ask!!
FCI McDowell is full of staff that don't want to work they never answer the emergency button from your cell when you push it. They do a lot of hateful things especially to DC inmates.
Water is not drinkable. Provocation. Better training of staff.
This usually a peaceful institution.
The water here is "contaminated". Just check the history. We have been on lockdown for a month and only been given bottled water two times. The staff comes in with bottled water because they have said the water is unsafe.

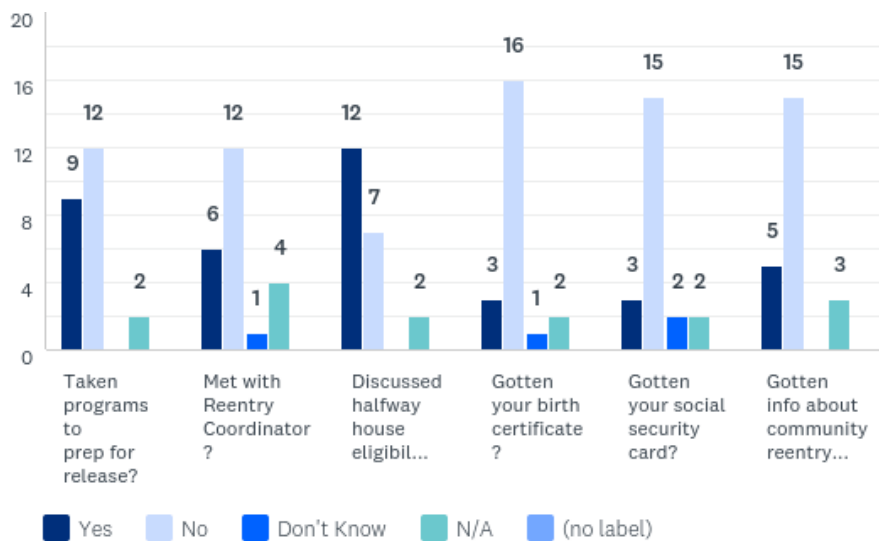
Are you within 18 months of release?

Answered: 53 Skipped: 8



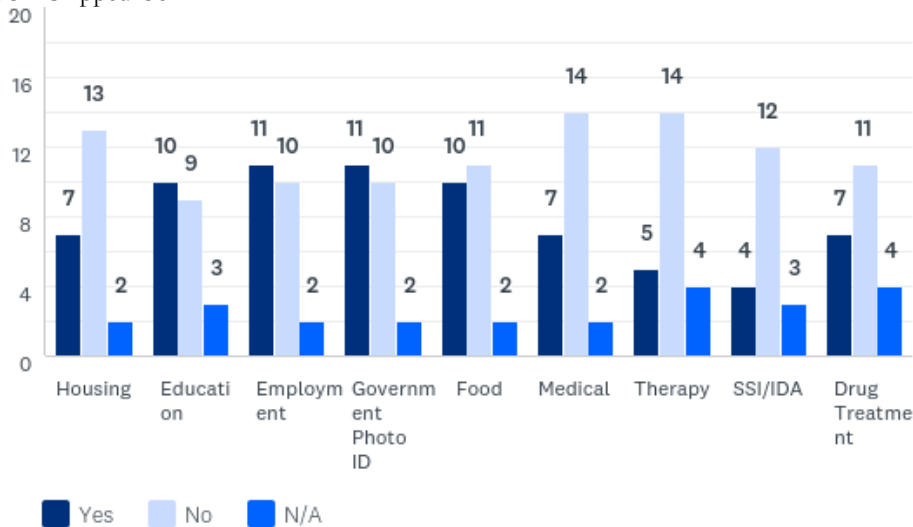
If you are within 18 months of release, have you:

Answered: 23 Skipped: 38



If you are within 18 months of release, do you know how to obtain the following after release?

Answered: 23 Skipped: 38

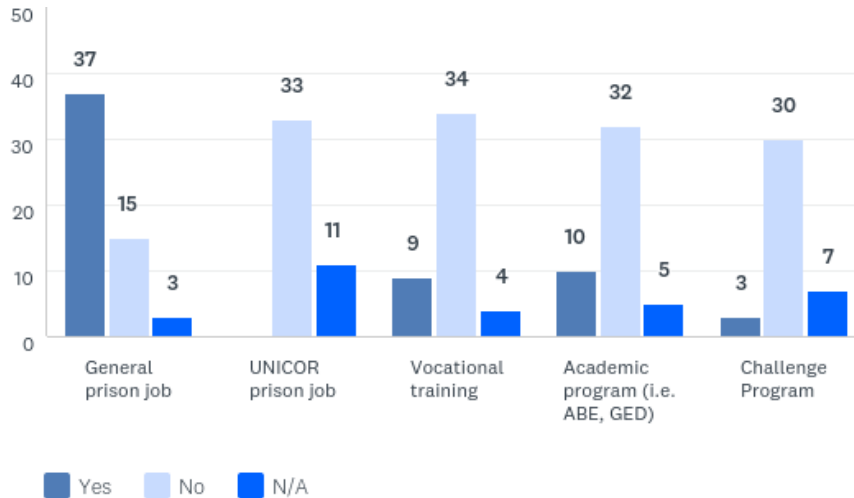


Is there anything else you would like to share about reentry?

Inmate Responses
Re-entry programs fail to account for the technological aspect of release. From what I've been hearing, almost all services and all job applications are filled out on a computer. We have no typing or computer skills programs whatsoever.
I have about 24 months before seeing the parole board and have 12 points. I should be at a low security institution.
It's a beautiful thing.
They take a long time to put halfway house packet in people only getting 30 days.
Have not been offered anything, been trying to get my options.
They don't come see me.

