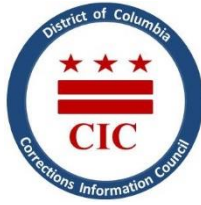


District of Columbia  
Corrections Information Council



# Rivers Correctional Facility

## Inspection Report



*Rivers CF*

*(photo by Federal Bureau of Prisons)*

July 21, 2020



## 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.

### **DC Corrections Information Council**

1400 I Street, NW, Suite 400  
Washington, DC 20005  
Phone: (202) 478-9211  
Email: [dccic@dc.gov](mailto:dccic@dc.gov)  
Website: <https://cic.dc.gov/>

# Executive Summary

## Facility Profile

**Dates of inspection:** July 9-10, 2019

**Location:** Winton, North Carolina

**Distance from DC:** 212 miles

**Year of activation:** 2001

**Security level:** Low

**Rated capacity:** 1,450

**Average daily population (2018):** 1,244

**Total population (July 2019):** 1,347

**DC population (July 2019):** 286 (21.2% of facility population)

## Key Findings

The CIC made the following key findings about the conditions of confinement at Rivers CF:

- DC individuals are concerned about ongoing tensions with the much larger population of ICE detainees, most of them Spanish-speaking.
- DC individuals feel that the immigrant detainee population is given preferential treatment in a number of areas including jobs, discipline, food, and recreation opportunities. The CIC was not able to confirm preferential treatment except in the prevalence of rice and beans on the facility menu, and a disproportionate number of DC individuals in the Restrictive Housing Unit (RHU).
- DC individuals had some positive comments on programming, particularly vocational programming.
- Many DC individuals stated that they needed more and/or different programming, particularly programming for long-term offenders and those seeking higher education.
- Many DC individuals expressed frustration that Rivers CF operates more like a high-security BOP facility in terms of design and movement, despite being designated as a low-security facility.

## Recommendations

Based on the inspection of Rivers CF, the CIC makes the following recommendations:

- Provide classes where inmates can learn to speak Spanish to increase communication between the population groups.
- Increase the number of Spanish-speaking staff by hiring individuals who can speak Spanish and incentivize existing staff to take Spanish-language classes.
- Provide more programming and jobs for all populations so that inmates are kept occupied and engaged.
- Survey the inmate population annually to determine educational and vocational programming needs, and consider adding, removing, or adjusting the capacity of programs offered based on this information.
- Create and publicize a process for inmates to propose classes that they are able to teach to other inmates, similar to the Adult Continuing Education (ACE) classes in BOP facilities.
- Consider providing a ServSafe<sup>1</sup> Food Handler certification program in conjunction with food service jobs in the facility.
- Pursue partnerships with college programs, either local to the facility (such as Roanoke-Chowan Community College, which previously had a relationship with Rivers CF) or local to DC, so inmates can begin college education at Rivers CF.

<sup>1</sup> ServSafe is a program offered by the National Restaurant Association that educates food services workers on food safety. The program provides a nationally accredited certificate in food safety that is required by law for food service workers in many states. The ServSafe Food Handler program was offered at ten BOP facilities as of March 2017.

- Update re-entry programming content with current information, particularly DC-specific resources.
- Increase the number of sessions for the Release Preparation Program to allow for discussion of its content over a longer period of time.
- The BOP should transfer all individuals with a security level of “low” to facilities with physical plant characteristics, work and program components, dormitory design, and movement restrictions that more accurately reflect a low security environment.
- Review internal data on job placement and disciplinary sanctions and critically assess it for possible racial bias.
- Assess the reasons behind the disproportionate number of individuals from DC in the RHU.
- Ensure grievance forms are provided upon request or else available without requesting from staff.
- Ensure that staff and inmates have information on when and how to use each of the two grievance systems.
- Increase the amount of fruits and vegetables provided at meals.
- Provide email access to inmates at Rivers CF.
- End the use of dayroom bunks.

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# Introduction

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Rivers Correctional Facility (Rivers CF) is a low security private contract facility for adult males located in northeastern North Carolina. The facility is operated by the GEO Group, Inc., and has a rated capacity of 1,450. The Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) contracted with GEO Group in 2000 to provide and operate a facility to house DC individuals. Rivers CF was opened in 2001 for this purpose, and operated under the original contract through March 2011. The contract was renewed on April 1, 2011 for ten years.<sup>2</sup> The number of DC individuals at Rivers CF has dropped significantly from 532 in October 2013 to 212 in August 2019. The percentage of the facility population that is from DC has dropped accordingly from 40 percent in October 2013 to less than 20 percent in August 2019. At the time of the CIC site visit, there were 1,347 inmates incarcerated at the facility, including 212 DC Code offenders.

The CIC previously performed on-site inspections of Rivers CF in 2013 and 2014, and sent a survey to inmates at the facility in 2016. The results of these inspections can be found in the CIC report on Rivers CF published August 17, 2017.<sup>3</sup>

The CIC conducted a site visit to Rivers CF on July 9 and 10, 2019. The site visit included an opening session with the warden and executive staff, a facility tour, informal conversations with staff working in different facility departments, and confidential interviews with 64 inmates in general population and the Restrictive Housing Unit. During the tour, CIC staff members were escorted primarily by Glen Smith, Associate Warden for Compliance. Report findings are based on facility documents collected prior to the inspection, staff comments made during the site visit and a follow-up teleconference, and inmate feedback gathered through survey responses and interviews during the site visit and communications after the visit. For a full explanation of the report methodology, see Appendix A.

## Summary of Key Findings

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The most common concerns the CIC heard from DC individuals at Rivers CF was the imbalance between the two main populations housed at the facility. The non-DC population at the facility is primarily immigrant detainees, and interviewees mentioned tension between Black inmates and Spanish-speaking detainees, along with concerns for their safety if violence occurred. DC residents also felt that Spanish-speaking inmates received preferential treatment in job access, disciplinary decisions, commissary selections, recreation opportunities, and food menu options.

Another major concern expressed by many individuals from DC is that Rivers CF is designated as a low security facility but runs as a high security facility, with armed guard towers and controlled movements, including multiple locked doors between destinations. These individuals expressed frustration that after they had worked hard at other facilities to reduce their classification points, they were sent to a facility with more restrictions and less programming.

Participants in vocational programs and the Thinking for a Change therapeutic program had mostly positive feedback. Many individuals who spoke with the CIC commented that programming at Rivers CF was insufficient or did not meet their individual needs, particularly for higher-level educational programming and programming focused on DC-specific re-entry resources.

Other inmate concerns included the practice of strip-searching kitchen employees after each shift, the quality and portions of food, the high prices of commissary items, the ongoing lack of email access, and the placement of individuals in beds in the unit dayrooms rather than in cells. Several inmates also contacted the CIC after the site visit to discuss a lockdown that prevented their access to law materials for several weeks and limited their access to religious services.

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<sup>2</sup> Per PREA Audit Findings, 6/8/2018

<sup>3</sup> Also available on CIC website at <https://cic.dc.gov/page/inspection>.

# CIC Findings

## I. Safety

The inmate population at Rivers CF is roughly 20% DC Code offenders, and 80% individuals detained by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Most of the ICE detainees are Spanish-speaking immigrants, while most of the DC population are Black citizens. Many of the ICE detainees are awaiting deportation, while most of the DC Code offenders will return to DC, many in less than five years. The most common concern the CIC heard from DC individuals at Rivers CF was about tension between these two groups, and fear that the tension could escalate to violence at any time. Several individuals expressed a concern that facility staff would not be able to ensure safety in such a situation.

The recreation yard at Rivers CF is in the center of the compound and surrounded by a fence with gates to the connecting hallways and buildings. Several individuals noted that in the past when a fight or other incident occurred, staff has forced individuals off the walkways and into the yard and locked them inside with no staff. The individuals noted that this may mean they are locked in the yard with agitated individuals and no staff, making them vulnerable to violence.

Several individuals in the Restrictive Housing Unit<sup>4</sup> (RHU) stated that they had voluntarily “checked in” to the RHU to avoid repeated conflicts with Hispanic inmates on general population units.

During the on-site visit and in later conversations, the facility leadership expressed awareness of the challenges presented by having two populations that largely speak different languages and have different programming needs and sentence structures. The leadership team also mentioned the challenge of having a large imbalance between the two primary populations. Many inmates who were interviewed made consistent statements about their concerns with safety.

### Inmate Comments:

- “It’s always tension between DC guys and Mexicans. This is my greatest fear, getting caught in a race riot.”
- “RCI is also a very dangerous trap for DC black inmates as 85% are Spanish and tensions are high.”
- “At times I do feel my safety is at risk. We are surrounded by a thousand Mexicans, so at any given time anything may happen. If you are not here you wouldn’t fully understand.”
- “Every time there’s an incident on the yard they lock us out there to get killed, ‘cause they too scared to control the Mexicans.”

During the CIC’s follow-up meeting with the warden, he indicated that the facility is always working to hire bilingual staff, but that hiring and retaining them is a challenge. He noted that some staff members are already taking Spanish immersion classes and indicated that providing Spanish-language classes to inmates was a possibility. The warden also mentioned that two of the current medical providers at Rivers CF are bilingual, as well as officers in the investigation department.

### Recommendations:

- 1) Provide classes where inmates can learn to speak Spanish to increase communication between the population groups.
- 2) Increase the number of Spanish-speaking staff through hiring individuals who can speak Spanish and incentivize existing staff to take Spanish-language classes.
- 3) Provide more programming and jobs for all populations so that inmates are kept occupied and engaged.

<sup>4</sup> The Restrictive Housing Unit at Rivers CF is equivalent to the Special Housing Units at Bureau-operated facilities. Inmates are confined to their cells for 23 to 24 hours a day, with generally only one hour out of their cell per weekday for recreation. Individuals are placed in this unit for various reasons, including as punishment for violation of a facility rule, investigation of a violation of a facility rule or new criminal charge, or for protective custody.



## II. Programming

### A. Educational and vocational programming

Educational programming offered at Rivers CF includes General Educational Development (GED), Pre-GED, Adult Basic Education (ABE) and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. As of October 2019, 23 percent of all inmates and 22 percent of DC inmates were participating in educational programming.<sup>5</sup> During the CIC's visit to Rivers CF, sixty DC individuals were enrolled in an educational program (including six taking correspondence courses) and seven were on a waitlist for an educational program.

Vocational programming offered at Rivers CF includes classes in Commercial Drivers' License (CDL), Construction Technology, Custodial Maintenance, Computer Applications (primarily Word and Excel software), and Basic Keyboarding. As of October 2019, 11 percent of all inmates and 18 percent of DC inmates were participating in vocational programming at Rivers CF.<sup>6</sup> At the time of the CIC's visit to Rivers CF, 42 DC individuals were participating in vocational programming, while 44 DC individuals were on a waitlist for a vocational program.

The CIC received a variety of feedback on DC individuals' experience with educational and vocational programming. Several individuals reported positive experiences, particularly with vocational programming and the Thinking for a Change program. The most common complaints were that there is not enough educational programming and that the existing programming is mostly focused on young, able-bodied individuals with little formal education. An older inmate expressed that the physically-active vocational programs are not beneficial to him, and several individuals with longer sentences noted that they had completed most of the courses offered at Rivers CF while at other BOP institutions. Rivers CF staff noted that they provide educational testing, but otherwise did not answer questions posed about how they determine what programs to offer the inmate population.

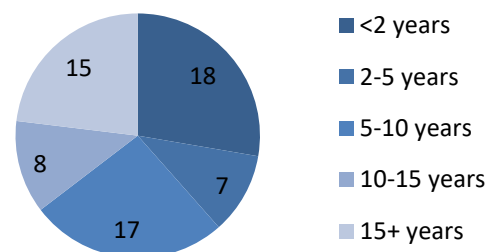
Forty percent of the individuals who spoke with the CIC were serving a sentence of less than five years, while thirty-five percent were serving a sentence longer than ten years. Programming should be available to provide for the needs of individuals who will be returning to the community soon as well as those who have longer sentences.

Six individuals mentioned that they already have a GED or high school diploma and that no other education programs are offered. Another individual noted that the single computer course available is introductory level, but he would like a more advanced course. The education staff at Rivers CF said that they have noticed the current DC inmate population has higher levels of education than in previous years, and they are aware that more higher-level educational offerings are needed. During the on-site visit, the CIC discussed the possibility of Rivers CF working with universities in DC, particularly those that have demonstrated interest in working with individuals at DC jail.

Four individuals mentioned that some of the GED teachers do not actively teach the class but leave teaching to the inmate tutors, and two people said that they were penalized when they attempted to leave the class because they were not getting the help they needed. Two individuals mentioned that there are few inmate-led programs and that it is hard to get such programs approved by facility staff. During the closeout meeting with the facility executive team, the CIC discussed one program recently proposed by DC inmates, and an associate warden indicated he had only heard about it that day but would consider it.

Some individuals had positive feedback for the vocational programs, including those for commercial drivers' license (CDL), custodial maintenance, and construction training. Two individuals mentioned that the CDL simulators had not been working for several months, but had recently been replaced with more advanced models.

**Figure 1: Sentence length of DC inmates at Rivers CF**



<sup>5</sup> Numbers provided by Rivers CF; may include some individuals participating in multiple classes.

<sup>6</sup> Same as above.



## Inmate Comments:

- “Here at Rivers I truly would have to rate the education and programming very poor and furthermore does not address the need of this population.”
- “We need more programs for inmates that are finished with school or have a GED.”
- “Overall I think and feel Rivers education programs are a great help and benefit. I had the opportunity to take a class Thinking 4 Change and this has actually helped me deal with being here and handling complex situations.”
- “GED programs we need better teaching staff and more help.”
- “Only thing about this place that’s good is the programs – Life Skills, custodial maintenance, CDL, a lot of good ones you can get certification.”
- “There is a severe lack of productive programming offered at Rivers. I know we do not get the same opportunities other federal inmates receive in terms of meaningful training. No UNICOR, no college programs, no meaningful vo-tech program, and very few inmate-taught courses.”

## Recommendations:

- 1) Survey the inmate population annually to determine educational and vocational programming needs, and consider adding, removing, or adjusting the capacity of programs offered based on this information.
- 2) Create and publicize a process for inmates to propose classes that they are able to teach to other inmates, similar to the Adult Continuing Education (ACE) classes in BOP facilities.
- 3) Consider providing a ServSafe<sup>7</sup> Food Handler certification program in conjunction with food service jobs in the facility.
- 4) Pursue partnerships with college programs, either local to the facility (such as Roanoke-Chowan Community College, which previously had a relationship with Rivers CF) or local to DC, so that inmates can begin college education at Rivers CF.

During the CIC’s follow-up meeting with the warden, he did not recall the proposed inmate-led program discussed during the on-site visit, but stated that if one was proposed then the facility leadership would evaluate it. During a follow-up communication in March 2020, the Warden indicated that the facility does not have any inmate-led programs.

The warden also indicated that he was open to partnerships with college programs. The CIC agreed to reach out to DC-area educational institutions and connect them to Rivers CF leadership to discuss partnership possibilities.

## B. Re-entry programming

Rivers CF has two re-entry programs, the Release Preparation Program (RPP) and the Continuum of Care (COC) program. The RPP is a BOP-mandated program intended to address the general needs of returning citizens, including health and nutrition, employment, personal finance and consumer skills, community resources, release requirements and procedures, and personal growth and development. A variety of classes may be offered to fulfill each of the RPP components. Rivers CF also participates in quarterly Community Resource Day videoconferences hosted by the Community Supervision and Offender Services Agency (CSOSA), during which multiple DC agencies and organizations speak to individuals at Rivers CF who are within 90 days of release and explain the resources and support services they offer to returning citizens.

The COC is a GEO Group program that provides cognitive behavioral therapy to participants while they are incarcerated, and financial support and case management to participants after their release to the community. The financial support can be used for clothing, housing, or tools to support an employment trade. Post-release case management consists of three

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<sup>7</sup> ServSafe is a program offered by the National Restaurant Association that educates food services workers on food safety. The program provides a nationally accredited certificate in food safety that is required by law for food service workers in many states. The ServSafe Food Handler program was offered at ten BOP facilities as of March 2017.

phone consultations from case managers located in Florida. The program was developed by the GEO Group and is not part of the contract with the BOP.

In conversations with the CIC, two individuals said that the re-entry coordinator was difficult to interact with, and another commented that it was hard to absorb all the useful re-entry information because so much was packed into a short period of time. Another individual said the re-entry program information was outdated. Two individuals in the early stages of the COC program had positive feedback about their experience, in particular their case manager.

### Recommendations:

- 1) Update re-entry programming content with current information, particularly DC-specific resources.
- 2) Increase the number of sessions for RPP to allow for discussion of its content over a longer period of time.

## C. Behavioral and therapeutic programming

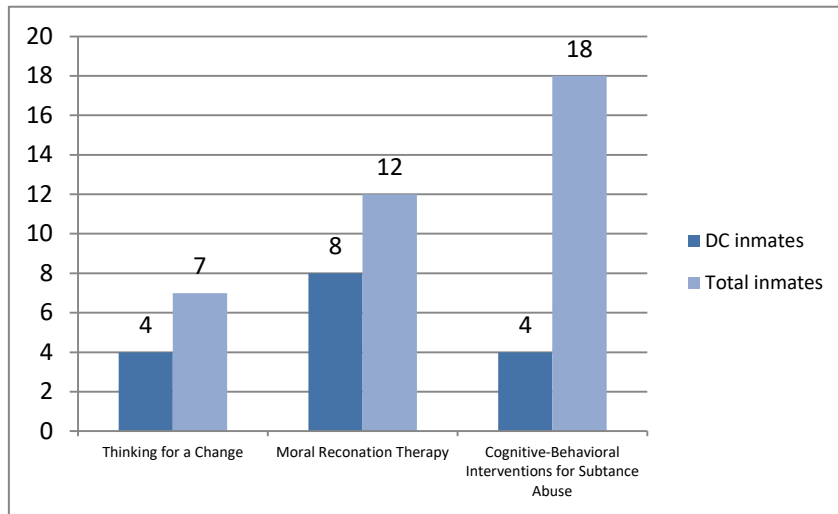


Figure 1. Inmate Participation in Cognitive-Behavioral Therapeutic Programming at Rivers CF

Rivers CF offers three therapeutic programs based on cognitive behavioral approach: Thinking for a Change (T4C), Moral Reconation Therapy (MRT), and Cognitive Behavioral Interventions for Substance Abuse (CBISA). Thinking for a Change focuses on development of social and problem-solving skills, MRT focuses on increasing moral reasoning and positive behavior, and CBISA applies cognitive change principles to support sobriety for individuals with substance abuse history. All three programs are voluntary; MRT and CBISA are run by Rivers CF staff, while T4C is run by outside volunteers (God Behind Bars) with staff oversight.