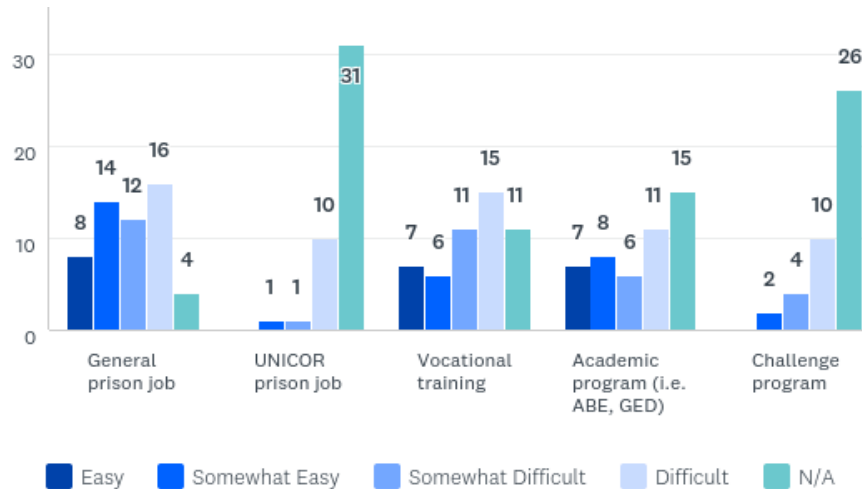
Are you currently participating in:

Answered: 56 Skipped: 5



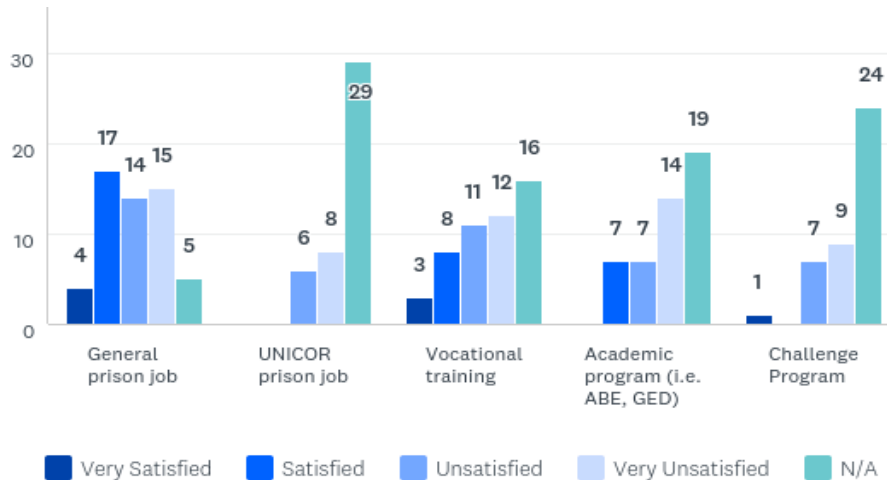
How easy or difficult is it to get into the following activities in this facility?

Answered: 55 Skipped: 6



How satisfied are you with the following activities in this facility?

Answered: 58 Skipped: 3



Is there anything else you would like to share about education and programming at FCI McDowell?

Inmate Responses

They don't offer any real education programs past GED. They base admission to vocational training programs on release dates, I don't have a release date yet because I see the parole board, so I am almost completely excluded from participating in vocational training programs.

I also teach classes here, but the education program here is very bad. There are no classes for prisoners, I mean to change a person views on what is right and wrong, they do not care if you grow as a person, which I think is a big step in making sure people don't come back to prison.

I have been in this facility for 16 months and I've taken the GED test a few times I passed two subjects and failed two, and they focus more on math than what I need. I tell the teacher and they just do what they want, so I just signed out. Also the teacher over there is disrespectful to the inmates, they curse at us and tell us they don't really care.

For DC inmates such as myself with a lengthy sentence it's hard for me to get in vocational classes in BOP. But when I was in Lorton and CCA private prison those classes were afforded to me at will.

If DC guys are under the Old law and should be able to be placed in the Challenge program without any problems.

Due to lockdown.

I've been here four years and haven't seen more than a handful of people actually get a GED.

There are not enough programs especially career-building programs.

It's hard to get a job! But they have no problem assigning a job to you that you don't work at nor get paid for just to show the outside world that we all have jobs.

I feel they don't have enough opportunities here to ready anybody for society.

McDowell does not have anything to offer.

Put cop-outs in for a job, trying to get things started.

Inmate pay - no incentives for the apprenticeship self-study program

Better training for staff. And poor drinking water.

The people that work in education are very disrespectful they don't how to talk to us.

There are only minimal programs and they hold no value to DC inmates. We receive no incentive for programming.

You can be fired for the smallest thing if you're not a rat or a homosexual.

Very inadequate. There are never any classes to participate in! Inadequate library too! Not a lot to choose from!

Well for the challenge program there is no consistency. I finished it months ago and still have not been credited for it.

There need to be more educational tools here for inmates. No TV in education, no educational videos, not enough diversity.

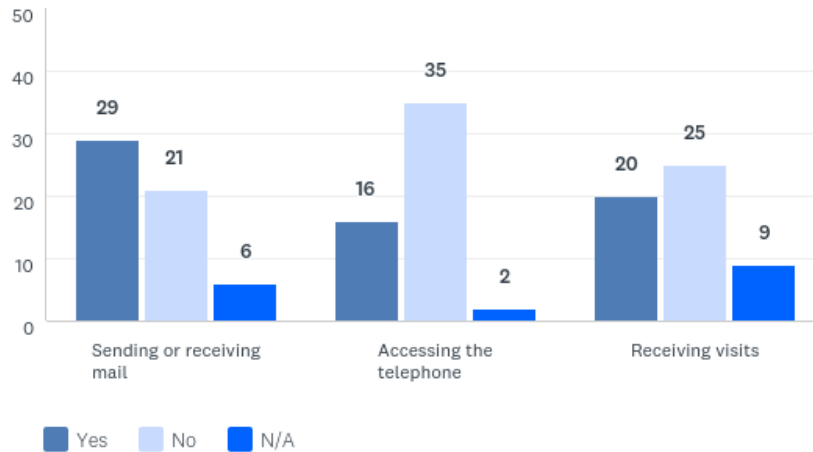
Once again, the staff are disrespectful and unprofessional.

it seems nonexistent.

Yes I think that it's very important to be able to participate in getting your education. GED needs to take those who want to receive GED should take more seriously.

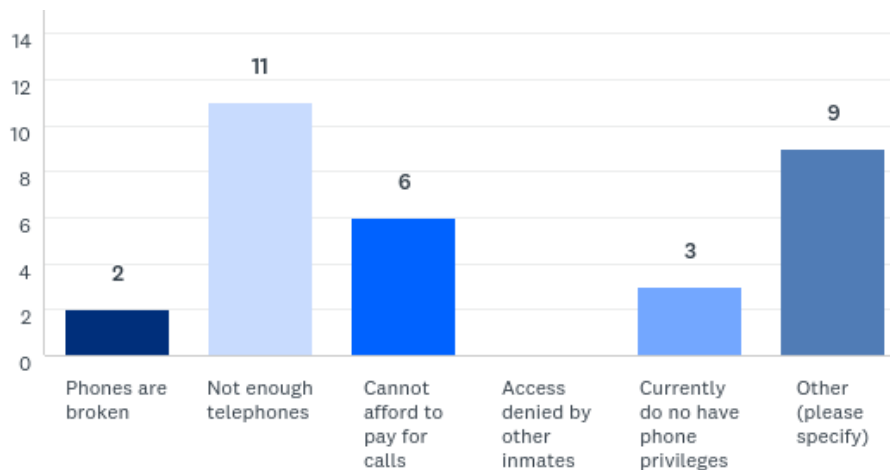
Have you had any problems within the past six months:

Answered: 57 Skipped: 4



If you have problems accessing the telephone, why?