Rivers CF staff runs several other voluntary therapeutic programs, including Life Skills, Anger and Stress Management, Victim Impact, and a therapeutic film group. Life Skills covers topics including basic money management, conflict resolution, and healthy communication. The therapeutic film group meets weekly to view and discuss films and the issues they present.

Volunteers from a local church run Malachi Dads, which is a Christian parenting program for incarcerated fathers.

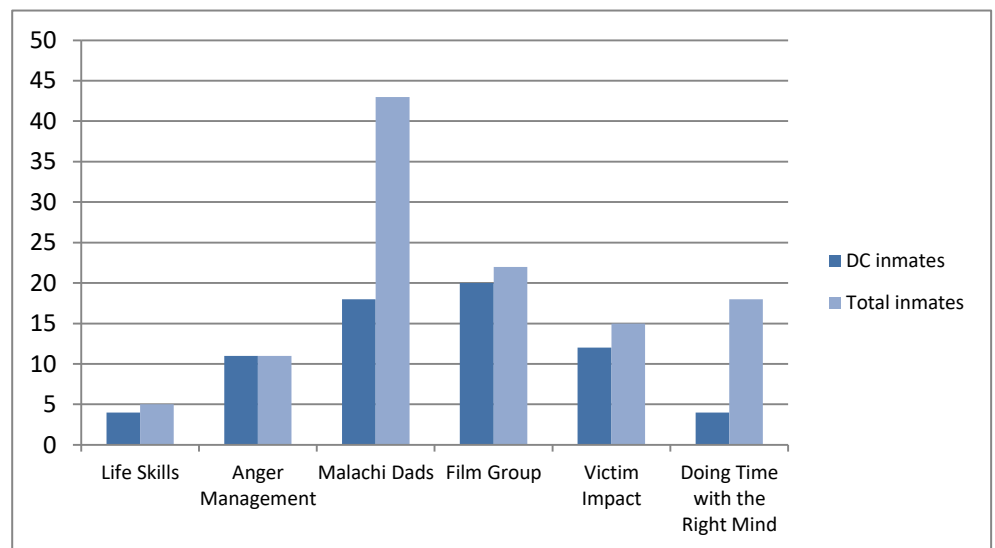


Figure 2. Inmate Participation in Other Therapeutic Programming at Rivers CF

One inmate indicated that anger management was “not too useful.”

Another mentioned that he found the Life Skills group helpful. Several individuals mentioned difficulty getting into the Victim Impact group. None of the individuals who spoke with the CIC mentioned Malachi Dads or the therapeutic film group.

Rivers CF also offers a non-residential drug treatment program in English and Spanish, and a residential drug treatment program (RDAP) discussed in section II.D below.

## D. Residential Drug Abuse Program (RDAP)

RDAP is a BOP drug treatment program where inmates voluntarily live in a specialized unit and participate in individual and group therapy. The program consists of three phases, each lasting three months. RDAP participants must meet a number of criteria, including being eligible for release to a halfway house, which precludes participation by non-US citizens who may be deported. As a result, the program at Rivers CF consists entirely of individuals from DC. The unit has capacity for 60 individuals, and participation ranged from 29 to 39 individuals between June 2018 and June 2019.

About half the individuals participating in the program were eligible for early release, which is one of the incentives of program completion. Between June 2018 to June 2019, 18 individuals joined RDAP program and 17 individuals graduated from the program. Since the unit operates under-capacity, the warden noted that many program graduates choose to stay in the unit and assist current participants. The program at Rivers CF was audited by the BOP in April 2018 and October 2018 and found compliant on all criteria during both audits.

The CIC received no comments on RDAP from current participants.

## III. Security Level

Twelve individuals who spoke with the CIC expressed frustration that Rivers CF is structured and operated like a higher security facility, despite being classified as low security. While low security institutions in the BOP mostly have dormitory or cubicle housing, Rivers CF has entirely cell-based housing. Movement is restricted to 10-minute periods once an hour during much of the day, and several individuals mentioned that they get stuck waiting for several locked doors to open so that they can proceed to programming or jobs, where they are then penalized for arriving late. In the BOP, typically only high security facilities have guard towers; Rivers CF has four guard towers. Low security facilities in the BOP have “strong work and program components,”<sup>8</sup> while high security facilities are focused primarily on close control of inmate movement. Individuals often work to lower their classification points through a combination of good behavior and program participation, so that they can move to a less restrictive facility with more programming opportunities. Several individuals mentioned that they had worked to get to a low-security facility, only to be transferred to Rivers CF where there are more restrictions than at most medium security facilities, and less programming. Programming is particularly important at lower security facilities, since many of the individuals at these facilities are moving towards release and re-entry into the community.

### Inmate Comments:

- “Not a low facility. All locked doors, gun towers, atmosphere like a USP even though no violence here, so why are staff treating us this way? A lot of confusion here.”
- “Us being locked down in a low is a problem for me. All these locked doors. If I wanted high security I would go to a med[ium] or pen[itentiary].”
- “Locked doors cause problems in the unit because folks in the bubble aren’t responsive so it’s more of a security hazard than open movement would be.”
- “Have to go through three locked doors to get anywhere, so takes long to get out of unit and only have 10 minutes transit.”
- “Work your way down to low and they treat you like max. Sussex and Red Onion [State prisons in Virginia] were max/supermax and they were better than here.”

### Recommendations:

- 1) The BOP should transfer all individuals with a security level of “low” to facilities with physical plant characteristics, work and program components, dormitory design, and movement restrictions that more accurately reflect a low security environment.

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.bop.gov/about/facilities/federal\\_prisons.jsp](https://www.bop.gov/about/facilities/federal_prisons.jsp)

- 2) Rivers CF should increase the amount and variety of programming available to inmates as discussed in Section II above.
- 3) Executive staff at Rivers CF should consider reducing restrictions on movement at the facility so that it operates more like BOP facilities classified as “low”. This could include adding longer periods of unrestricted movement during the day, and leaving some doors to unit and programming spaces unlocked during the day where feasible.

## IV. *Disparate Treatment*

Many of the DC individuals at Rivers CF, who are primarily Black U.S. citizens, believe that they are treated worse than the ICE detainee population, who are primarily Spanish-speaking immigrants. Twenty-three of the individuals with whom the CIC spoke at Rivers CF mentioned at least one form of disparate treatment. They mentioned that the Spanish-speaking inmates received better jobs, less frequent or less severe punishment for rule infractions, more cultural activities and holiday celebrations, and recreation activities that are not as appealing to individuals from DC, such as soccer and volleyball. Meals also include rice and beans as part of the hot bar, where inmates may serve themselves. One individual mentioned that in his unit three of four televisions were on Spanish-language channels at all times.

The CIC was unable to verify many of the complaints of disparate treatment by DC individuals due to their amorphous nature. The recreation schedule provided by Rivers CF listed a wide variety of activities, including open basketball five days each week and all day on Saturday. The tournaments listed over the course of the year included basketball, handball, racquetball, soccer, and various card and table games. Football was routinely shown on a big screen per the schedule. The February schedule included a number of Black history events, including movies and trivia. Cinco de Mayo recreation events were extensive, while Memorial Day, Fourth of July, and Labor Day events included basketball, volleyball, soccer, and track as well as table games. The menu included five weeklong meal cycles. Of the 70 lunches and dinners listed, all included some type of beans and 64 included some type of rice in addition to other proteins and vegetables. The warden told the CIC that all housing units have four televisions in the dayroom, and that two are set to Spanish language channels and two to English language channels.

During 2018, DC inmates made up 30-40% of population in the Restrictive Housing Unit (RHU) at Rivers CF, while DC inmates were only 20% of the total population of the facility. The CIC did not request information on the reason for each RHU admission.

### **Inmate Comments:**

- “For example, I may request to move to an open cell-room first, the staff denies me and then a Spanish inmate requests the same staff to move to the same room, the cell-room will be given to him.”
- “They don’t let us celebrate no DC traditions. They have no activities for us; there are no black dishes in the chow hall.”
- “Staff are very disrespectful to DC inmates and show a lot of respect to the Mexican inmates, all the Mexican inmates get hired for the best jobs first.”
- “Staff may ignore you or give an aggressive response to whatever you ask. If the Hispanic guys ask then they’re more acceptable to listen.”
- [Discussing floods in SHU] “If I do it, they’re going to write me up and take all my stuff. If Mexicans do it, they just clean it up.”

### **Recommendations:**

- 1) Review internal data on job placement and disciplinary sanctions and critically assess it for possible racial bias.
- 2) Assess the reasons behind the disproportionate number of individuals from DC in the RHU.

## V. *Grievance Process*

The grievance process at Rivers CF includes two distinct paths depending on the issue. Inmates grieving BOP-related matters, such as designation, classification, sentence computation, Good Conduct Time, property issues, or matters occurring when the inmate was in a BOP facility, should use the typical BOP process laid out in BOP Program Statement

1330.18. For all other matters, particularly those concerning Rivers CF policies, procedures, staff behavior, or Unit Disciplinary Committee decisions, inmates are required to file their grievance first through the GEO group procedure. The exception to this is if an individual believes their safety or well-being would be in danger if the grievance became known at the facility, they may file directly to the Privatization Management Branch (PMB) at BOP Central Office.

The GEO group procedure involves a request for informal resolution and an informal resolution meeting with staff - after which the individual can file an initial administrative remedy form. GEO policy states that individuals are not provided the initial administrative remedy form until the informal resolution process has been completed. The initial administrative remedy is handled by the Rivers CF Administrative Remedy Coordinator (ARC) after which an individual can appeal to the GEO Eastern Region Office, then the PMB at the BOP, and finally to the Office of General Counsel at the BOP.

On average, inmates filed 18 initial administrative remedies per month during the 18-month period prior to the CIC visit. Based on an average daily population of 1,247 individuals - that equates to one grievance filed per 70 individuals at Rivers CF. The most common grievances filed were complaints against staff (102), followed by medical issues (24), disciplinary decisions (22), and food service issues (21).

Thirty-one out of 49 survey respondents (63%) said that they had access to BOP grievance forms, while 18 (37%) said they did not have access. Seven individuals explained that forms were only available from counselors and that the counselors were rarely in their offices or refused to provide the forms when asked. Two individuals mentioned that they were able to get grievance forms from their counselor, and the process worked.

Out of 44 respondents, seven said the grievance process was fair, 20 said it was not fair, and 16 responded that they did not know. The most common complaints about the grievance process were that staff blocked the process somehow (15 responses), that the process does not work (9 responses), that responses to grievances are delayed or never happen (6 responses), and that the process takes too long (6 responses). Several individuals mentioned confusion about when and how to use the two separate systems.

#### **Inmate Comments:**

- “Staff are unfamiliar with the forms. RCI has their own set of complaint forms. When you submit them, no return or result. Disappears in someone’s trash can.”
- “Need to go to counselor for them and they try to settle the matter or block it, whatever you want to call it.”
- “Long delays in responses.”
- “I feel like you never get a fair result is because most of the staff are some kin or friends.”
- “The only BP-9 and 10s that you can get are through your counselors. When I followed one process all the way through, I was able to obtain them.”
- “I think that the process could be so much easier if [the administrative remedy clerk] would just make herself more available to the inmate population. It is so difficult to get in to see her and to try to obtain any information about the status of your grievance procedure that it is unreal. It is so bad that it makes you want to give up on trying to exhaust the administrative remedy process.”

#### **Recommendations:**

- 1) Ensure grievance forms are provided upon request or else available without requesting from staff.
- 2) Ensure that staff and inmates have information on when and how to use each of the two grievance systems.

## ***VI. Other Issues***

### **E. Kitchen strip searches**

Three individuals who spoke with the CIC mentioned that they were routinely strip-searched before leaving the kitchen at the end of their shifts. One person stated that the strip searches were “humiliating” and that waiting for everyone on his shift to be searched caused him to get in trouble for being late to his program.

The warden stated that the facility had been dealing with a lot of homemade alcohol, and instituted strip searches of kitchen workers on random days to curb the amount of fruit and sugar removed from the kitchen to be used to make alcohol. The warden stated these strip searches were targeted to address this problem based on information received, and that the strip searches are not being conducted at this time.

### **F. Commissary**

More than half of the individuals with whom the CIC spoke at Rivers CF complained that the markup on commissary items was too high, including a few comments that items at Rivers CF cost twice what they had in BOP facilities. Five individuals mentioned that commissary availability in RHU was very limited.

A number of factors may explain differences in pricing. While contract facilities are obligated to use the same 30 percent item markup as BOP facilities, BOP facilities are tax exempt and contract facilities are not. Differences in facility location and proximity to distribution sites may also impact pricing, as well as whether the items offered are brand name or generic. Bulk orders, discounts, and the frequently with which a facility rotates commissary stock also impacts availability and pricing of commissary items.

The CIC compared the commissary price list provided by Rivers CF with the commissary list recently provided to the CIC by USP Pollock. Many of the items were not identical or could not be verified as the same size or brand of item; however, a sampling of similar items is provided below.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Cost at Rivers CF</b>	<b>Cost at USP Pollock</b>
4-pack AA or AAA batteries	\$2.00	\$1.00
anti-fungal powder	\$2.80	\$2.20
chicken ramen	\$0.40	\$0.30
dryer sheets (Spring Fresh/Bounce)	\$2.25	\$2.90
eye drops	\$2.20	\$2.20
pocket dictionary	\$4.15	\$3.85
replacement watchband	\$18.90	\$11.45
Spanish-to-English dictionary	\$2.40	\$2.25
Snickers bar	\$1.30	\$0.80
Suave Skin Therapy Lotion 10 oz / Suave Cocoa Butter Lotion	\$3.55	\$3.00
thermal bottoms	\$6.55	\$9.10
t-shirt	\$7.00	\$5.70
Tums 3pk / Tums 4pk	\$2.90	\$2.30

### **G. Food**

Seventy-five percent of the individuals who completed the CIC survey shared at least one complaint about the food. The most common specific complaints included that the meals are always rice and beans (19 responses out of 50), that portions are too small (14 responses out of 50), and that meals are unhealthy or lack fresh fruits and vegetables (12 responses out of 50). As noted in Section IV above, the menu provided by the facility includes rice and beans as part of nearly every lunch and dinner offering in a five-week cycle. The menu lists vegetables, such as broccoli, peas and carrots, green beans, and collards as part of lunch and dinner offerings, but does not indicate whether the vegetables are fresh. Fruit is listed on most meals, but type and preparation of fruit is not specified.



## H. Email

When the CIC visited Rivers CF in 2016, we recommended that the facility provide an email platform for individuals to maintain contact with their loved ones and community, similar to the secure CorrLinks email platform available in all BOP-operated facilities. The response to the CIC report noted that Rivers CF is not contractually obligated to provide an email platform to residents, but stated that the institution was “currently negotiating an agreement with Access Secure Mail to provide an electronic messaging service to the inmate population. Target date for implementation is September 2017.”

When the CIC visited Rivers in July 2019, the facility still did not have an email communication setup for its residents. Several individuals expressed frustration that they no longer had access to email after having it in BOP facilities. The warden mentioned that the facility is looking into an educational tablet program that could include email access and that the facility is also looking into the possibility of setting up video visitation. The warden did not know when any of these services might be available for use.

## I. Dayroom beds

The CIC visited one general population unit at Rivers CF, Unit D. The unit had three bunk beds in the common area dayroom, where six individuals slept each night. Inmates are assigned to these bunks, and staff said that those assigned to the bunks have more freedom to move around, but less privacy. The warden explained that these beds are used for individuals who will not keep their cells tidy, or have particular difficulty living in close quarters.

## J. Recent lockdown

In August 2019, the CIC heard from several individuals at Rivers CF about the facility’s lockdown status. These individuals were particularly concerned about lack of access to law library materials for ongoing *pro se* litigation, as well as lack of access to religious services during the lockdown period. During the CIC’s follow-up conversation with Warden Tripp, he confirmed that the facility was on full lockdown, and then on modified lockdown for a period of several weeks from August 25, 2019, until September 23, 2019, due to an incident in which a number of inmates refused to lock-in to their cells. The warden said that the facility was back at fully operational status as of the conversation on October 8, 2019.

The Warden clarified that the Rivers CF policy is that inmates needing law library information during a lockdown can use an inmate request form to request specific case law or information from the facility librarian. Inmates are allowed to practice their religion in their cells, but no religious gatherings or other programs are held during a complete lockdown until normal facility operations resume.

### Recommendations:

- 1) Increase the amount of fruits and vegetables provided at meals.
- 2) Provide email access to inmates at Rivers CF.
- 3) End the use of dayroom bunks.

## Appendix A: Methodology

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## Rivers CF Inspection Methodology

In accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Corrections Information Council (CIC) and the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP), on May 23, 2019, the CIC submitted a request to inspect Rivers CF. 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 on-site inspection, the CIC communicated with DC inmates at Rivers CF to notify them of the upcoming inspection and offer the opportunity to participate in a confidential interview with a member of the CIC.