Answered: 21 Skipped: 40

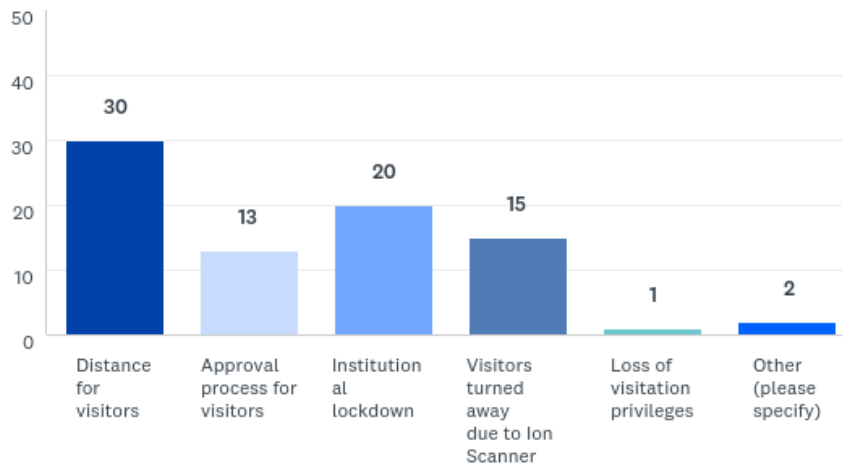


If you currently do not have phone privileges, how long have you been without phone privileges?

Inmate Responses
They locked me down now for over a month and don't give me the required recreation time to access the phone. I have no disciplinary infractions and as far as I know I'm not under any investigations and my phone privileges have not been suspended due to any sanction from DHO or unit team or disciplinary proceeding.
Mail is not being received by outside sources. Family, no cards or color paper.
I have been without my phone for three months now.
lockdown
Due to lockdown.
We've been on lockdown.
One month due to the massive lockdown.
1 month, due to lockdown.
Been on a frivolous lockdown since Nov 12th.
N/A (Lockdowns)
Currently the whole compound has no phone privileges. We've been on lockdown for over a month.

If you have problems receiving visits, why?

Answered: 42 Skipped: 19



If you currently do not have visitation privileges, how long have you been without visitation privileges?

Inmate Responses

They took my privileges and continue to do so without any due process or disciplinary proceedings. About a month, they suspended all visitation.

Due to lockdown.

I haven't had my visitation privileges over six months but the other prison took it for a year but I can have my closely family can visit in six months.

Is there anything else you would like to share about communication and visitation at FCI McDowell?

Inmate Responses

They have locked us down since November 14, 2018. Since then I've been given recreation time outside of the cell, which includes phone use and email for a total of one hour and half an hour at a time and today makes approximately thirty days of continuous lockdown.

They hold our mail for long periods of time and they reject a lot of mail.

Space is inadequate to elaborate.

Too far away from family. Staff is disrespectful to family. I'm nearing my parole date, I should or we should be near home.

Due to lockdown.

The staff that deals with incoming visitors are disrespectful to families of inmate, which make them not want to come back.

They are very disrespectful to visitors. Your visitors come all this way and may not be able to see you. It's heartbreaking for your family to save and plan to come and see you, then can't because of lockdowns or the Ion scanner. They mailroom here turns almost any and everything around. You get your mail almost a week after it's been here in the institution. It's really bad here.

I can not receive visits because I'm too far from DC. My family can not travel this far to come see me.

Yes I get the USA Today newspaper and they are always one to two weeks late. I've never been at another institution where it has taken that long for me to get the paper, maybe a day or two late at the most.

Better staff training please! Bias, provocative, lack of consistency.

They turned your family around for nothing here and they talk bad to your family. Please help us.

The visiting area is usually ran okay but this institution is far for DC residents.

These people could care less if we had communication with loved ones.

At times when families travel long distances to visit loved ones they are denied too often for menial reason, mostly Ion scanner.

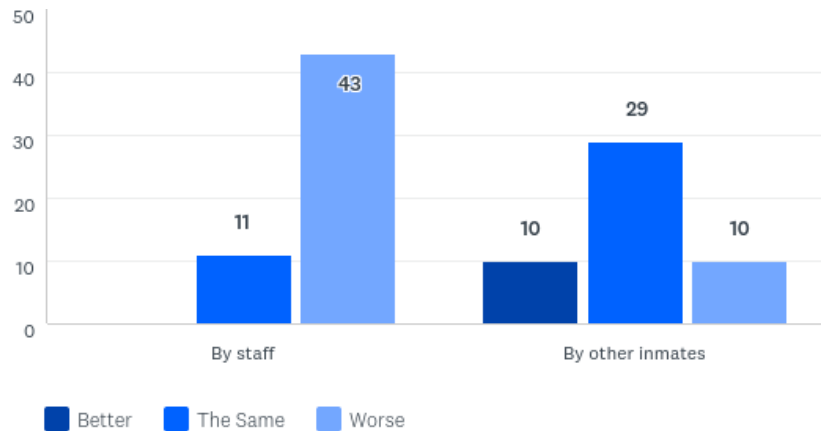
The way they hold your family up front and then call the unit for the inmate to get to the visitation room on the weekend is long, and the 9:30 to 11:00am count get our people stuck up front!

The Officer (Brown) is very disrespectful to the family members who come. And even when you report it, he is still in the visitation room.

I think if the prison was to go on lockdown and our family drove very far to see their family should be able to see us!

Compared to other inmates, how do you feel DC inmates are treated?