The BOP and Rivers CF executive staff provided the following documents to the CIC, which are on file with the CIC:

- Current roster of DC inmates
- Completed CIC pre-inspection information worksheets
- Restrictive Housing Unit monthly population (1/2018 – 12/2018)
- Significant incident summary (1/2018 – 12/2018)
- ACA report (2017)
- Contract facility monitoring report (April 2019)
- PREA auditor's summary report (June 2019)
- GEO Group ion scan policy
- 5-cycle weekly menu (as of March 2019)
- Facility cost-per-meal breakdown (June 2019)
- Commissary list (general population and Restrictive Housing Unit)
- Weekly staffing report (5/31/19)
- Facility staff vacancies list (6/30/19)
- List of current programs (6/12/19)
- Program participation rosters (10/1/2018 – 3/31/2019)
- Current program enrollments and attendance (10/8/19)
- Residential Drug Abuse Program (RDAP) participation numbers (6/2018 – 6/2019)
- RDAP programmatic audit (1/2018 – 12/2018)
- Recreation schedule (9/2018 – 9/2019)
- Inmate pay scale (as of 9/1990)
- Inmate job descriptions and standards (as of 7/1995)
- Continuing Education participation numbers (10/2018 – 3/2019)
- Restrictive Housing Unit visitor logs (4/2019 – 7/2019)
- Medical logs, including sick call, vaccine days, physician assistant, doctor, nurse, dentist, dental hygienist, and oral surgeon (6/1/2019 – 7/8/2019)
- Grievance log (1/2018 – 7/2019)

The CIC conducted an on-site inspection of Rivers CF on July 9 and 10, 2019. The inspection process included an opening session with Rivers CF executive staff, a tour of the facility, and interviews with DC inmates in general population and the Restricted Housing Unit (RHU). Various executive staff escorted CIC staff during the tour portion of the inspection. The areas toured included recreation, visitation, education, vocational technology, the kitchen and dining hall, the medical and dental areas, the psychology offices, religious services, a general population unit, the RDAP unit, and the RHU. Following the inspection, the survey responses and interview notes were compiled and edited for clarity.

In response to the warden's request for more timely feedback, the CIC spoke with him and the facility's BOP liaison on October 8, 2019. The CIC and the warden discussed observations from the site visit, surveys, and interviews, as well as several of the CIC's recommendations. The warden also answered additional questions that arose during the CIC's review of the data collected during the site visit.

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

## **Appendix B: Inmate Survey Responses**

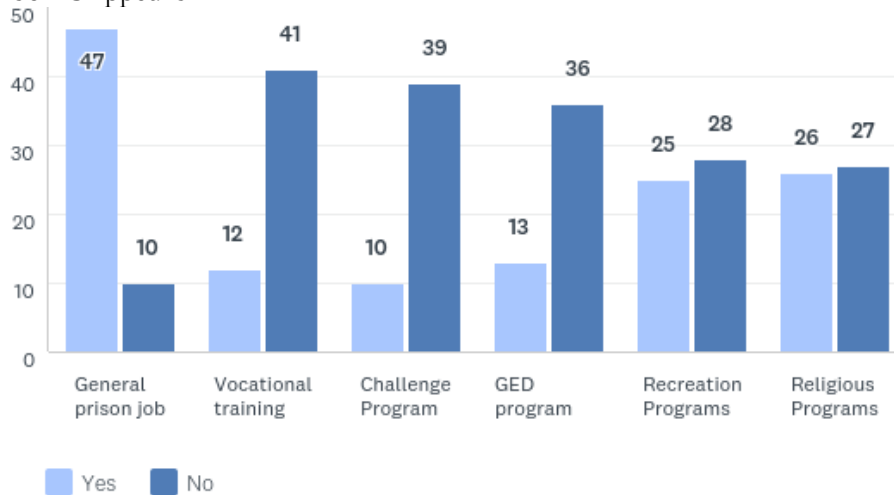
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## DC Inmate Survey Responses

The following responses were collected by the CIC during the on-site visit to Rivers CF in July 2019. The open-ended responses have been edited for clarity and to erase any identifying information.

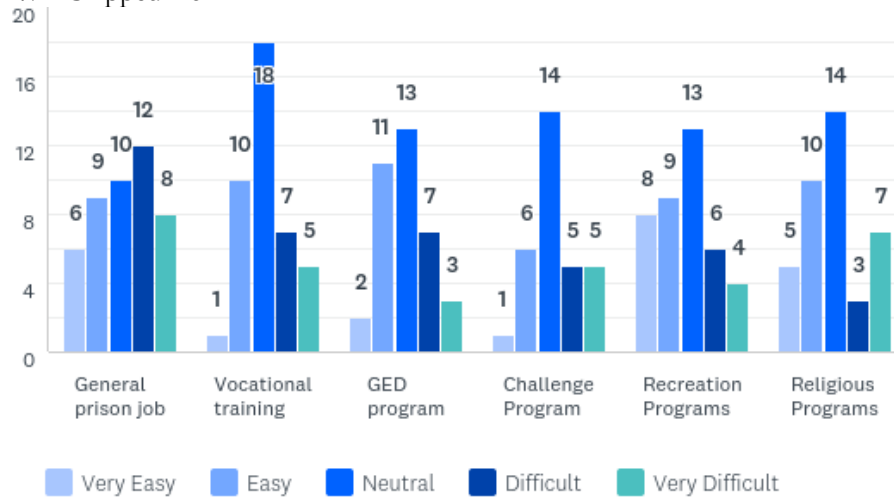
### Are you currently participating in:

Answered: 58 Skipped: 5



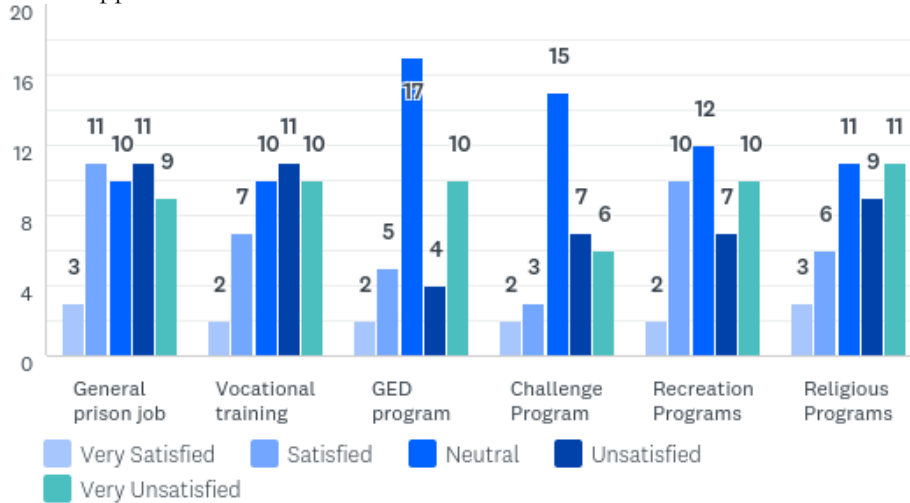
### How easy or difficult is it to get into the following activities at Rivers CF?

Answered: 47 Skipped: 16



## How satisfied are you with the following activities at Rivers CF?

Answered: 48 Skipped: 15



## Is there anything else you would like to share about education, programming, or employment?

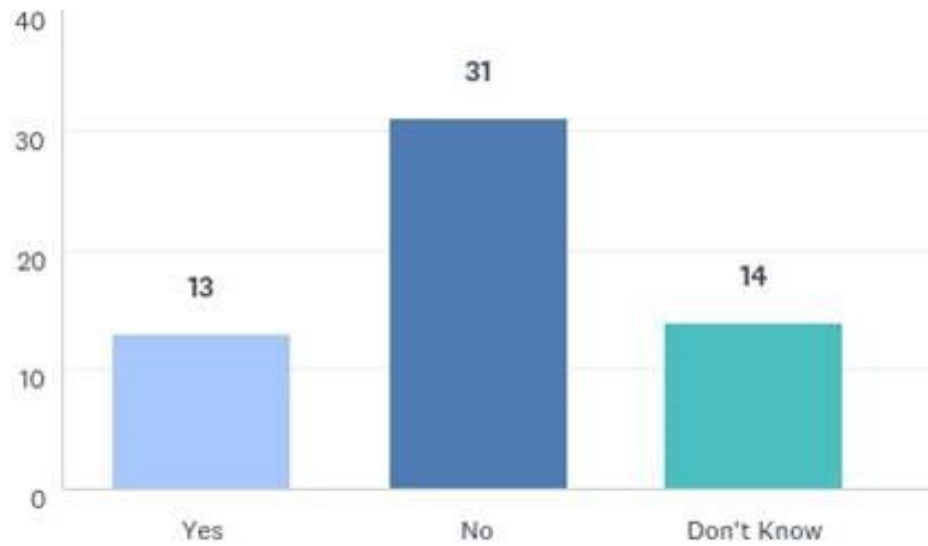
Responses
In the middle of Mexico, fear for my life- ICE. Do not want to be here, how can I get transferred? Only chips, coffee, candy, cookies for commissary in RHU. Don't want to go to rec because of Hispanics, rice & beans
Just that we are forced to work in the kitchen
Here at Rivers I truly would have to rate the education and programming very poor and furthermore does not address the need of this population. Now as far as the employment, I feel that we are being compensated at a far too low pay rate.
Just got here last week. Yes we need a rehabilitation program get us ready for re-entry just because you did time don't mean you ready if you don't have the requirements or the programs.
Need serve safe certification, food service. Industrial Jobs College program needed.
I'm a federal inmate with a federal case. Due to the first step act, far as non-violent offenders can program to work up to 65% time projected of doing, Here, being that this is not a FBOP facility the benefit of programming to get time off, I'm not able too. I've only been here 2 weeks. The jobs here is horrible and when it comes to pay. This institution forces you to work in the kitchen. If you refuse, then you are going to the SHU. This institution says it's mandatory to work in the kitchen 90 days. Visitation is horrible. You are force to wear boots no matter what, institution boots even if you have a soft shoe pass. We are housed in an immigration institution. Food is terrible, commissary is extremely high.
We need more programs for inmates that's finished with school or have an GED
construction program 9 months program good
None as per now
Needs something more challenging, not in GED program because he already has a diploma. Not enough programs to get sentence reduction, need college course while here. Want to have a fighting chance
As far as the educational programs they are limited. Employment you are forced to work in the kitchen upon arriving at the facility. Also it's kind of difficult getting a job that is financially stable for prison.
I haven't actually started programming yet, seeing as though I've only been here for a week
I do not express any concern about the education, programming, or employment. Just staff needs to be more accountable to getting the material we need for legal work.
teacher was cool
Took drivers to get reintroduced to driving exam, in CDL class, custodial maintenance (12 certs) Good programming Life skills, computer classes
Programs pretty good, ask if you need to talk to someone one on one staff are pretty good here , way it runs is good
I dropped out of GED class because it is designed for the Mexicans. There are no American teachers. It was very difficult to learn. I lost good days cause of it SMH.



There are no programs here at rivers correctional institution for me to sign up for. I took so many programs while in BOP that RCI does not have.
Well my job is Disability Aide, I wanted laundry job or rec job but can't because the Spanish inmates have first pick. They don't have no program that can help me in society to get a job. Already took the custodial maintenance nothing else will help me.
Kitchen better than doing nothing.
Have not been here that long
GED programs we need better teaching staff and more help
Jobs are very limited and they are given to Spanish population for all the high better paying jobs, the US citizen is either left with very low or no job and classes.
There is a severe lack of productive programming offered at Rivers. I know we do not get the same opportunities other Federal inmates receive in terms of meaningful training. No UNICOR, No college program, no meaningful vo-tech program and very few inmate taught courses. Also, the library is too small for this size institution.
No job related issues for me. What religious program? As far as education or programming classes, there are none for me at all. I've taken advanced computer courses at other facilities. There are none here at all. The computer Ed. here is more an introduction to computers and learning keyboarding (if you don't know how to type)
Overall I think and feel Rivers education programs are great help and benefit I had the opportunity to take a class thinking 4 change and this has actually helped me deal with being here and handling complex situations
I don't like that we are not able to prepare ourselves for society. They don't provide any programming.
Need more moderate up to educational programs, college courses, parenting classes, work, re-entry. (I take outside college courses, I pay for.)
-No GED Tutors -Forced to take them -Lower Payments -No Program Variety -No Records for programs I did
I don't expect too much - we're in jail. More programming. Would like to do construction and CDL as many programs as possible especially to get good time
I think there should be more vocational programs available
programming cool
Was in SHU for 18 months 2010-2011, straight in to RHU right from the bus. Want to go to another facility 1st time in SHU
There need to be better programs/vocational training that meet the demands in the job market today.
Wish college courses, I've done everything especially for long timers.
When you sign for classes and the classes start, if the teacher isn't helping you accelerate in class and you want to drop out they will write you a shot and take good time from you
There's no college courses. The re-entry coordinator Ms. Green is quite difficult to deal with.
They need to get us a raise. I been working the same job since I been here 7 years and I have been getting \$11.00 ever since.
With me already having these programs there's nothing else for me to do after I complete these programs. There are no program in education to take but your G.E.D.
Not enough programs to help get trades instead of basic certificates.

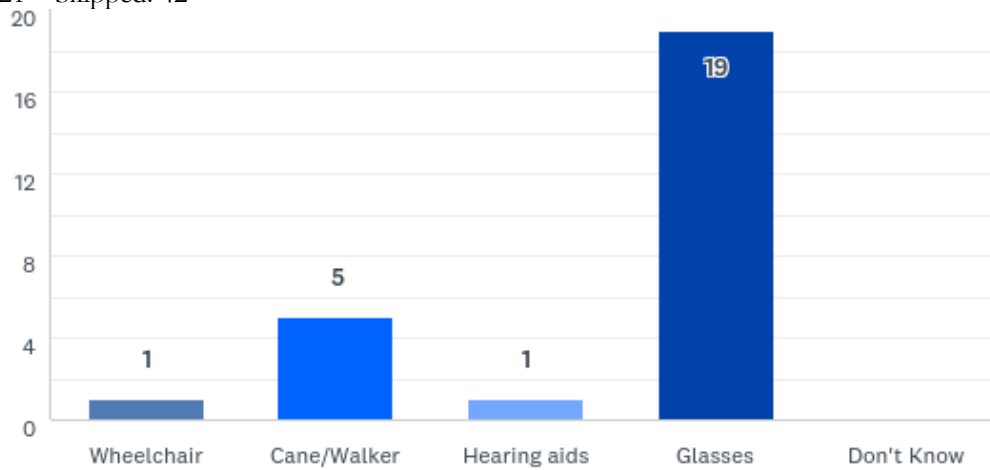
### Are you on the chronic caseload?

Answered: 57 Skipped: 6



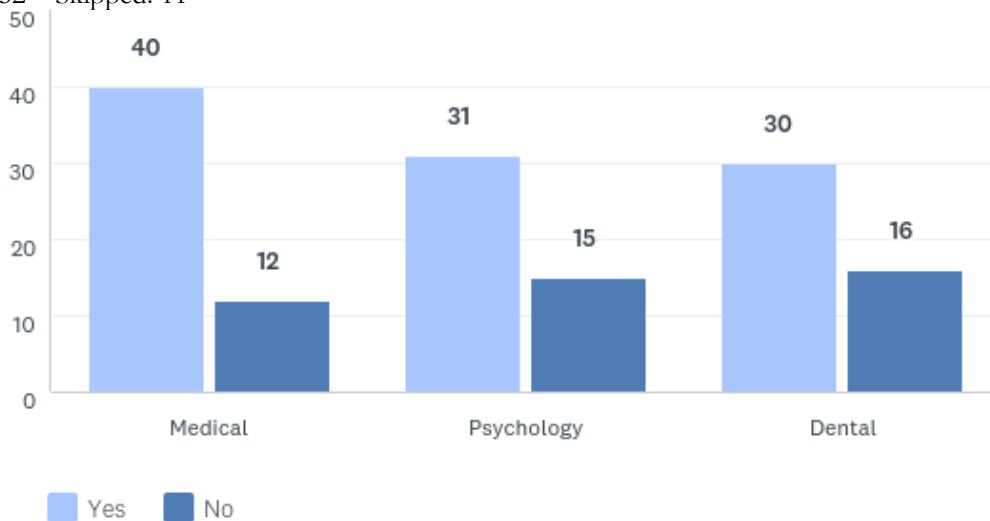
### Do you need or use any of the following?