Answered: 54 Skipped: 7



Please give an example of better or worse treatment:

Inmate Responses
Staff hates us and usually other inmates treat us well because they don't want any problems. Honestly.
I am an old law DC omnibus prisoner with an aggregate sentence of 20 years to life. Although I see the parole board and could possibly be released as soon as 2020 I am regarded as having no release date for transfers and certain programs.
Having an 007 or 016 is a curse here, to some of us. Some of us know how to overcome this. People from DC will not get good jobs, they are looked at as animals.
They hate us period.
Because we're from DC.
They think that we think we are better than others and they think we start problems.
The staff dislike DC inmates.
The inmates is nothing, but these officers target and harass us daily because of where we're from. They do not like DC inmates.
The stigma that DC prisoners have in the BOP. Staff and other inmates have an inherent bias and prejudice towards DC prisoners.
Staff after learning you are from DC or have a 007 they say "So you're from DC" what is that supposed to mean? I have been locked up 20 years.
It's good.
They always target us and are biased towards us.
Harassment, racist slurs
They disrespect us, talk to us any kind of way.
Just the small things they think we believe we're exempt.
Remarks about being from there, lack of care for inmates who are DC inmates
Some DC inmates are a handful but staff have a preconceived prejudice towards us. Sometime they're willing to help until they hear 007.
Always labeled as a bad person.
The staff and inmates alike have this made up notion that we are all disrespectful, homosexuals, and violent. WE are treated in the worst of conditions.
Staff don't like us and they target us and they say they hate us DC guys. Inmates just don't like us.
The staff say that we are animals and smart out the mouths and just make things hard.
Staff talks to us like we ain't human at times.
Staff always referring to us as those DC inmates. Also if we are trying to move to a different cell it's like we can't but other inmates can always move.
They think we are all thugs.
Bias attitudes from staff; provocative attitudes all the time.
During lockdown the police that was in my cell threw away personal family photos and did it because they know I was from DC.
They hate us because they say we always start problems and we always get judged by our residents.
Worse because we are typically prejudged as being troublemakers so we are blamed for things out of our control.
We're hated for no reason.
Worse is worse.

DC inmates are stereotyped accused of carrying weapons, being aggressive or just doing something prohibited. As soon as they see 007 they got some slick stuff to say or do.

Staff always say that we think we are better than other inmates due to stereotypical behavior of the past, present, future of DC inmates so they go to extremes when it comes to DC inmates.

Just the reputation of being from the nation's capital!

DC inmates are treated differently by staff and other inmates according to the specific inmate.

We always get harassed and when another DC inmate make them mad they search every DC cells and take stuff they aren't supposed to take.

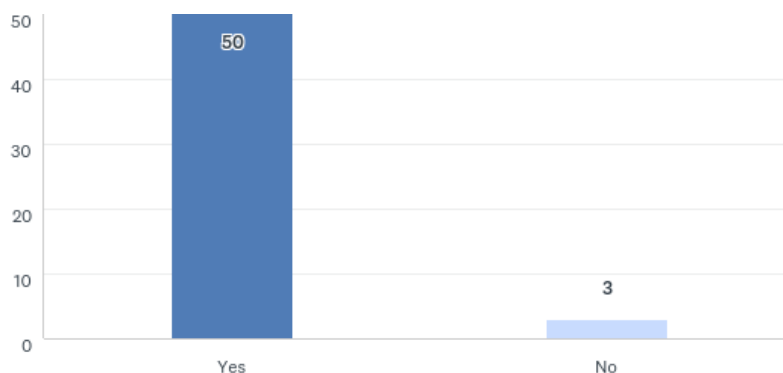
Coming out of the kitchen staff stop DC inmates about their shirt collar being up. And after the confrontation comment are made, "You DC inmates think you are tough." What does this have to do with the collar being up?

They try to be so disrespectful to us but seem they're just half as disrespectful to others.

No one likes us but who cares, right?

If you had the opportunity to be closer to DC during the last 24 months of your incarceration to prepare for your reentry, would you be interested in doing so?

Answered: 53 Skipped: 8



Please explain why or why not:

Inmate Responses
I have no plans on getting released to DC.
I believe I would get visits more often. I haven't seen my family in about nine years.
But I am getting deported.
To help get closer to family.
Closer to family, the environment at home don't see race as a factor.
Because I can see my family more and we can prepare for my release.
Because I'll be closer to my sons and I would be better able to get things in order before I get out.
The reason why is based on having the access to certain resources and being able to have regular visits to network with family and friends to seriously discuss housing, job, transportation, etc.
I would have a better chance to interact with family. My kids and wife grandkids after being away for 20 plus years learn about how things are out there as for jobs.
I will like transition housing, and re-entry programming.
I would be more comfortable to be around those who understand where I come from and how it is in my city.
Because my time is almost up I go home 2020.
Because it's better to know your family and loved ones.
To be closer to home and to be out of these racist states.
Family!
Closer to family and lawyers.
I have kids that are infants and an unborn child.
I need to get used to being around my family members, the ones that I know who love me and I love them. I've been gone for sixteen years and all I'm used to is being in prison. I need to get used to my family and 24 months being closer to home is needed.
I will be interested because my family can come see me and help me get prepared for the community. And that will help me fit back in society.
Get to know what is going on in the city.

Anything to better myself and be closer to my children!
Because it cuts back my travel time and I can get people to come see me and get things in order for my release.
I could get visits.
I can be closer to being home and I can see my family more and the re-entry would be a lot better for DC prisoners.
So I can get my situation straight with jobs, housing, things I need to be a good person and not come back.
Because I've been in about 18 years and all the institutions I've been to have been 8.5 hours, 5.5 hours away from home.
Because most institutions don't offer a whole lot of vocational training or opportunity.
I believe, that if I was closer I would get a better sense of how things are going and be able to better prepare.
Better ability for visitation, more chance of receiving mail and better staff conditions.
So I could see and be with the people I love and know a keep me on track.
I would love to come back to DC they treat us bad here. I need to go to another place ASAP.
It would be helpful in me being able to have those who are going to help me with my transition to be able to see me.
So I wouldn't be so far from my children.
I need help on the outside.
This is a very racist state and for family members to travel here is dangerous. Plus there are limited resources here.
One because I'll be closer to my family, and two I wouldn't have to deal with the disrespect of these officers and their stereotyping me and going to extremes.
Too much to explain.
Yes, because DC will help me in reentry more than here.
So I could receive visits and feel closer to home.
Yes. I can bond with family more and help my younger son avoid pitfalls by consistent contact, also parents getting older.
It would give me a better chance to get back involved with my family and community.
So that I could have better ties with my family and better resources.
Because you have DC inmate that know a lot about the world and didn't always be labelled as bad people.
Because the opportunities here are none.
closer to family.
Because my family can come see me more and it gives us time to build our relationship with one another and also can build my foundation better.