Answered: 21 Skipped: 42



### Do you have the access you need to the following:

Answered: 52 Skipped: 11





**Is there anything else you would like to share about medical care at Rivers CF?**

Responses
more medical issues
No problem put in sick call 2 weeks ago + waiting
It's hard to be seen with medical issues
When you say Chronic Care I would say "What Chronic Care?" therefore I'm saying it is absolutely inadequate and absolutely does not address or provide all of my medical needs. To sum it up they have some staff that desire to assist you but their hands are being tied by the administration Also they are not able to address and/or provide proper care and treatment for me
Haven't really gone
Too slow to see people, standing in long line for pill pickup especially during the winter outside
okay good
I'm not able to give an accurate opinion, I only been here 2 weeks
Charged the 2.00 co pay, BOP refunded the copay after I challenged them in SC.
Yes, sick call/emergency is very difficult process. To have to been seen by a nurse or physician, you have to wait days. You are required to fill out a request form and submit it to be seen which takes long time for the whole process
ok Why take so long knee- they gave me meds but no x-ray etc.
It's not very good as of right now my finger is either broken in a place or fractured. I was given an x-ray 2 weeks ago and medical has yet to give me the results
Have an ankle sprain from DC Jail and have yet to have a follow-up
Should be on chronic care for high blood pressure and glasses were given by someone else.
If I go to doc before three nurses see you, better than the dentist
Always make you do cop outs, takes a while because people in line ahead of you
No complaints
They charge for sick call and never been seen
Okay
Meds not on time. When sick, we can't go straight to medical or when in any body pains we are sent back not even ask to be look at without filling out a cop-out sheet which we will be seen 2 days later
It's not private concerning ones business and they charge even when not good. the open house is often not held so one can discuss medical issues, I've been waiting over 8 months for medical care surgery on my right arm
No issues for me personally
Haven't put in for glasses yet It appears to be adequate as far as I can ascertain but luckily I haven't had any serious issues. I can say they haven't given me the correct cream to help with the purple blotch I had transferred to my right cheek by Dr. Holderness
I think overall rivers does a pretty good job when it comes to medical far as my experience when dealing with medical
I don't have anything to say I haven't seen them
Needs a professional facelift
I've been waiting for three months to get my broken glasses. I've been waiting for two months to get an MRI. My ACL is popped and I can't walk and still waiting.
Ok
Difficult to be seen with only a remedies as final results. I experienced an ankle surgery that left me with worst conditions than previous to it. Was transferred from B.O.P , Ft.Dix, N.J into R.C.I without medical records apparently this is common practice
Unsat! I do not get the care I need. medical, food, etc.
target-ger C pap machine put in a complaint - no response
this institution is not prepared to deal with the needs of chronic care inmates
It's fine, bring meds daily in SHU
when you ask to speak to them its \$2.00 and when you're in pain and need medicine you have to wait 1

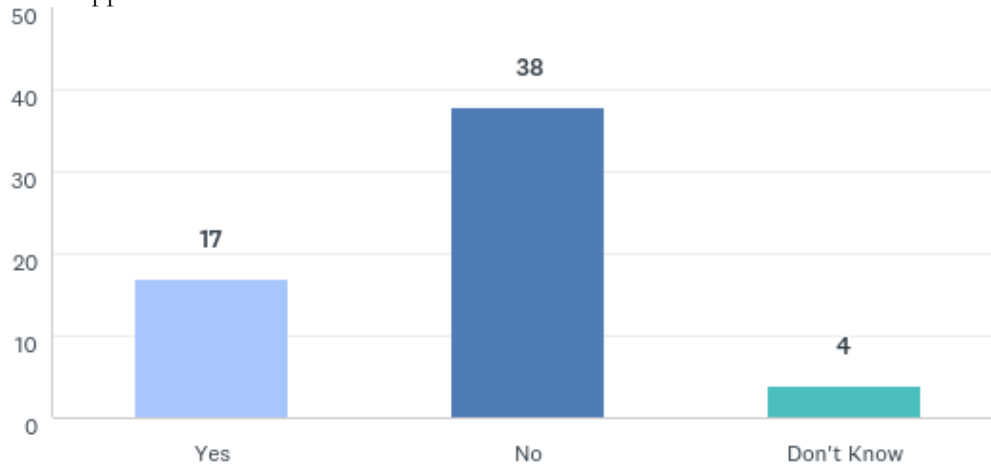
week and pay \$2.00 again just to be seen once
I don't have any problem with medical
I do not have access to psychological help I feel I need
Still waiting on MRI
Yes- good enough

**Is there anything else you would like to share about dental care at Rivers CF?**

Inmate Responses
Haven't seen since been here
Been here a year haven't gotten my teeth cleaned yet
It takes too long to be seen
Completely inadequate and does not provide proper care
Good
Yes they have not call me to get my teeth clean since I have been here and I have been here over a year
Fair
Slow
Have yet to be seen
I have submitted several requests to be seen with no success. I have decayed teeth and pain but no one cares.
I would say dental is ok, it takes a while to be called but not bad
on the waiting list for cleaning
trying to see dentist for a couple months now
Pretty good
put in a cop out takes a month or two for them to call you
No complaints
Dental take forever to see you
haven't got to see dentist, he will in July
it takes weeks to be seen
it takes a year or two to clean teeth
Yes, I had a filling fall out a couple of months back. Dr. Holderness refilled it twice in one session as it didn't hold the first time. Took a solid hour. His hand rested against my cheek the entire time. He had on a purple "Nitrile" glove. Similar to a henna tattoo, this has had the effect of leaving a purple blotch on my right cheek. Apparently when he then researched this online there are a handful of other cases of this same thing.
I don't have anything to say I haven't seen them
needs more improvement
very unprofessional
Don't need dental
This place has their own set of rules or guidelines that do not comply with the BOP
Teeth cleaning, but heard can only get teeth pulled if in SHU, no cleanings
That they don't have the right do crown/caps and a lot of people need caps
They sometimes have you waiting too long to see them especially when you are in pain
yes- pulled tooth, it was fast, no need for other work

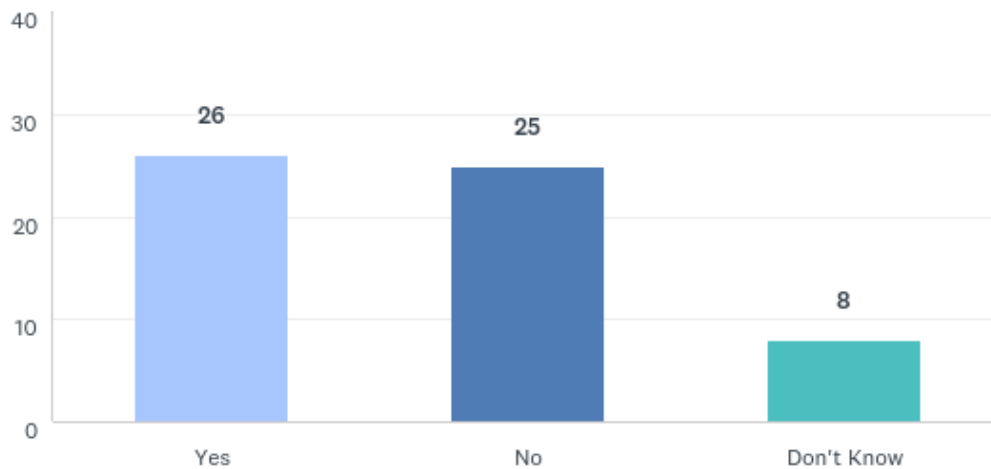
**Have you ever been diagnosed with a mental health issue, at this facility or elsewhere?**

Answered: 59 Skipped: 4



**Did you have a mental health evaluation when arriving at Rivers CF?**

Answered: 59 Skipped: 4



**If you had a mental health evaluation at Rivers CF, please describe the process?**

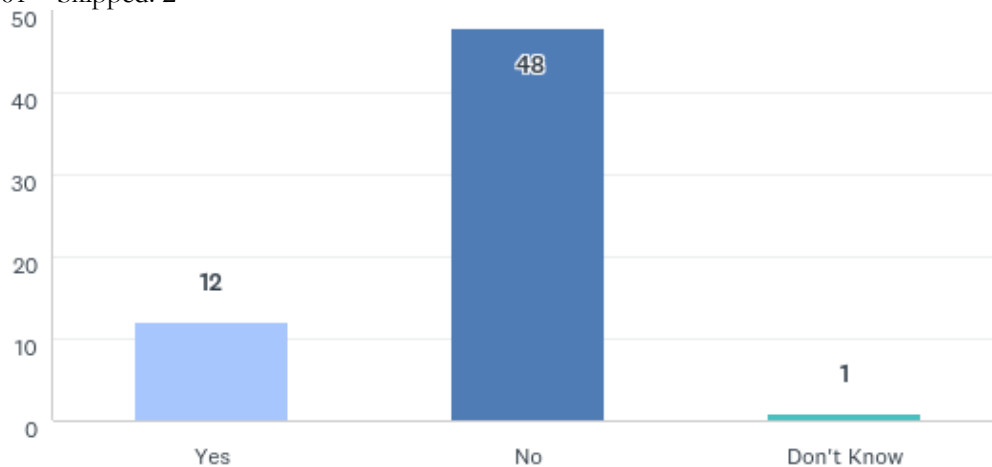
Responses
Asked questions
They have not addressed any of my mental health needs
Asked basically was I crazy, so it wasn't that long
Intake process was brief and short not detailed/ can't have carry on medication
Answer a set of questions / assessment
I was told that I need a grievance counselor
Talk to the psych and answered all her questions
Same as any other
I don't know
Asked questions
I was asked about any thoughts of suicide, family issues, how I'm coping in prison, that's about all I can remember, because it was about 5 years ago
I was told there will be a follow up.
Meet w/ Dr. Weston every 2 weeks about meds
Had one in DC before coming here
Ok medicine keeps me stable , they did the evaluation by just asking questions
They just ask me questions they didn't have because here they keep no file on no inmates here our medical file doesn't follow us here.



I can't  
 1860's time period, It was like a Wendy's drive thru  
 PTSD  
 Meeting with doctor, Very satisfactory  
 Part of intake process  
 My eye glasses  
 Not yet  
 I was told that I could not see or get a copy of the evaluation - something about it being non-compliant  
 Rushed through it, had one before trial + used that  
 I don't know  
 I spoke with psychology (Mr. Teeter) in length. It went well. I current see psychology once a month and receive Medication daily.  
 Asked a few questions.  
 yes- Doctor Teeter- talked

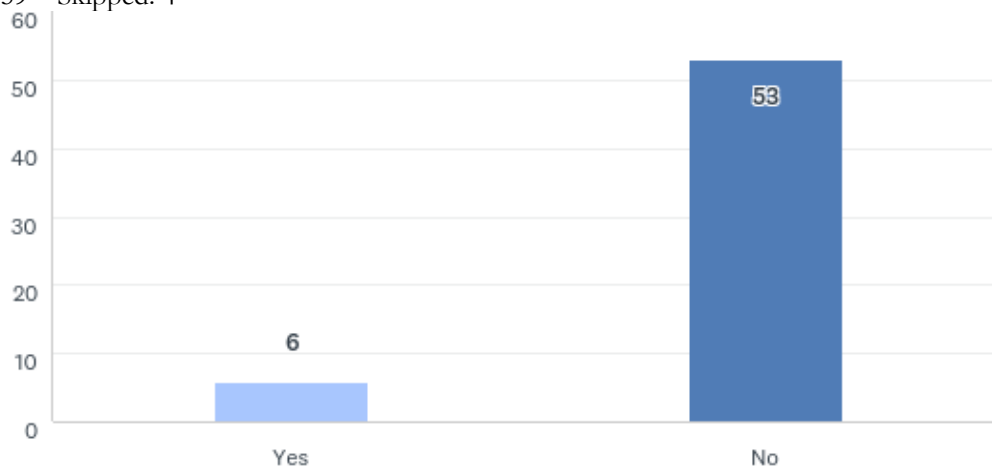
#### Are you currently receiving mental health medication?

Answered: 61 Skipped: 2



#### Have you ever experienced suicidal thoughts while at Rivers CF?

Answered: 59 Skipped: 4

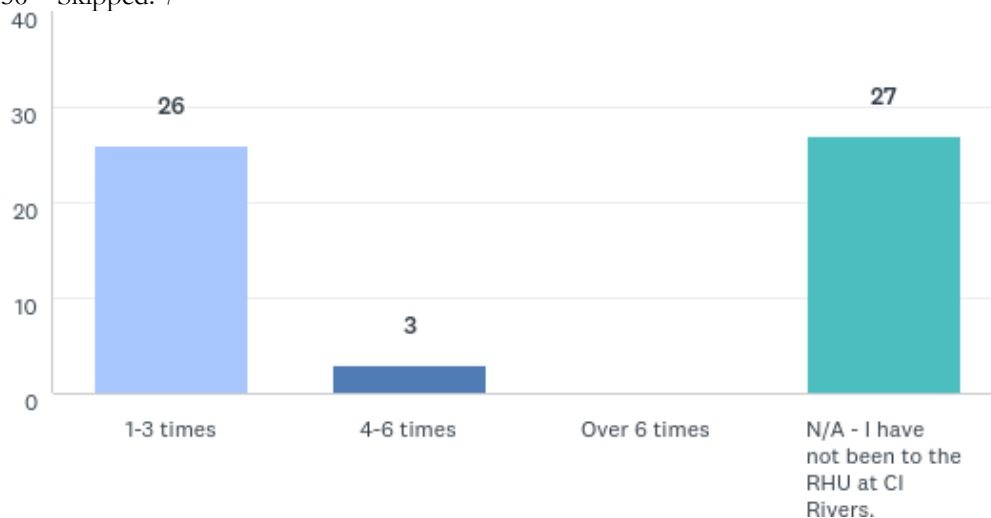


### Is there anything else you would like to share about mental health care at Rivers CF?

Responses
As far as I'm concerned there is absolutely none
Change medical staff too often no follow up mental health counseling or therapy
psychologist come around gives you things to do
Brother- hasn't seen him since aborted visit here 7 years ago.
Took mental health medication when on the street.
They'll hold chow for you if you're still in pill line
Okay.
One inmate told my friend he was suicidal and he alerted officers (Lts. and Sgts.) And they ignored him and even stated that he was making it up. Next day the man attempted suicide. While I have had no personal issues with mental health services, issues are here.
I can talk to Mr. Teeter at virtually any time, he has almost always made himself available to us and he is currently alone here still and needs help this month also is my understanding
Does need a face lift
Rivers Mental Health is unprofessional
This institution/mental health dept is understaffed to properly address my concerns dealing with my mental health issues
This place is real stressful
Inadequate

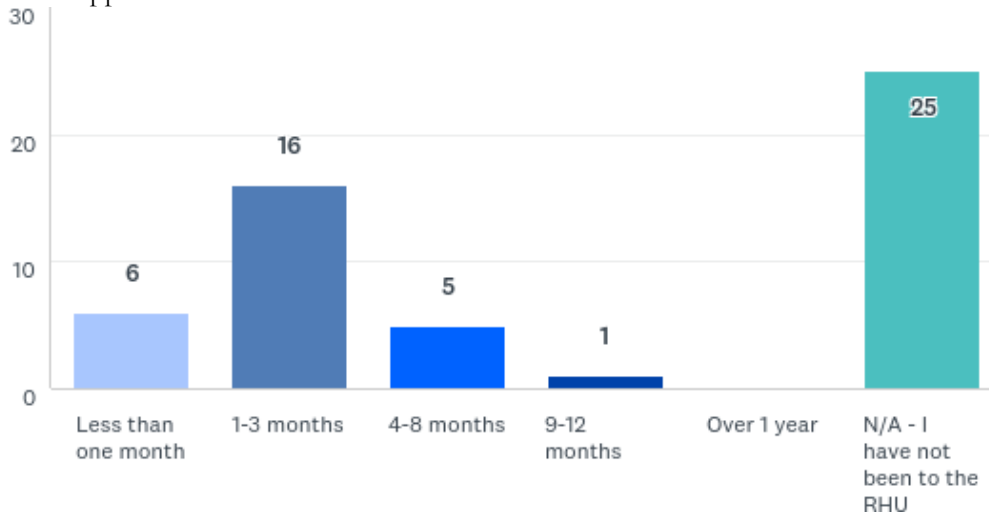
### How many times have you been in the RHU at Rivers CF?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 7



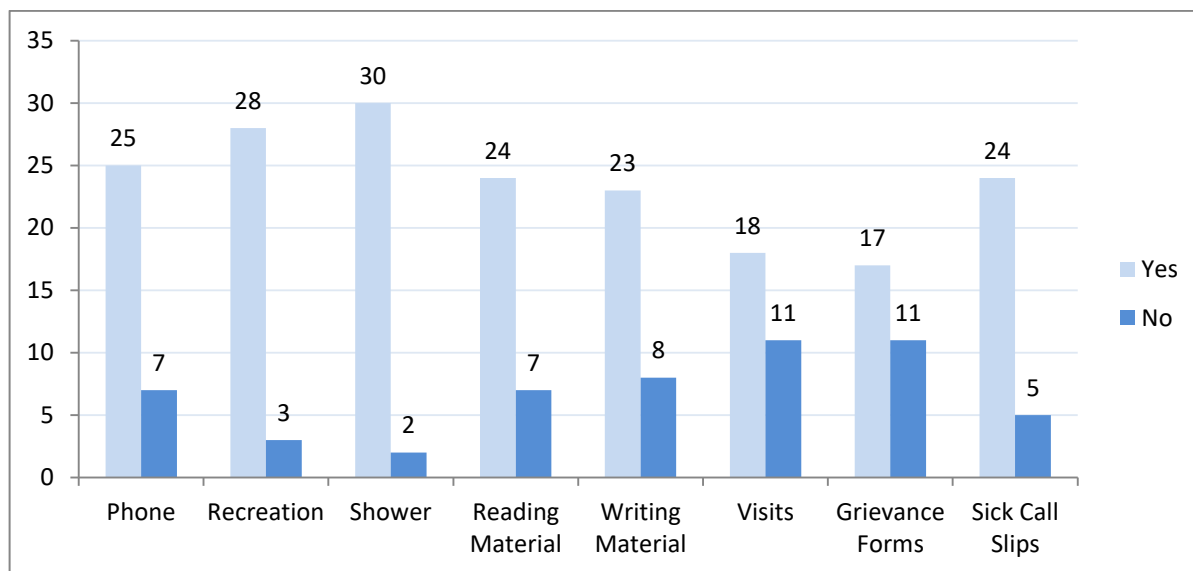
**What is the maximum period you have spent in the RHU at one time in Rivers CF?**

Answered: 52 Skipped: 11



**Did you have access to the following:**

Answered: 31 Skipped: 32



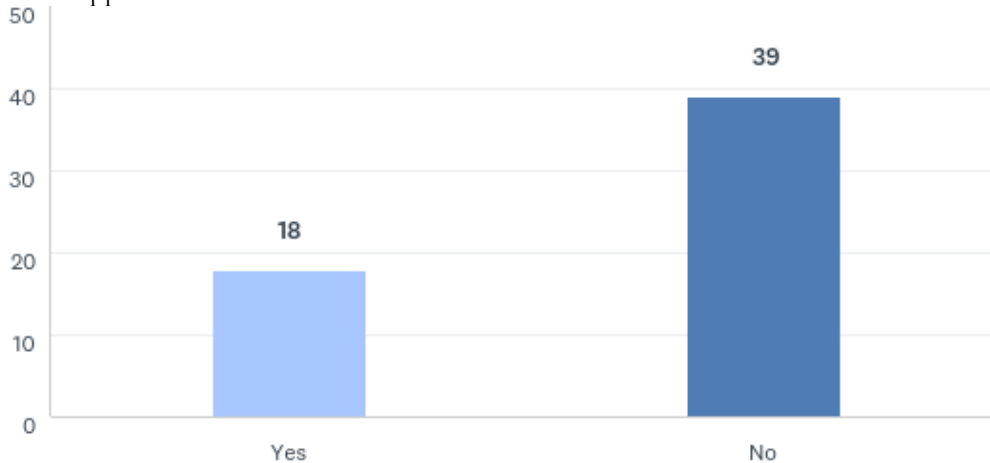
**Is there anything else you would like to share about the RHU at Rivers CF?**

Responses
In RHU 30 days awaiting hearing accused of possessing a cell phone on hearsay by staff member. No phone has been found, only been at rivers for 4 months before placed in RHU
Don't change blankets/sheets to laundry, have to put cop outs and have to wash your own underwear out, no laundry exchange. No visitation personally but seen others go 3x/week. Library is same books, put a cop-out into education for papers and books
food sucks, cater to Spanish pop
Only grievance needs black ball point pen was given a regular RHU pencil
Yes, RCI feeds inmates in the SHU very poorly. Inmates are given very small portion of food and are not allowed to buy food items from commissary. Also correctional Officers bang on the cell doors 14 a day including at night startling inmates while sleeping.
Food too sparse- portions too small, lack of commissary, staff need better training
Your communication is very limited to your family or friends, because you can only use the phone 2 times a month
Staff-wise everything is run good here, never had a problem with that
Family says it's too far heading home in November

No legal material or access to any nor/ or allowed to receive material (cases) from library
Unit teams are supposed to make themselves and any forms you need widely available. I and the other guy in my cell sometimes watched unit team members literally run across the RHU floor so as to be able to avoid on purpose and not speak to us. Nurses also.
Worst months of my life
Library cart needs to be changed, has books people don't read, comes through when they ask CO to bring it depending on if they want to bring it through. SHU counselor brings stuff if acct balance is low
Unorganized and unprofessional - used to BOP, BOP staff is more aggressive
They always cut off the water when inmates don't want to take a cellie.
There's a saying about the SHU here. You go in weighing 190 you come out weighing 150
They are not feeding us proper portion of our meal, also we not receiving exchange of clothes while in the SHU
Grievance- they don't follow policy. I want a copy of the employee conduct policy at Rivers. Been in SHU for 8 months.

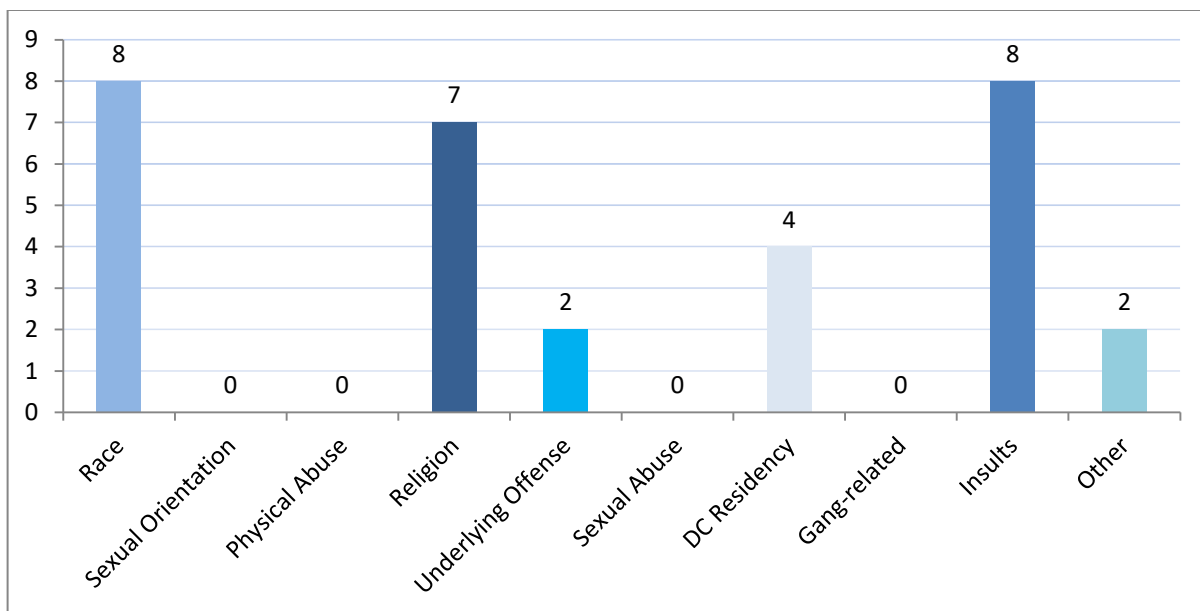
### Have you ever been harassed, threatened, or abused by staff at Rivers CF?

Answered: 57 Skipped: 6



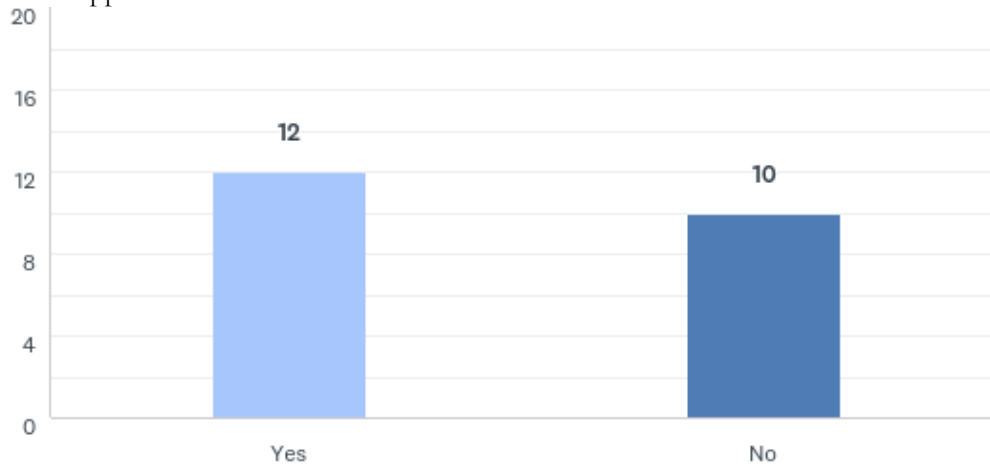
### If yes, what did it involve? (check all that apply)

Answered: 18 Skipped: 45



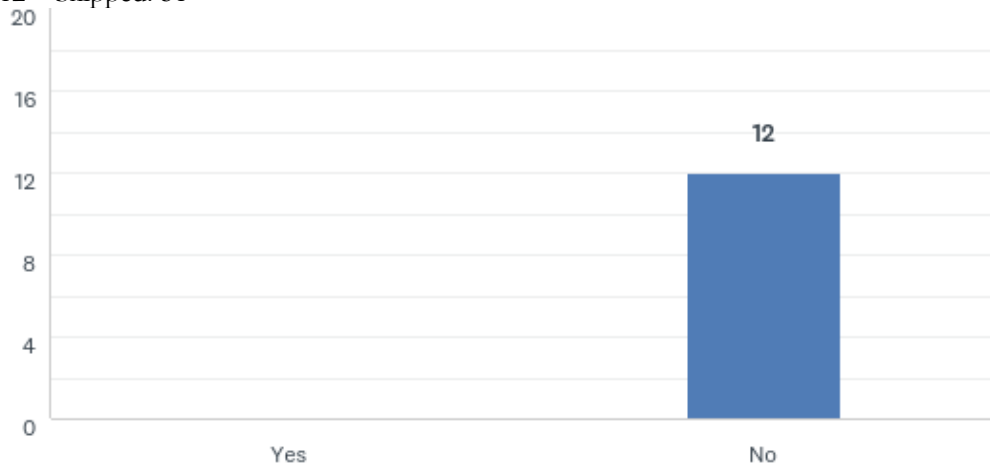
**If yes did you report it?**

Answered: 22 Skipped: 41



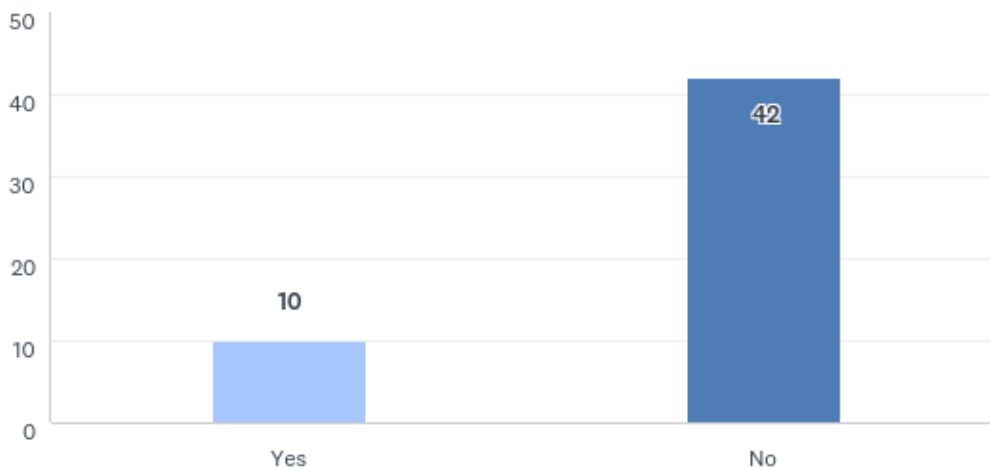
**If yes, are you satisfied with how it was handled?**

Answered: 12 Skipped: 51



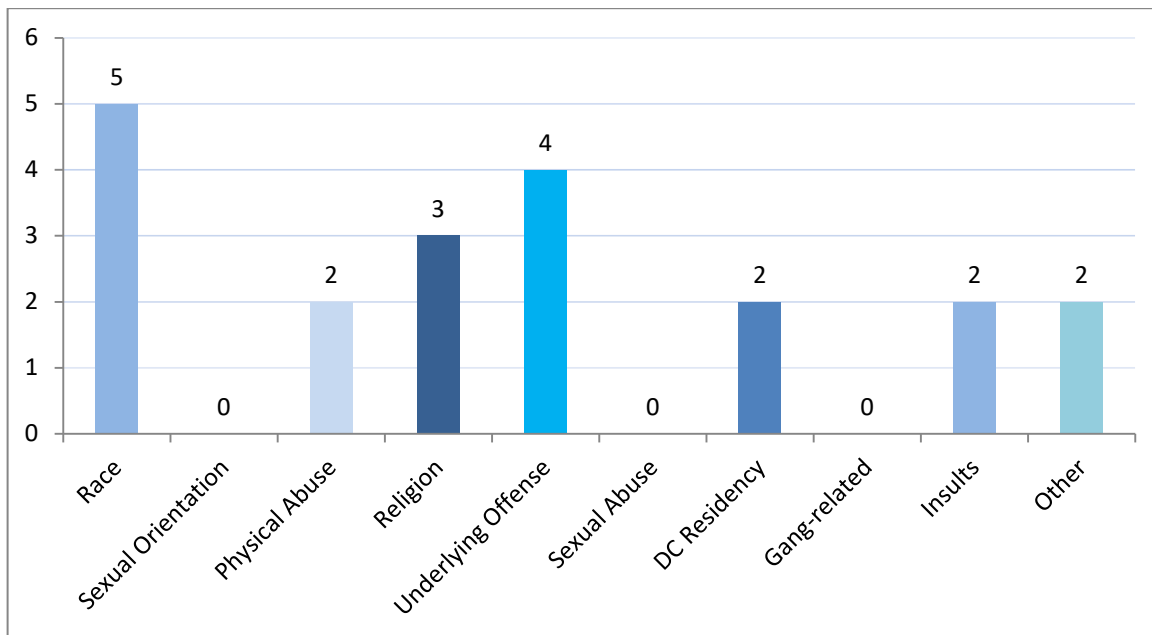
**Have you ever been harassed, threatened or abused by other inmates at Rivers CF?**

Answered: 52 Skipped: 11



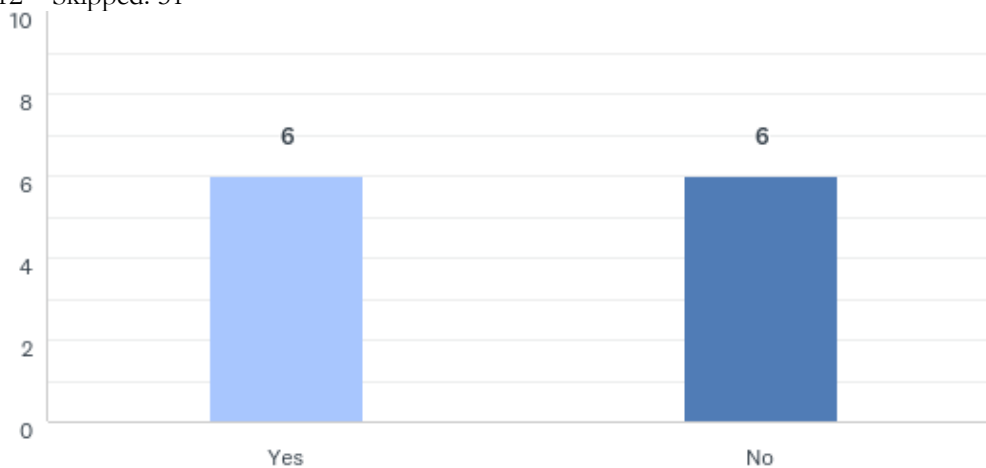
**If yes, what did it involve? (check all that apply)**

Answered: 10 Skipped: 53



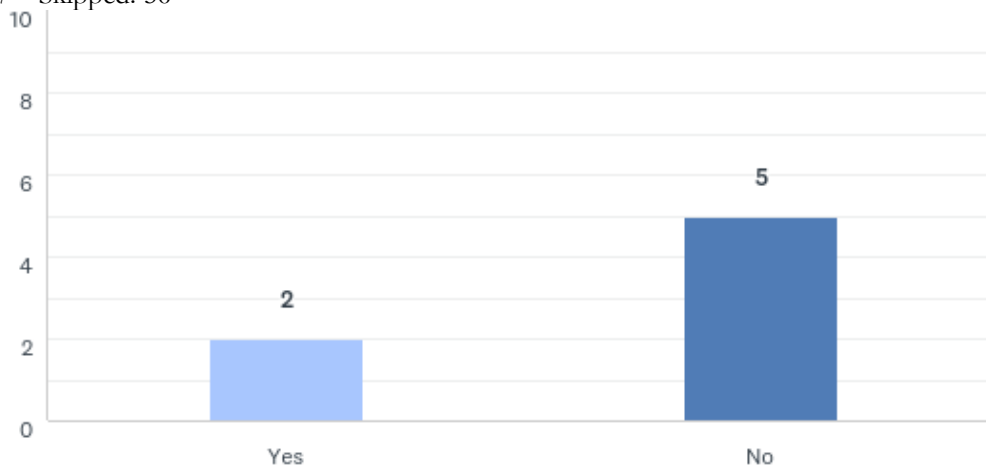
**If yes, did you report it?**

Answered: 12 Skipped: 51



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

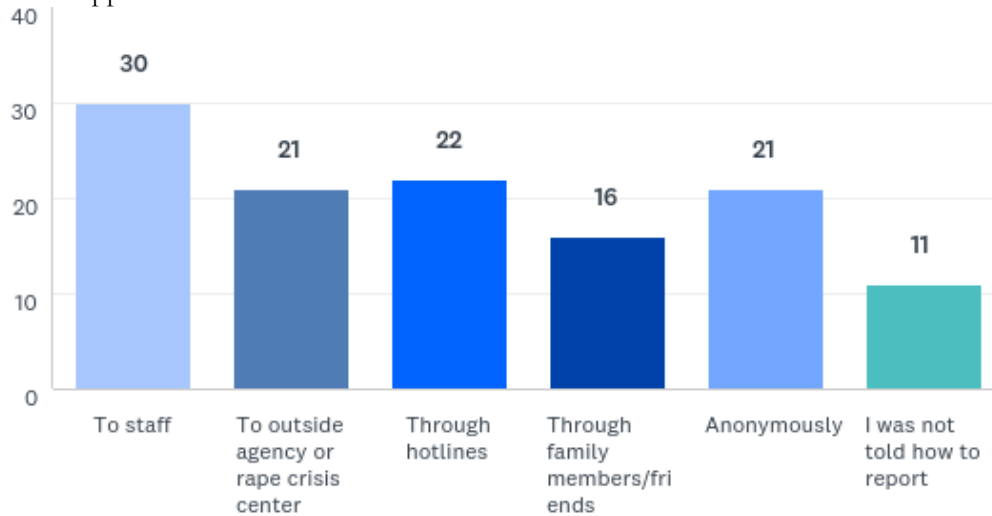
Answered: 7 Skipped: 56





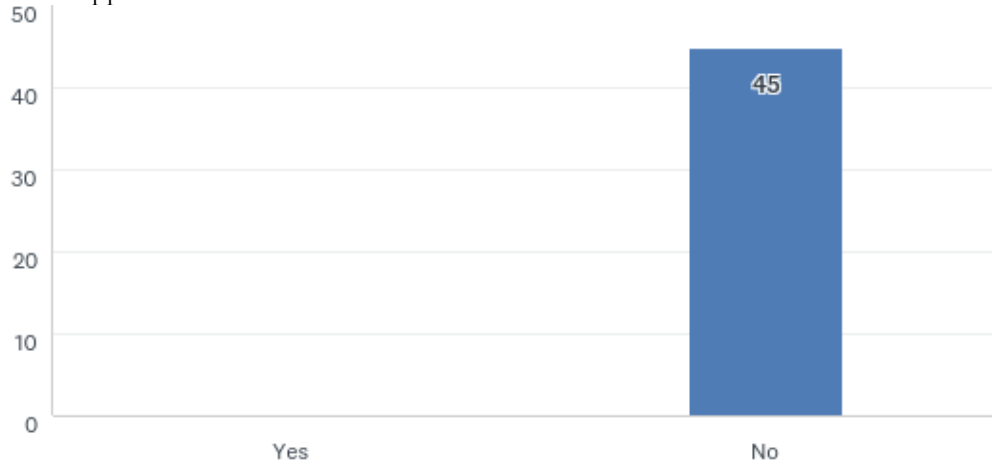
**Were you told that you could report sexual abuse or sexual harassment in any of the following ways:**