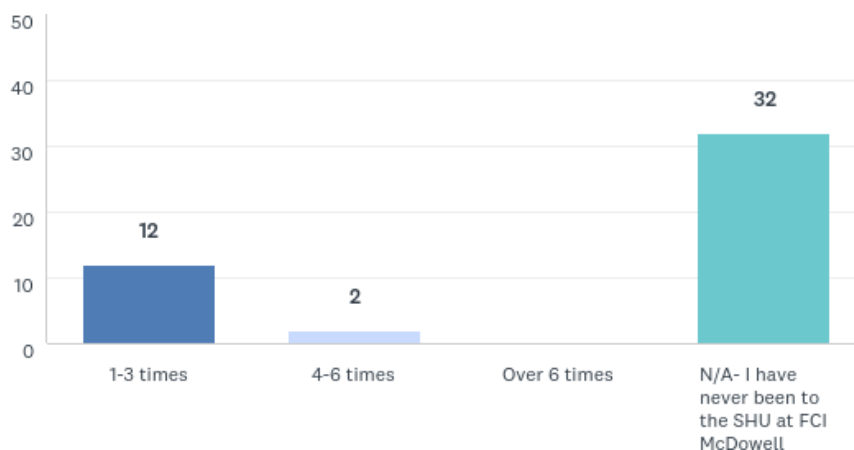
Is there anything else you would like to share about the treatment of DC inmates?

Inmate Responses
About a month, they suspended all visitation.
I feel that to help DC inmates to stay out of prison something must be done to change how we see life, to understand that the way we have been living is not what life is about, the culture must be changed, some are still stuck in the teenage state of mind. I think that once a person from where we are from is helped to see that there is a world outside of DC that is very accepting of people from DC that we are creative, intelligent, that we can do better than now, a lot more brothers will stay out of prison.
They hate us.
I don't know where to start.
The staff here is always going after Washington DC inmates. It's irritating and stressful to always have to go through this. We talk to the administration about it and they wave it off like it's not a problem, but it is and has been since I've been here. This needs to be addressed.
Overall DC prisons have second-class treatment and double standards in BOP from dealing with the unit team to education to rec department. If given the chance I'll explain in detail.
The FBOP should look into treating old guys better. Staff should be better prepared to deal with DC guys needs. We have to buy water that's good enough to drink. The water is unsafe. And my hair has started falling out in the month that I have been here.
They hate us.
Treat other inmates with respect, not DC inmates.
We are not well-regarded in the federal prison system.
We're branded here as wanna-be tough guys so the COs are extra aggressive towards us. They think that we think we run things so go out of their way to prove to us and other inmates that we're not so tough.
We as DC inmates are treated inferior to all. We don't get the good jobs, our family gets disrespected when they come and visit or call.
We are just always targeted by staff and they say hateful things to us call us DC blacks or niggers. And search us a lot patting us down and grabbing on our private parts. It's just really bad out here. And it makes us want to go back in the streets and be violent.
We are treated with disrespect because they think all DC inmates are violent and basically just don't care.
We get the worst treatment.

Yes, a lot of us DC inmates don't have federal cases and yet they sentence us under the federal guidelines, which in fact I've come across a lot of other inmates from different states that have the same charge and don't have but half the time that I was given.
They charge us for medical services and they make us go to school even if you want to sign out. And they make us take money out of our account for court fees when we're supposed to pay when we get out.
Provocation, biased attitudes, poor people skills, better with inmates than staff, lack of consistency.
They hate us for unknown reason.
They always single us out. They call us DC Blacks. They hate when it's more than three of us together. They walk up on us and make us move from each other. We need help.
I don't believe there is enough opportunity being offered to us as a whole. It's like we're doing dead time with nothing to look forward to or anything to work for.
DC inmates are treated as though we're always doing something wrong. We are singled out and manipulated.
It is what it is, right? No prison is worth a praise, but before I left Lorton in 1995 I didn't go through half the things I went through here in 18 months.
Not really than we should be judged individually on our actions, not lumped together as troublemakers throughout the BOP.
We should not be here.
It's unfair to be treated like I'm an alien because we have no state prison.

How many times have you been in the SHU at FCI McDowell?

Answered: 46 Skipped: 15



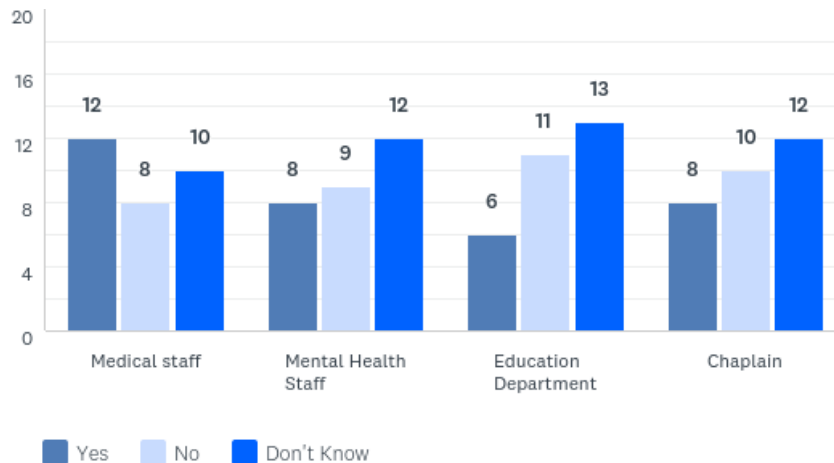
What is the maximum time you have spent in the SHU at one time in FCI McDowell?

Answered: 45 Skipped: 16



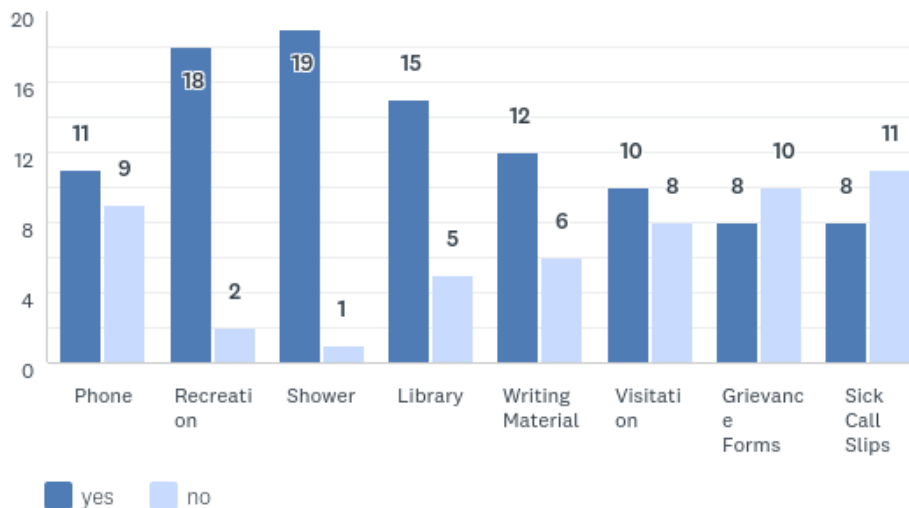
Did the following conduct weekly rounds

Answered: 30 Skipped: 31



Did you have access to the following:

Answered: 13 Skipped: 14



Is there anything else you would like to share about the SHU at FCI McDowell?