Answered: 38 Skipped: 25



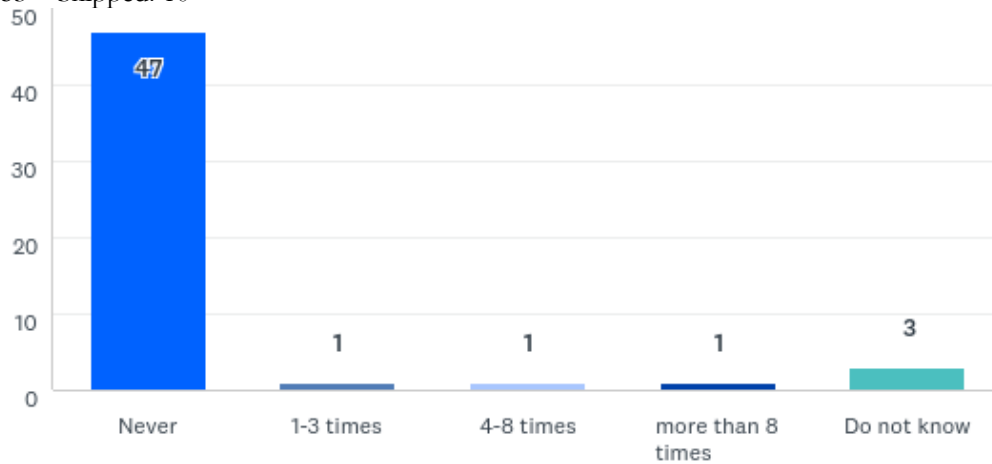
**Have you ever reported sexual abuse or sexual harassment while at Rivers CF?**

Answered: 45 Skipped: 18



**How many times have you been placed in four-point restraints at Rivers CF?**

Answered: 53 Skipped: 10

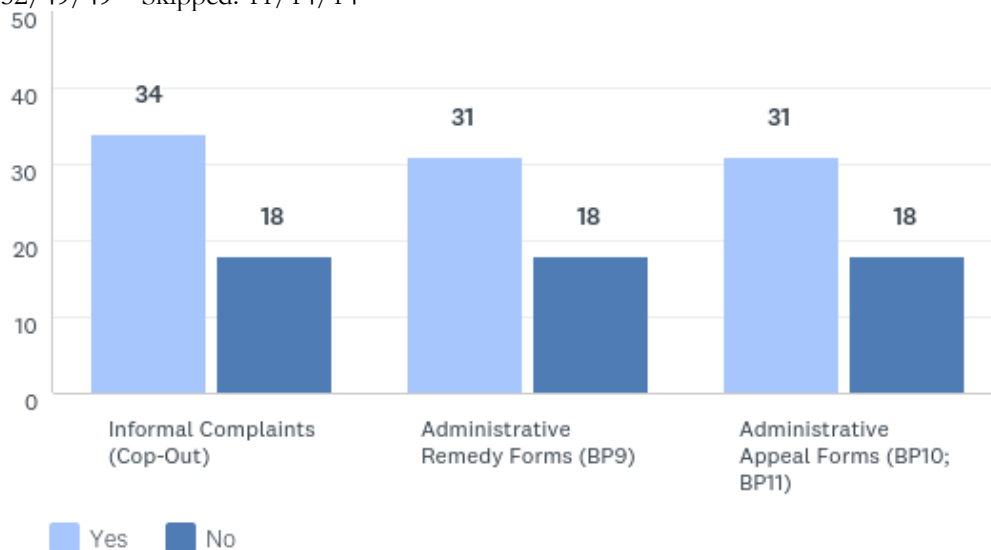


**Is there anything else you would like to share about safety or use of restraints at Rivers CF?**

Responses
About safety- It's 10 to 1 Spanish to Black and at any given time we can be harmed
Officers dragged and slammed me last time fighting
Not here
At times I do feel my safety is at risk. I'm or we are surrounded by a thousand Mexicans. So at any given time anything may happen. If you not here you wouldn't fully understand.
I did not know about that, we are not animals.
The safety here at Rivers is none. Not enough numbers in officers most all older women very few men and very few are young men. The Spanish population tells the staff what they are and not doing , upon they're grouping up ( ganging up)
On occasions I and friends have been threatened but I did fear strongly over my safety enough to report. Once in a while my crime can cause issues.
I did get a "nick" on the back of my hand from cuffs that were too sharp in the RHU but it wasn't worth a stitch at medical so I didn't report it.
Needs improvement
Officer at Hazelton revealed info to another inmate, putting me at risk. I'm trying to get together a complaint.
Rivers is stressful
Told by staff that could have kept issue in house, didn't have to tell family attorney but they didn't do anything until told attorney.
Every time there's an incident on the yard they lock us out there to get killed, cause they too scared to control the Mexicans.

**Do you normally have access to the following:**

Answered: 52/49/49 Skipped: 11/14/14



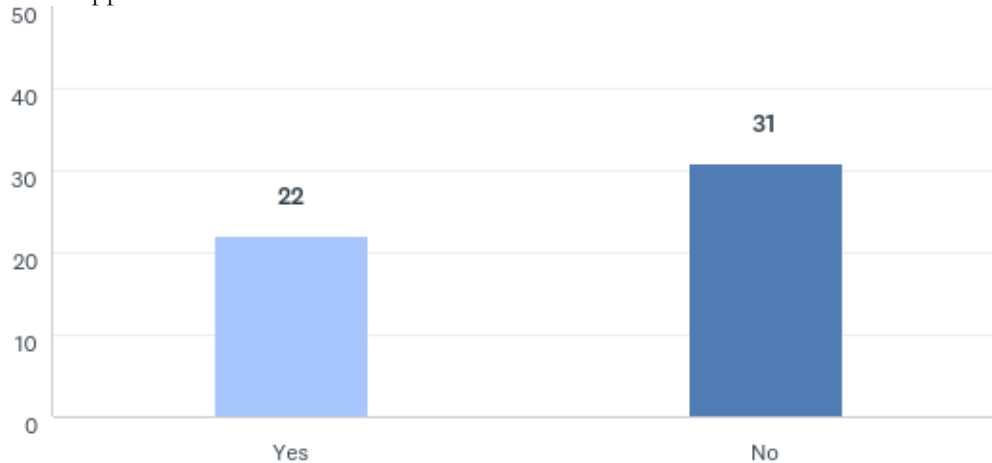
**If you checked no to any of the above, please explain:**

Responses
It is totally difficult to receive almost anything that will benefit us in any form
We have to wait for the counselor to come back to work
Don't have the slightest idea of how and where to file a complaint
If so, I haven't seen it
Need to go to counselor for them and they try to settle the matter or block it, whatever you want to call it
They never give you one when you asked
Because you got to ask for them they either don't have none or don't answer the button

We have to wait for it.
Must get from counselor, not easy sometimes
The only BP-9 and 10's that you can get are through your counselors. When I followed one process all the way through I was able to obtain them.
Not in standard with BOP policy
Staff is unfamiliar with the forms. R.C.I has their own set of complaint forms when you submit them no return or result. Disappears in someone's trash can.
Ask officer, counselor or case manager have them sitting by desk.
They lock it in an office and not come to work.
Dropped the issue after waiting too long. Religious program, I was refused.

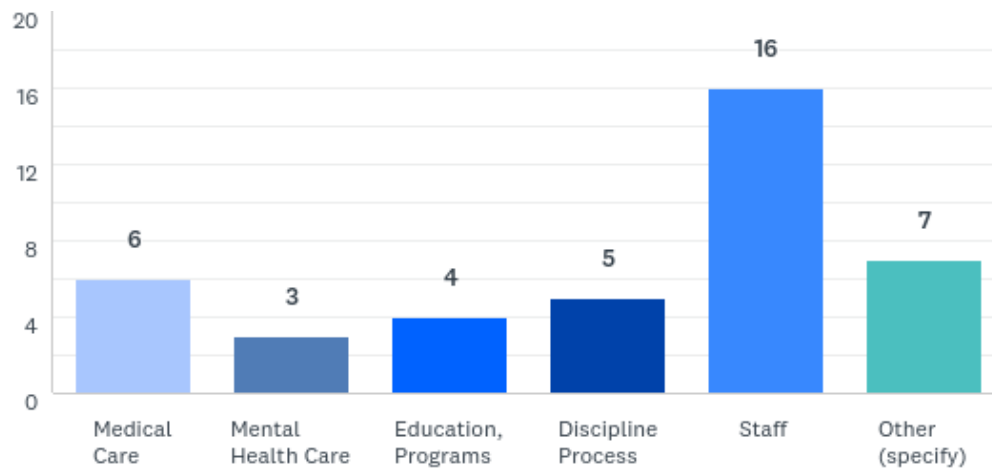
### Have you ever used the grievance process at Rivers CF?

Answered: 53 Skipped: 10



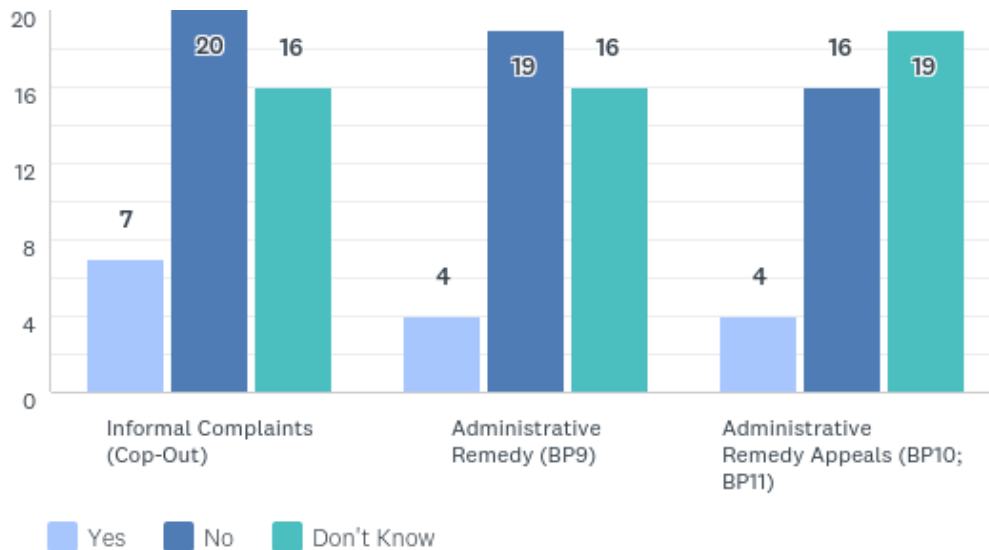
### If you used the grievance process at Rivers CF, what was the reason?

Answered: 28 Skipped: 35



**Do you feel that the following are generally dealt with fairly at Rivers CF?**

Answered: 44 Skipped: 19



**Please provide examples of why the grievance process is fair or unfair at Rivers CF:**

Responses
Never got my past counselor, she shut it down and it didn't go any further
Too long to respond to issues, no detailed investigation, staff covers for staff, no change with staff attitude towards inmates.
All you got to do is follow the process
Jail days 560 days.
A staff member violated my rights and individual privileges by clear and convincing evidence, however RCI ignored the facts as only to protect the staff member, and as consequence I have been denied access to educational program unit and other important needs including working extra hours.
Problem was solved, came to an understanding.
I feel like you never get a fair result is because most of the staff are some kin or friends.
Long delays in responses.
The grievance process here at Rivers CF is unfair because the administrative always agree with their staff
After filing for disciplinary process the warden, officer, and the B.O.P all did not follow through with any investigation.
My response to the BP-8 and BP-9 was copy and pasted. No effort to resolve this issue. Was told all BP-10/11 only address good conduct time issues. If it isn't a good conduct time issue, it is not bothered with.
I think that the process could be so much easier if a unit officer would just make herself more available to the inmate population. It is so difficult to get in to see her and to try to obtain any information about the status of your grievance procedure that it is unreal. It is so bad that it makes you want to give up on trying to exhaust the administrative remedy process.
Nothing is done about anything.
It takes too long, and is not backed or governed by BOP policy.
Complaints don't go anywhere, fall on deaf ears.
Most of staff here are related or known each other for years.
They never look at my defense, they already had their mind set. Was very unfair, never told me that I could present witnesses, and when I did it was too late.
I've a deferred purchase n commissary
Because they still do it.
When I went sent the admin remedy, the paperwork went to the SHU person/staff rather than the person who handles these matters.

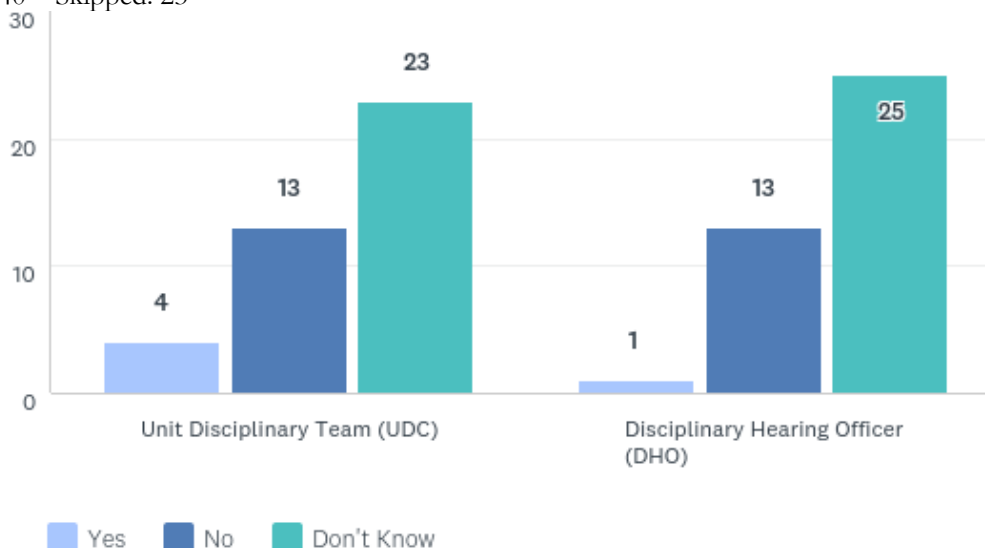
Don't do nothing for you
A white officer called me a n-word and they just let her go to another GEO Facility (2016 June). A female CO grab my penis on camera and they told me they didn't believe me and to shut up and out their office; I felt lonely and hurt.
They don't ever let you win.

**Is there anything else you would like to share about the grievance process?**

Responses
I have been told in both a step 1 (warden) and step 2 (GEO) that as inmates we are not allowed to see ANY GEO policy statements that relate to our own inmate accounts. In the Library they (GEO) removed chapters 1-4 in the policy statement book and have told us that we are not allowed to see any policy statements from those sections.
RCI needs to be fair when resolving issues raised by inmates.
Not helpful at all, dies in a file.
As of right now I have a grievance in process about an incident report that was written up wrong I have yet to get a response.
I filed a grievance about my personal property when i got here on Feb. 21, 2019; R and D staff confiscated and the Administrative never respond.
It's all unfair in its handling from the (in-house) Rivers and their officer with BOP representative not investigating the complaint filed.
Once I filed a complaint and I was threatened with the SHU due to other people's complaints.
See above answer on the overwhelming difficulty of attempting to see Mrs. Journigan, the administrative remedy clerk. Sometimes she is in her office even as you can see her reflection moving in the glass but she tells the person that answers the door speaker that she is unavailable anyway, "come back tomorrow" or "come back Monday" she will say on a Friday. She is basically useless.
Takes too long and does not work.
It's a waste of time, they don't try to listen to you, then send you to BP-10 when you only have 20 days and there is no time.
RCI does not use any complaint forms as in B.O.P facilities
food service , security
I don't think they go anywhere.
The warden Clerk Ms. Jernigan always tell black people she don't want to accept our grievance if it's something about her officer. They ask me to drop the shot and they would let me leave but they lied.
Need outside people overseeing.
Hard to understand- 2 different processes -- Rivers and BOP don't get response re employee conduct

**Do you feel that the disciplinary decisions are fair from the following:**

Answered: 40 Skipped: 23

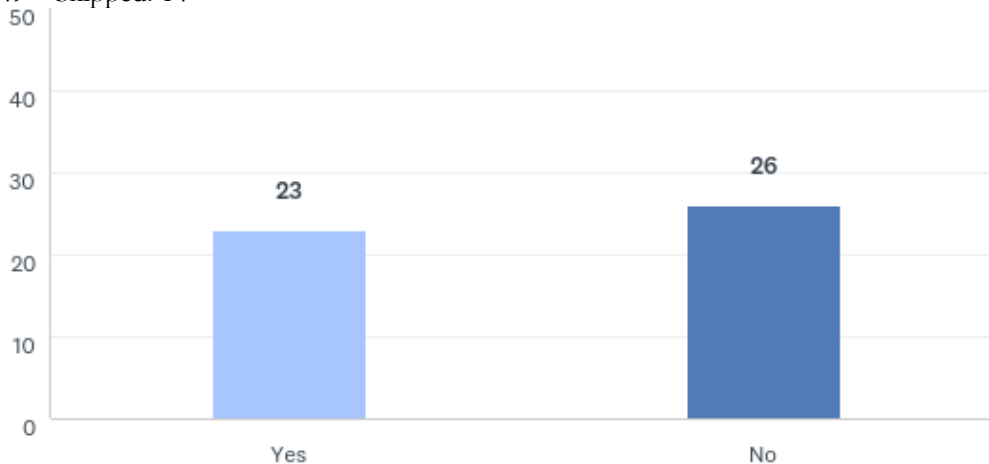


### Is there anything else you would like to share about disciplinary decisions at Rivers CF?

Responses
Because the DHO been working here since Rivers opened she was an officer, counselor, and case manager. She may already have personal issues with inmates
I don't know
Better staff training
The disciplinary decisions are not fair because the DHO is on site which she/he is supposed to come from a neutral site, also these staff members are either some kin or good friends.
The officer of UDC and DHO upon my experience has lied and known it, and continue in their lies take GT even when they know it was wrong
I don't have any experience being in any serious trouble here so I don't know. To what standard or lack thereof is staff held to here at Rivers? AND do we have a right as inmates to be able to have a copy of staff's disciplinary process? Some staff act very unprofessional here. Not all, but some, Do they have any disciplinary guidebook or rules?
In violation of constitutional law
See DHO, considered guilty before chance to defend your case. long waiting period, 10-11 months to get transferred
I feel that the process is one-sided where a you are in a no-win situation
Based on other folks, some folks get lenient, but depends one guy to the next
Because they don't want to listen to the problem and always think what their officers say is right
Never had a problem with unit disciplinary team. Take too much, visits, phone, commissary, take three privileges for one incident, it's unfair.
No attention to deadlines - especially 24 hours.

### Are meetings with your unit team at Rivers CF generally helpful?

Answered: 49 Skipped: 14



### Please explain:

Responses
They are very disrespectful, absolutely unprofessional, untrained, not qualified and don't assist you with any issues or needs you may have etc.
Everything I ask for they be on top of
They do not want to help you when you need to do things they talk to you very disrespectful, they do not care ever
Since my time here my unit team is fine
To begin with, it's hectic and so difficult to have a meeting with the Unit Team. Most issues are always passed on, and in some cases, the unit team appears as if they don't know what to do.
If they demand they are helpful, but if they can't answer questions they stonewall.
my unit team shows a big interest in my well-being also I can talk to anyone of them if I'm having problem at home or in prison
They seem like they're okay. I don't approve of how they handled my current situation. Other than that they're approachable.
Everybody has been helpful

A unit team staff assists me in whatever information I need, except for what programs do I have to take to get away from here.
Because the only thing is they want you to do is programs every review is about program
She a nice lady helpful ABE program
Don't help you. Lie to you to keep you here
They do not know in how , when or where the acts, process needs done, how do they attend to what little they do know, they do not care nor know their job.
Very Basic. 45 seconds and can't answer simple questions.
I'm still trying to understand my last unit team where I was informed I was going to "camp level" status when I have two years left to go. So I stated why not send me to camp now with 4 years left so I can better enjoy and do my time. Now my case manager has reversed herself and her statement since I put in for to be moved to camp now instead of with two years left as she stated to me in my team meeting. Why tell me I'm going to camp to finish my time when now I'm obviously not??? Does that make any sense at all? Is her statement merely an attempt to better control me for another two years?
This where I express my discomforts and problems at and for the better part hear me out
They don't have information for you. No programming and no plan
No one knows how to get anything done.
At times they are and at times they are not.
In SHU no one gives you definite answers, don't stop to answer questions, very rude/disrespectful, walk past your door.
Haven't been able to speak with a case manager concerning my release conditions.
They don't explain anything to you. They make you sign the document and there are things that don't explain like the treaty transfer.
"sort of" in C building
They are poorly trained and inexperienced with job responsibilities.
You are rushed through the unit team process and not given a clear explanation for the questions or reasons for the meeting.
They don't have time for us.
Once get back to RHU, unit team in a rush & blow you off, since transfer in process they're in my face, has improved in my situation in terms of communication, but otherwise "I'll get you later" & don't come back for three days.
Because they don't like DC Inmate, they say we are ignorant, hard head, uneducated, and selfish.
I don't have a problem with these folks. They know me and know I'll write them up. My unit team isn't that bad.
They don't provide answers, "that's just how we do it."

**Is there anything else you would like to share about staff at Rivers CF?**

Responses
They have to give my points
They are completely unprofessional and most of them are not qualified to work in a prison setting
Everyone unit team isn't as helpful as they could be
Okay, not the best, not the worst. Isolated incidents with different officers
Few are abusive, other than that many of them are doing their jobs right and professional
Better training
The staff as a whole can show more professionalism
Some are rude and disrespectful but majority are nice.
They are very unprofessional and need more training to be honest I really don't feel safe here.
Most but not all staff here at Rivers is disrespectful and unprofessional.
Very disrespectful, overworked, judgmental.
Can't get ABE program while in RHU.
To work in corrections it has to be a passion most staff at Rivers CF are not passionate about their job so it will bring conflict and issues.
Some are very disrespectful to us inmates here talk to us in any type of way.
They will not do anything to help assist in correcting dates, release, transfers all this because of what the administration has and is instructing them (staff) to do or not do
Very disrespectful and ill-informed. Very unorganized and policies change day to day. Staffing is one of the true

horrors of Rivers.
A lot of the officers don't know how to deal with inmates, their communication skills are bad
Some are good, but you do have those that are unprofessional and disrespectful
BOP rep Mr. Brooks good help
Lack of info from case management
disrespectful - rude - unprofessional - racist
Everyone is humane
Some of them try their best based on the situation.
They're very unprofessional in all their dealing from day to day. This in how they speak, with and to one. They don't know how to do the job they're hired to do
Yes, they don't respect DC inmate, they strip search us coming out the kitchen every day, please send me back to the feds.
They are real disrespectful.
A lot of the white CO's are racists and the black CO's don't say anything because they fear of losing their jobs.
You go up against one, you have to deal with everybody.
Sick of the chaplain, programs get suspended for the convenience of the chaplain.

**Is there anything you would like to share about hygiene, meals, or commissary?**

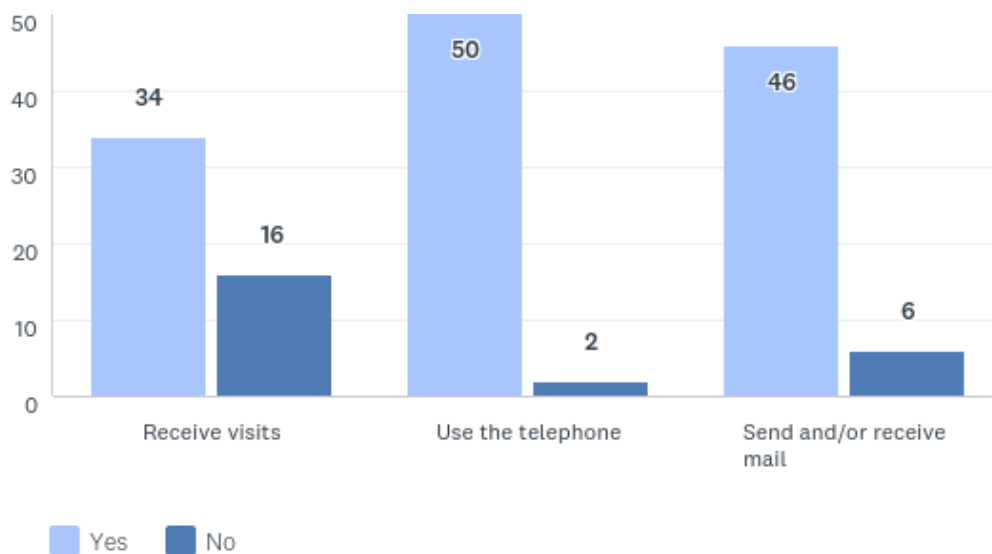
Responses
Hygiene - buy it yourself. No commissary. Meals are terrible " I wouldn't feed it to my dog" commissary - very limited in RHU.
Food is terrible we have beans and rice every day.
Meals are the same, not much very small portions.
There were no hygiene items provided to me at all. I've had to purchase all hygiene from day one of arriving here. The meals are trash they completely unhealthy, poorly prepared, and totally insufficient and do not meet the BOP National Menu. Commissary is absolutely too expensive and it doesn't provide a wide variety of a selection
It's okay, it's just the food, I can't eat it. They only let us order chips, all that gone in a week, probably less than that. I don't eat the trays here
More good food, everyday its beans and rice with everything
Commissary overly priced. Only receive 2 pair of whites, two pair of uniforms for one week. Yes, I'm a diabetic they give us bread and rice everyday they feed us like we are from Mexico.
Food here is absolutely terrible... no taste, no seasoning. Beans and rice every single meal. Small serving portions. Commissary overpriced must spend money to make up for lack of meals
Hygiene good, meals suck, commissary very limited in RHU
The food here is trash. We are fed beans and rice every single day. The food is truly horrible. Commissary is extremely high. They feed us like we all are Mexicans. If a person doesn't have any financial support, it's really going to be hard for him. The commissary isn't affordable and the food isn't good at all at times it taste old.
meals - the worst - Spanish guys meals - beans and rice
RCI provides no hygiene items like toothpaste, toothbrush, shampoo, bar soap, combs, and other items including razors to inmates. The meals provided is poor and commissary items are twice the price the BOP prices
Hygiene- good meals- portion (could be protein) too small, low grade, cheap commissary- too limited, too expensive commissary too expensive and job pay too little
The meds RCI are not good at all they serve a very bad grade of food, also they serve beans, and rice every day of the week.
The meals are continuously and served to cater the Hispanic culture. We get no juice, no real foods, all frozen foods, no sugar, no real fruits are served, or slices of bread.
Meals are written on the board in the unit, but when we go to the cafeteria it wasn't what was on the menu. Slice turkey is shredded turkey, breakfast, lunch, dinner, we get one slice of bread. Commissary is too high in pricing, compared to DC Jail.
For the most part it's all right except commissary there certain things you can't have back here
Bring chemicals in every morning, have to buy hygiene from commissary, haircuts @ barbershop
Hygiene is so/so but could be ALOT better. Meals are the worst I had since I been in for 3yrs. The meals are designed for the Mexican. We eat beans and rice every damn day. It's a shame the way they feed us. They give us baby portions and sometimes they won't feed us if we don't make it in time cause our building was last.



Commissary is way too high (more than the BOP) and never changes. They never change our linen or clothes.
The portions of food are too small and the commissary is too expensive
Commissary is charging more for items than any other institution. The food, meals, is mainly beans and rice everyday
Commissary too expensive, meals lack of food, lack of clothes which is under clothes
Good
Hygiene isn't given daily, meals are very small portions and is often cold.
Commissary is overly priced we only receive two pair of whites and uniforms to wear for seven days a week meal- > I'm a diabetic and they give us white rice, bread, potatoes, beans with every meal with salt on tray
We are being charged for everything from the moment a U.S citizen step foot on/in Rivers. Their prices are very high. The times are very limited and they are in partnership with meals of food service dept. here
The other big horror of Rivers. Food is usually of poor quality and not to par of the Federal Prisons. Commissary has good selection but VERY EXPENSIVE. Up to 50% higher.
Meals here are almost unbelievable. Try to understand. You have a grown man who maybe has been working all morning long somewhere here at Rivers. When he gets to lunch there is the equivalent of two Wendy's chicken nuggets on his tray and he's told by staff he cannot have another tray just the one he has. That is the reality of our situation.
I think they need to put walls in the shower between the shower head they have 4 showers heads and only one inmates at a time take a shower which case long lines and tension. They need a new food administration someone whose going to be flexible and not just cater to the Mexicans, lower the price and get better quality of shoes if we're going to be charged top dollar they're selling us boots for \$90.00 and BOP you can get timberland for 100.00
Meals are below average, consists of rice and beans every day.
No help with hygiene. Too much beans/rice , very small portions of meat. Prices are much higher.
Overpriced commissary hygiene- Warmer water repetitive- meals
Commissary is too expensive and they really don't have anything on there and also they only let you get a few items or certain things the meals here are rice and beans everyday no matter what they feed us we get rice and beans with it and also I'll portion of food be small.
Commissary is terrible, especially the SHU, nothing but snacks, stuff you see in BOP is far different/everything is catered to the Hispanics (with regards to food) always beans and rice, not like national menu, small portions, lose dramatic weight back here due to food they serve.
Hardly any cleaning supplies, commissary is twice as high as BOP and they still pay us BOP wages. Meals are not well prepared and unbalanced.
Two boxers, two t-shirts, two socks per year. No personal hygiene unless you have money in commissary. Rice, Beans, no fresh fruit, no fresh vegetables, little protein.
BETTER FOOD commissary ok- more variety.
BOP pass hygiene kits once a month, not RCI.
Commissary is a bit high and food service is very poor.
The meals at rivers is not good for a person, the commissary it is too high, not good.
Commissary markup is too high.
Hygiene is okay, meals are better than BOP. Commissary no experience yet, better then BOP.
The worst I have ever had in my life.
Nice if more options in SHU -can only get one of the things particularly food items.
They always serve process food for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. And it's always Mexican food. Commissary the items are too high and a lot of the products be old and expired.
Meals are a joke. Rice, beans, tortilla, every f...ing day.
They don't give you enough, if you don't have anybody helping you on the outside.
The meals are no good here the food have no taste to it and the commissary is too high.
Hygiene- laundry not changed, staff did not say anything to cell mate meals-- too much Spanish food, salsa, beans, rice, illegible writing illegible writing

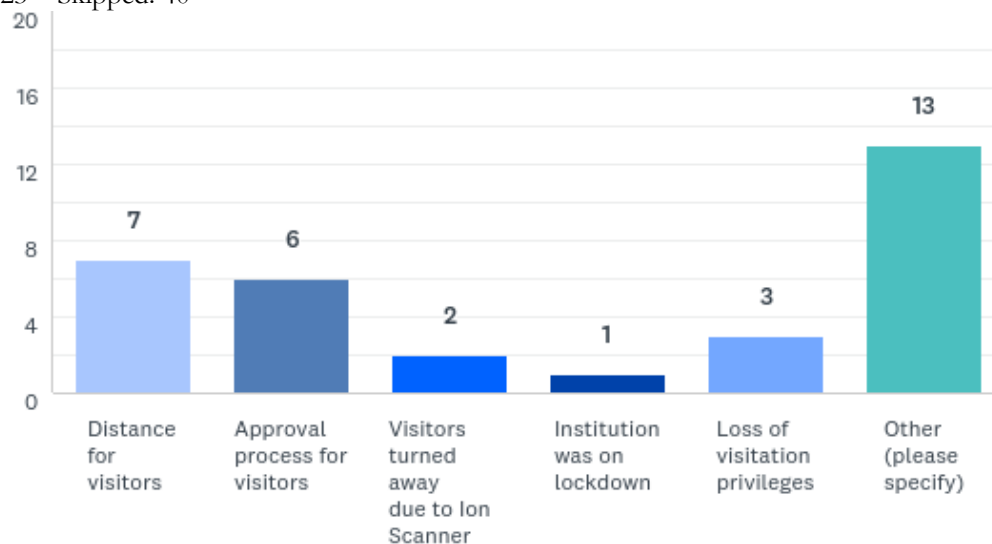
**In the past 12 months have you been able to:**

Answered: 54 Skipped: 9



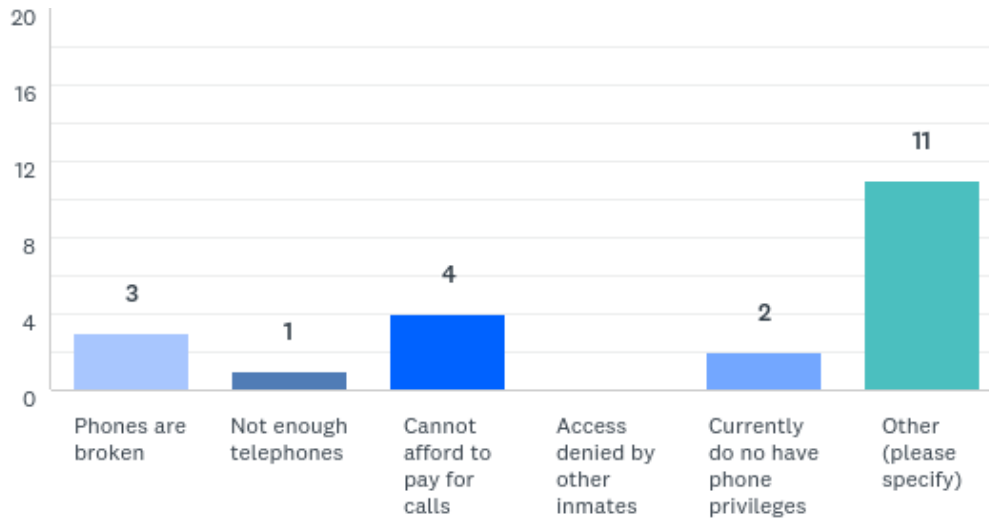
**If you have not been able to receive visits at Rivers CF, why?**

Answered: 23 Skipped: 40



**If you have not been able to use the telephone at Rivers CF, why?**

Answered: 16 Skipped: 47



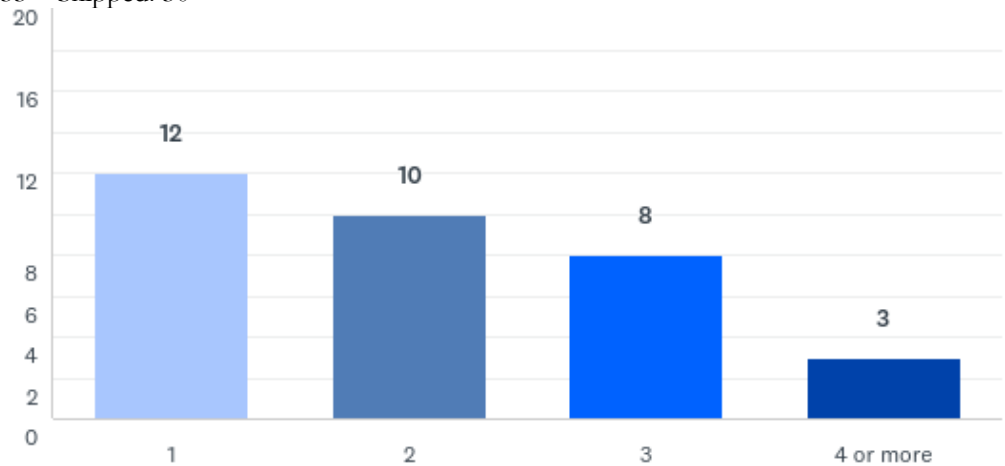
**Please leave any comments you would like to share about visitation and communication at Rivers CF:**

Responses
Issues before on letters
Here at RCI the mail system is piss poor sometimes you may receive you mail and then other times you may not. They have literally lost mail that belonged to me! Also I have individuals that have returned their visitation forms and we have not been given any reason why they were turned down.
Run out of minutes in less than a week, it's costly. That why I don't really have time to program I'm always on a visit working out, using the phone.
The visitation here is also bad. I say that because this supposed to be a low security institution but we must wear boots, institution boots even if you have a soft shoe pass. I worked hard to get my points to a low, and requested Allenwood, PA and was sent here. Why? A low institution is a privilege. This is an immigration place.
Visitation scanners often give false reads on babies and older people.
Making collect calls one a problem to loved ones, since I've been here I have yet to have a private phone call with family.
Calls do cost a lot.
No email.
The machines prices are very high and too many times no product (items) in machine upon visitations
Use of drug machine on visitors creates false positives and staff do not follow the machines instruction statement.
I was at Allenwood low in Pennsylvania for 10 years and able to get SOME visits. Down here none. It is simply too far for my family to come. I put in for to be moved to camp closer to home when I was informed by my case manager, Harren, I was going to be moved to eventually and now that won't be happening I'm told.
Overpriced.
Communication issues is that phone calls to DC cost too much a minute.
Having issues with staff getting PSI info to place my kids on visitation list.
Good I heard.
Pass out mail quicker here than DC jail. 2-3 days vs 2-3 weeks.
I would like to have more phone time and the calls are less.
I've never had no problems with visitation, but they shouldn't keep sending people back who came all this way because of what pants they're wearing.