Inmate Responses

They don't allow you to receive more than one book a week from library/reading materials. They used to allow you to get soft cover books from your property or through the mail, including magazines and newspapers. Now it's just the one book. With nothing else to do, that's not enough for most people.

Two books every other week, phone once a month.

When placed in the SHU here your personal property comes up missing a lot here. These officers throw your stuff away!

If you want what you're supposed to get, you have to buck for it. And when you do, you pay a heavy price.

They don't never answer your emergency button in your cell if you push it so you can die back there.

Poor drinking water, poor staff training.

The thing I did have access to was hard to get, the staff carry inmates while in the SHU.

What is the most positive aspect of FCI McDowell?

Inmate Responses

Vocational programs.

Vocational.

Food.

They make sure your clothes get clean and you get showers.

It's good at times. Some staff are respectful.

Not one.
Nothing.
The food, education, and rec.
That it's not a bad institution actually.
Even though the police lacks regard and care for inmates they pretty much stay out of your way unless provoked.
I don't know.
No violence.
There isn't any.
It's laid back.
Beautiful scenery the air is great.
I see none.
Nothing. They lock you down here for nothing and they always treat you bad.
That there are some staff members that DO try to help better my situation like my unit team (case manager, counselor, unit manager).
None.
Nothing.
That a lot of guys here are short, on their way home so there isn't much tension amongst inmates.
It's not Florence Supermax or USP anything in name rather.
The relationships you build with inmates to ease the burden of incarceration.
Nothing.
Waking up every day.
As of now, nothing!
Leaving one day.
I respect everyone and mind my own.

What is the most negative aspect of FCI McDowell?

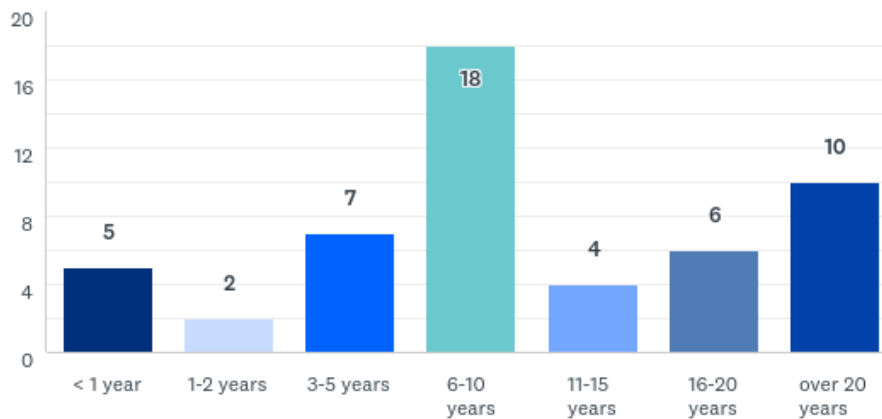
Inmate Responses
Lockdowns, location, and medical.
Few programs through education that offer any real-world value.
Medical
Staff.
They lock down too much.
Most of this facility is negative, this place needs to be shut down.
The water here is not safe to drink. Disrespect towards DC guys by some staff. The mail and legal mail.
Everything
The respect.
They don't respect us.
The respect level and how they deal with institutional problems.
The excessive lockdowns, and the water.
The racism and the lockdowns.
The laziness of the staff, top to bottom, and the disrespectfulness. Looney in the kitchen and all laundry and commissary staff are the most disrespectful of them all!
The water and the mail.
Staff don't like DC guys or black guys.
Lockdown, re-entry packets.
Everything.
Staff.
This place have negative people working here and they just don't have no respect for black people.
Lockdown, not being able to see case manager, counselors.

Please provide one recommendation you would give to improve the conditions of confinement at FCI McDowell.

Inmate Responses
Bring DC inmates home.
Basic computer programs.
Medical, mail.
To get a jail of ours.
Better water and better food.
You're supposed to see your property within seven days, but that doesn't happen. It's taken anywhere from a week to a month to see it. I think that needs to be improved back there!
The water is unsafe to drink.
Move all DC inmates
Listen more to the inmates.
More programs.
Respect.
Professional their to personal then they handle institutional problems wrong, just more job-based staff.
Organization.
Better treatment by staff and better (cable?)
This is a medium security jail and not a level 7 pen! This is top 3 worst FCIs in the FBOP. Everything is blown out of proportion. No jobs! Disrespectful police and they make it hard to leave! Let this place run like a medium instead of of a pen before you get penitentiary results and behavior from the inmates.
Get filters for water for all inmates.
Get me out of here transfer me to Petersburg or Cumberland. I don't know if you can make this place better? Maybe microwaves and washers and dryers.
Lesser and shorter lockdowns put in re-entry packet sooner than last minute! Move me closer to home.
Close it down!
Staff treatment.
It's the worst ever they need to close this place.
Help people more.
I would say to medical/dentist treat inmates as you would want to be treated by your medical provider.
Change the warden or ask the inmates what they want.
To properly and honestly address and assess inmate custody points.
Better training for staff, consistency, people skills.
You can't improve something or people whom have their own set of rules.
This place needs a new warden. She don't care about us, our family, our health. All she knows is lockdowns. I need help this place is crazy.
incentive-based programs.
Better staff members.
Get me out of here.
Create some type of programs where a lot of inmates can find something to do with their time.
More jobs, better training for staff, anger management classes for staff and stress management. Actual town hall meetings to voice our concerns. Better communication with commissary staff.
Better water.
Run it as an FCI and stick to it.
Just realize we made mistakes in past and are here to pay for those mistakes, while treated fairly and like a human being!
Everyone needs to show a great level of respect dealing with men and not be treated as animals or having to talk to a person back.
provide UNICOR.
Better opportunity for inmates getting released and more time to finish classes that help prepare for release and better communication for the inmates got to be here. What I mean by more time meaning too many lockdowns for nothing.
Get us out of here.
Treat others staff/inmates how you would like to be treated.
Workers should treat us men as if they was in our position!

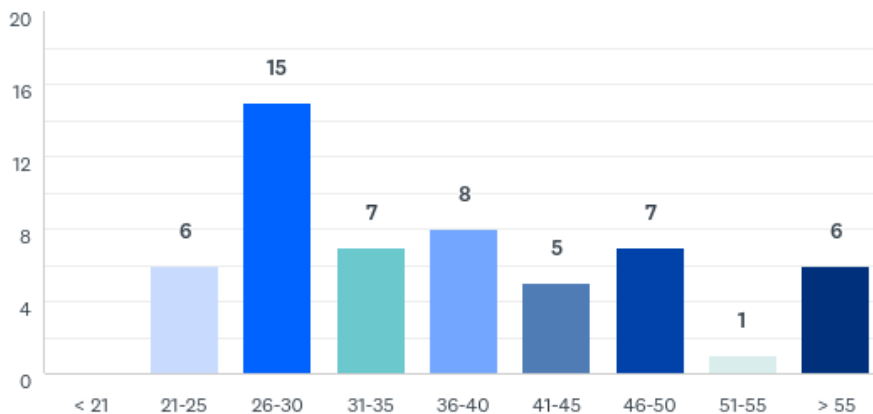
How long have you been incarcerated overall?

Answered: 52 Skipped: 9



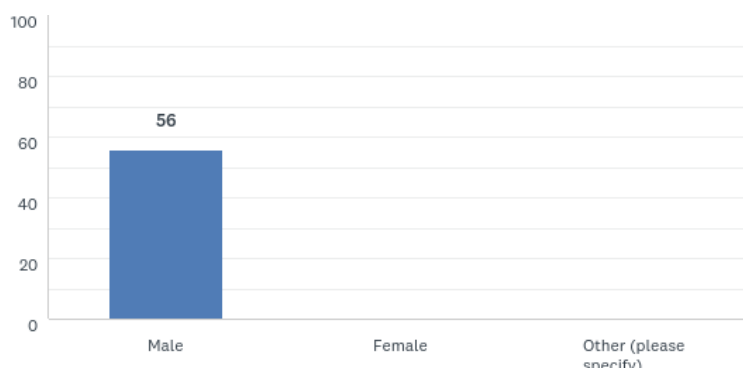
How old are you?

Answered: 55 Skipped: 6



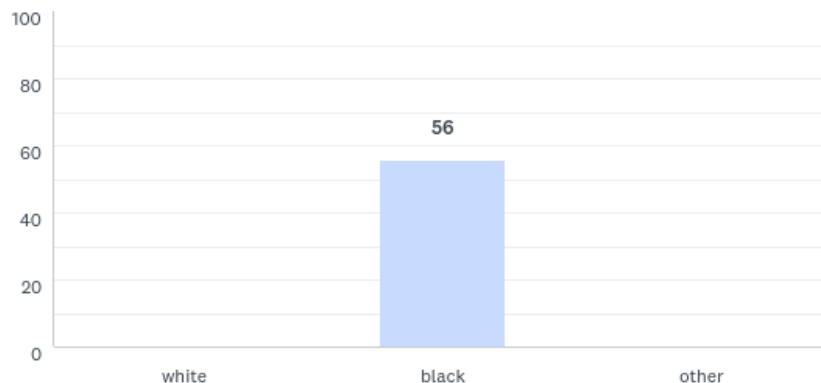
What is your gender?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 5



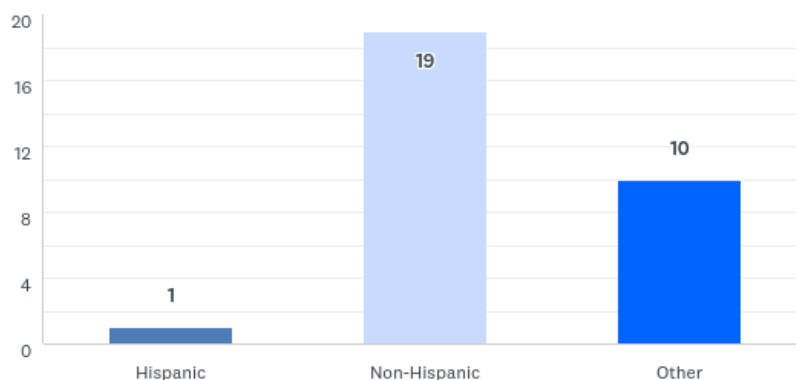
What race do you most closely identify with?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 5



What ethnicity do you most closely identify with?

Answered: 30 Skipped: 31



Is there anything else you would like to share with the CIC about your experience at FCI McDowell?

Inmate Responses
Get us out!
I would just like for guys to have the needs they need to prepare them for release and the opportunity to see their family as far as being closer to DC and Maryland. Old law DC guys should have better opportunity also to prepare for release. They should stop charging DC guys for medical or dental care.
Move me close to home my dad is real sick.
Don't understand why they're punishing everybody for one person's mistake. And why we're not getting any hot meals. Cruel and unusual punishment. We're tired of eating sandwiches every day. It's hurting my stomach. I can't sleep at nights, because I can't use the bathroom.
Transfer me please.
They got us on lockdown because nobody snitches and they said we're not coming out until somebody snitches. The water has chemicals in it that make your stomach real upset and they won't give us medical attention for it.
I've done all my time at USPs and now that I've made it lower in custody it's miserable. This is not what they told us the FCIs are like.
Staff are extremely disrespectful to inmates and treat us as if we aren't human.
We also don't have any microwaves so we can't properly cook our food that we buy from commissary. So we're eating half done meats and that's not healthy.
Get me out of here!
The water is very bad, very bad.
Please get us DC prisoners out of West Virginia! They don't want us here at all.
There are only 2, maybe 3 hot meals served per week in a cold cell, while on lockdown in the winter. That's crazy! No heat!
Please look into medical/dentist. Please look into the water at McDowell.
This place that we're locked up in isn't or don't obey by FBOP rules.
This place is a mess. The water makes you sick. The people are racist. They got us on lockdown over 30 days because nobody will snitch. I need help I'm asking to leave here ASAP.

If there were more programs for rec (movie rooms, music rooms - video games) and more incentive based educational programs this would be an even smoother and easier to run institution.

I hate it here, the worst prison I've ever been incarcerated in.

Miserable, harsh, cruel.

Yeah, no consistency.

Just glad to be among men that are changing their life to become better men.

It's trash and we are very mistreated here.

Appendix C: BOP Response



U.S. Department of Justice

Federal Bureau of Prisons

Washington, DC 20534

October 2, 2019

Donald Isaac, Executive Director
DC Corrections Information Council
441 4th Street, NW
Suite 270N
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Isaac:

This letter is in response to the draft inspection report received on August 1, 2019, regarding the December 12-13, 2018, visit to the Federal Correctional Institution (FCI) McDowell. The Bureau of Prisons (Bureau) 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.

Throughout the report, unsubstantiated allegations are made without direct observation by the CIC or supported by facts that can be corroborated. The Bureau notes the draft report findings are based on a small percentage of DC inmates assigned to FCI McDowell. 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:

The draft report recommends: Executive staff should consider possibilities for locking down only the necessary portion of the facility in response to significant incidents, and continuing programs, work, and recreation during lockdowns.

Response: The decision to lock down an institution is one that is never taken lightly. It is only done when absolutely necessary to maintain the safe and secure operation of the institution. The primary objective is to investigate what necessitated a lockdown, and to determine how best to prevent it from happening in the future. The need for a type of lockdown 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.

The draft report recommends: Executive staff should implement mandatory antiracism training for all personnel. This training should occur at least annually and ideally should occur quarterly.

Response: The Human Resources Department provides yearly Diversity Training to all staff during Annual Refresher Training and to all new staff during the Introduction to Correctional Techniques Phase I.

The draft report states: Facility staff should ensure that all grievance forms are readily available to inmates, and should not interfere with inmates' use of the administrative remedy process.

Response: All inmates have access to Administrative Remedy forms through their Unit Team staff. At FCI McDowell, the Administrative Remedy Program, also known as the grievance process, allows inmates to seek formal review of issues related to their confinement. An inmate must first attempt to informally resolve the issue before filing a grievance. The process provides three levels of formal review: the Facility (BP-9), the Regional Office (BP-10), and the Central Office (BP-11). If an inmate is not satisfied with the response, he or she may appeal it at the next level. The Administrative Remedy process is discussed during Admission and Orientation.

The draft report recommends: Executive staff should create opportunities to engage directly with inmates and respond to their concerns.

Response: Executive staff are available during inmate meals to address inmates concerns. Additionally, inmates have access to TRULINCS, the inmate email system, to forward concerns to Executive staff electronically.

The draft report recommends: Executive staff should encourage medical staff to provide appropriate medication to inmates who are seen at sick call.

Response: FCI McDowell is a care level one institution, which provides essential medical, services to all inmates in a manner consistent with accepted community standards for a correctional environment. During sick call, inmates are triaged, medically assessed, and prescribed the appropriated medication, when medically necessary, based on their assessment.

The draft report recommends: Facility medical staff should clearly communicate diagnoses and treatment plans to inmates, and should ensure that all planned diagnostic and follow-up care is completed as promptly as possible.

Response: Medical staff communicate and explain diagnoses and treatment plans to all inmates in a manner consistent with accepted community standards for a correctional environment.

The draft report recommends: The Bureau should ensure that the facility has sufficient medical staff to respond promptly to the needs of the population, including acute and chronic medical concerns.

Response: The Bureau's medical staff provides essential medical, dental, and mental health (psychiatric) services in a manner consistent with accepted community standards for a correctional environment. The Bureau uses licensed and credentialed health care providers in its ambulatory care units, which are supported by community consultants and specialists. For inmates with chronic or acute medical conditions, the Bureau operates several medical referral centers providing advanced care.

The draft report recommends: Facility staff should continue to encourage and support inmate-led programming.

Response: Inmates who possess specialized educational and vocational skills are afforded the opportunity to tutor other inmates.

The draft report recommends: The BOP should ensure that the facility has sufficient staff to allow all inmates meaningful access to education and re-entry programming.

Response: The institution made a selection for a Re-Entry Affairs Coordinator. Also, a new Special Learning Needs teacher has been hired. These new hires, along with the current educational and vocational staff, provide numerous educational and re-entry opportunities for all inmates at FCI McDowell.

The draft report recommends: The BOP should re-consider the decision to eliminate the position of Re-entry Affairs Coordinator at FCI McDowell.

Response: The Re-Entry Affairs position has been filled.

The draft report s recommends: The facility should identify and contract with a certified laboratory serving the area to perform comprehensive water testing on the facility water source to ensure adequate water quality. The type and frequency of the water testing should only be determined by the outside testing entity.

Response: FCI McDowell receives domestic potable water from the city of Welch, West Virginia. FCI McDowell utilizes the services of a certified laboratory and pays to have water tested from the City of Welch at random intervals to ensure adequate water quality.

FCI McDowell adheres to Program Statement 4200.12, Facilities Operation Manual, Section 18, which outlines the procedures for inspecting and testing the water supply system. Unless otherwise appointed, the institution Safety and Environmental Health Administrator conducts the testing, in accordance with policy,

The draft report recommends: Facility staff should consider directly addressing the inmate population regarding their concerns, including provision of water quality test results.

Response: Every concern that is brought to staff's attention from an inmate is addressed, to include any issues concerning the water.

The draft report recommends: Facility staff should ensure that all inmates have access to the most current mail policies.

Response: All of the current mail management policies, institution supplements, and operational memorandums are accessible via the inmate computer network, TRULINCS.

The draft report recommends: The BOP should ensure that the facility is sufficiently staffed to process mail in a timely manner, particularly legal and special mail. This includes promptly notifying inmates of rejected mail.

Response: The safety of staff and inmates is extremely important. The Correctional Systems staff process mail in an efficient manner given the inherent security risks involved with the introduction of illegal and harmful substances through the mail. An additional Correctional Systems staff will be hired which will continue to improve the efficiency of the Mail Room operations.

The draft report recommends: Facility staff should always respond promptly to emergency medical alerts to ensure the safety of inmates.

Response: Staff at FCI McDowell respond to all emergencies in a professional and efficient manner, while maintaining the overall safety and security of the institution and remaining attentive to unforeseen circumstances.

The draft report recommends: Facility staff should ensure the barbershop is open during sufficient and predictable hours in order to allow inmates a reasonable opportunity to get their hair cut.

Response: FCI McDowell's barbershop is open during the week, weekends, and evenings to ensure access is available to all inmates. An inmate barber also provides barbering services to inmates housed in the Special Housing Unit.

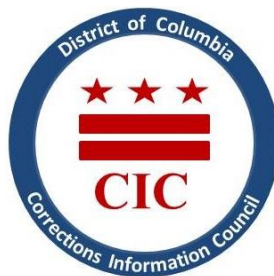
I appreciate the opportunity to review and provide comments to your inspection report of FCI McDowell.

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", with a stylized flourish at the end.

David Brewer, Administrator
Correctional Programs Branch



**District of Columbia
Corrections Information Council**

The electronic version of this report is
available on the CIC website:
<https://www.cic.dc.gov/>