**Note:** The next four questions are only applicable to respondents with children under 18 years old.

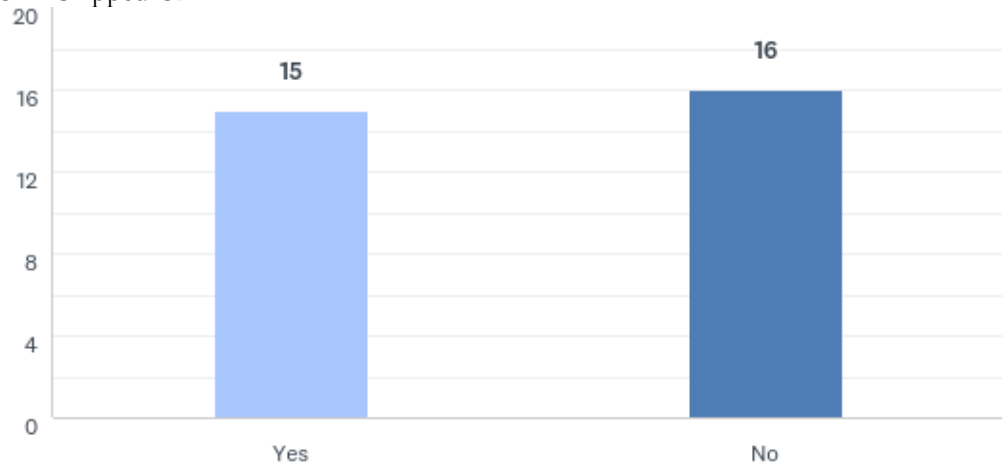
**How many children do you have under 18 years old?**

Answered: 33    Skipped: 30



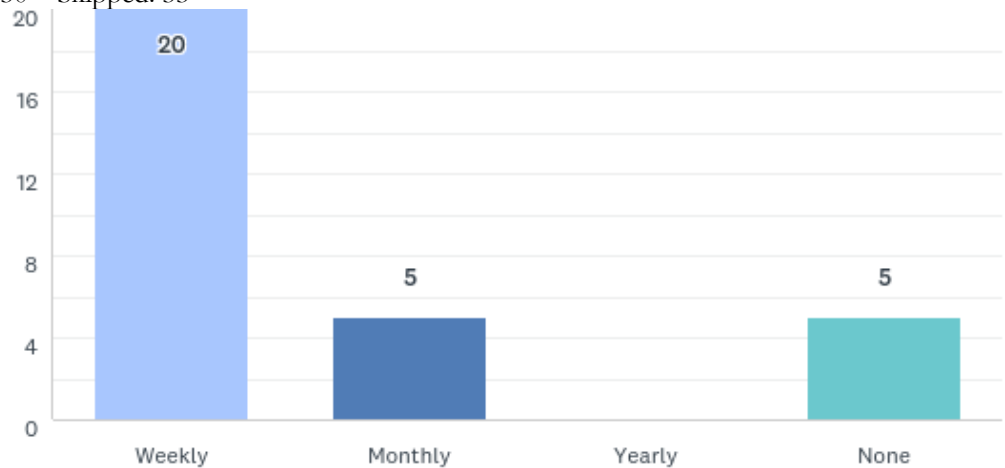
**Have your child(ren) been able to visit you at Rivers CF?**

Answered: 31    Skipped: 32



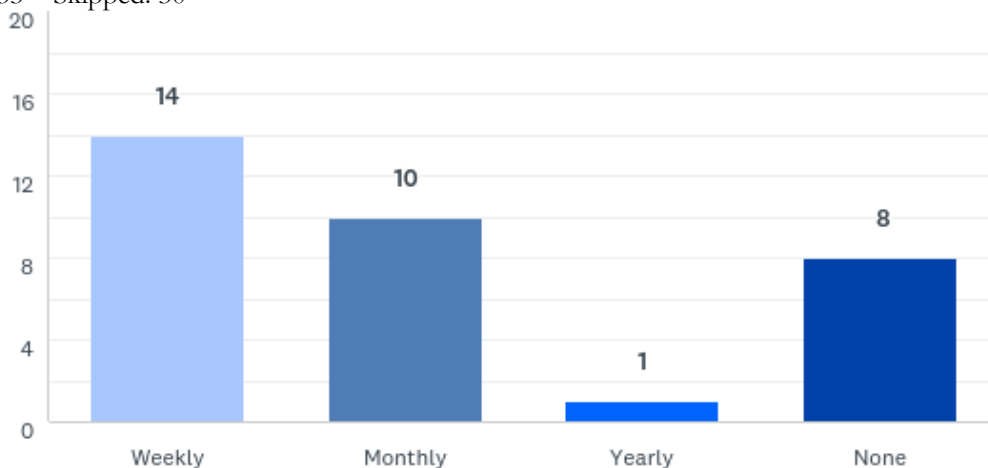
**How often do you speak on the phone with your child(ren)?**

Answered: 30    Skipped: 33



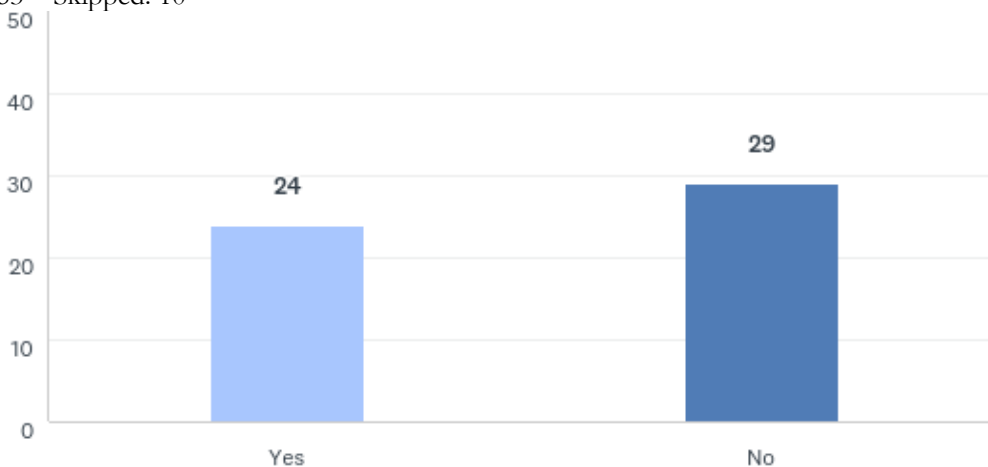
### How often do you write to or receive letters from your child(ren)?

Answered: 33 Skipped: 30



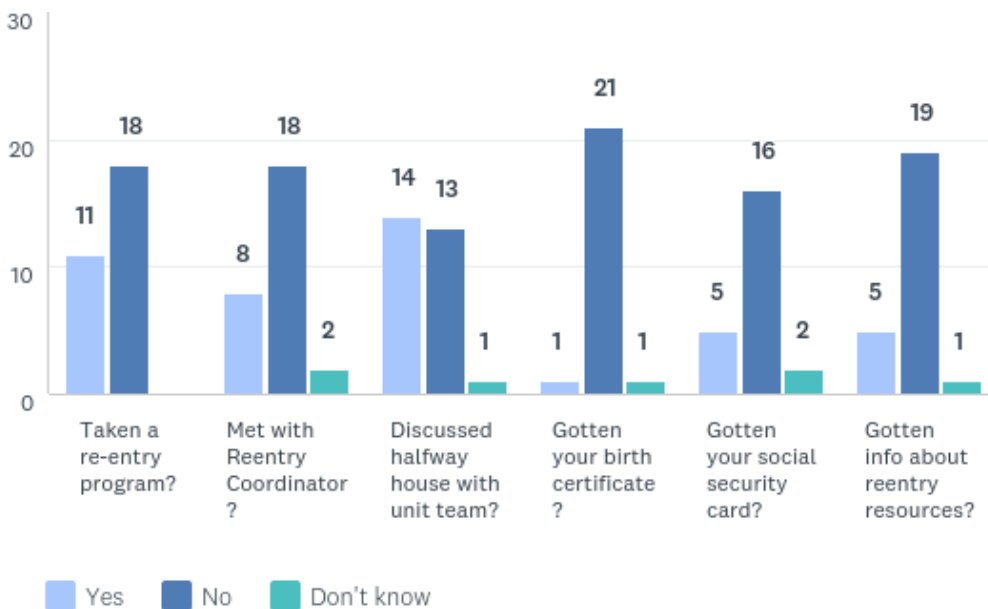
### Are you within 18 months of release?

Answered: 53 Skipped: 10



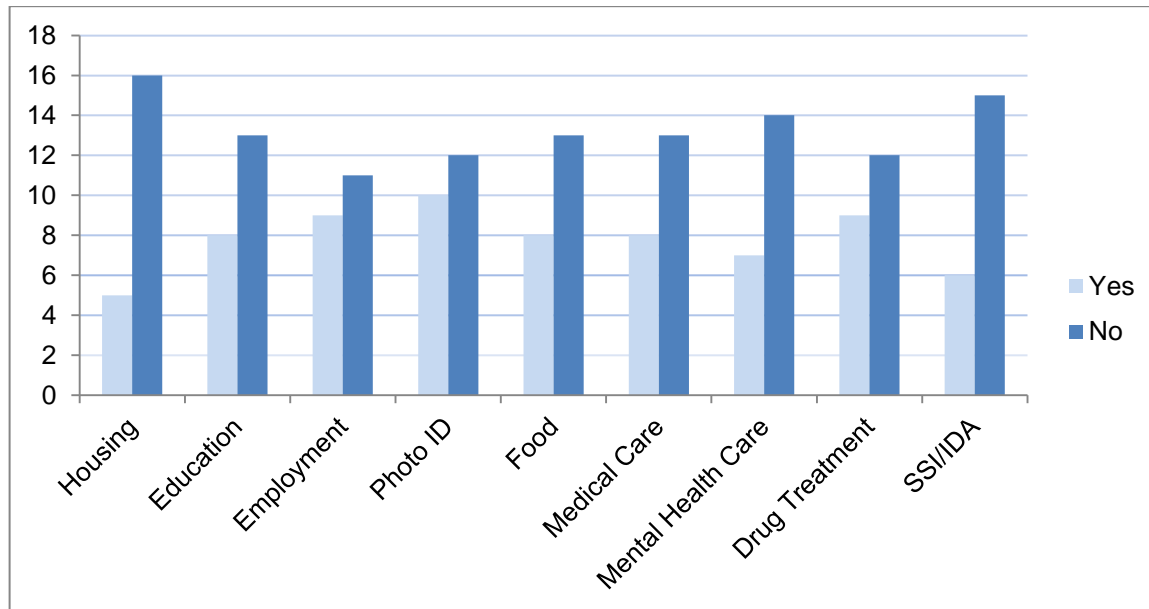
### If you are within 18 months of release, have you:

Answered: 29 Skipped: 34



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

Answered: 22 Skipped: 41

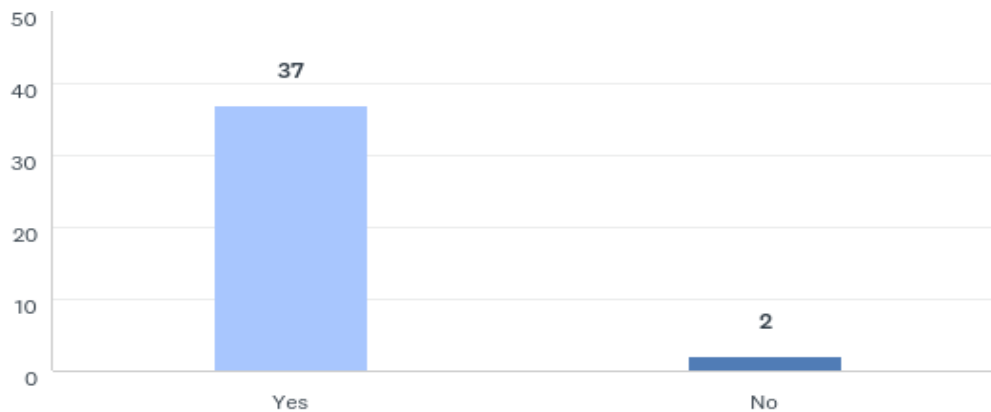


**Is there anything else you would like to share about pre-release services at Rivers CF?**

Responses
COC program very good. But the pre-release program is outdated. Under served. Teacher Mrs. Green is very disrespectful towards inmates
I am within 90 days and they have not put half way house package in yet.
Wants longer than 6 months at halfway house wants like a year or longer at halfway house Second Chance Act work way back to society Doesn't want to be pushed out-- too soon for Halfway House Worried about transition Does not want to return to prison
I don't think they even have one, especially talking with 3 or more people that have a year and under.
I have yet to receive anything relating to pre-release.
Rivers CF hasn't put me in touch with pre-release services.
I've asked the team about why they did not put in for my half way house time yet.
Hasn't applied to me yet as I'm just inside 4 years left to go
They don't provide this information and it's a concerning problem.
Needs a facelift.
Haven't seen anyone concerning this issue.
Have 100% family support, self-employed and qualified for social security benefits
Because transferring, have talked about it but ill unit team @ new facility.
Ms. Green always tell people they are stupid and she will see them when they come back.

**If you had the opportunity to be closer to DC during your incarceration to prepare for re-entry, would you be interested in doing so?**

Answered: 39 Skipped: 24

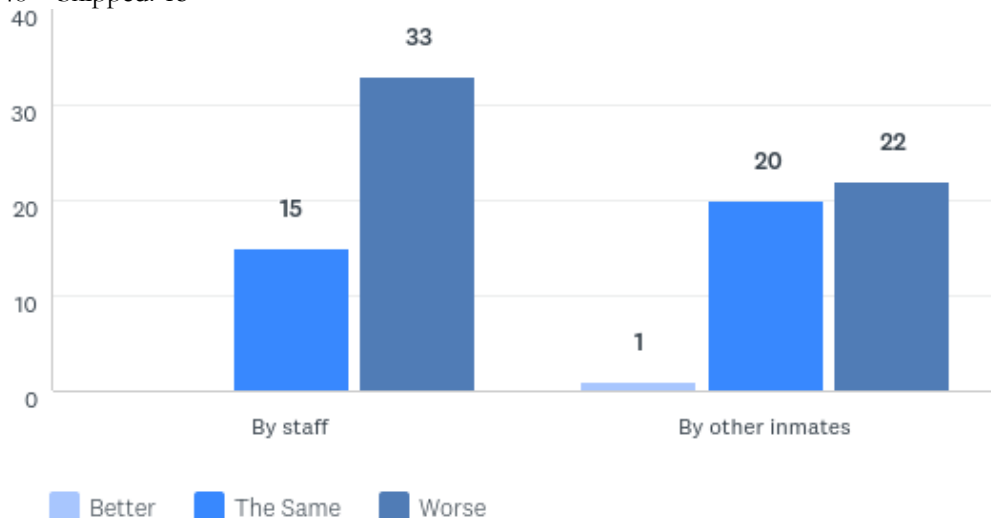


**Please explain why or why not:**

Responses
To be closer to family
Easy for my people to come visit it doesn't matter where I go as long as I'm comfortable, I don't have that much time.
Close to family and resources.
Do not want to go to Hope Village. Been to VOA in Baltimore- nice out there. I want a new halfway house in DC.
To give me and my family a better chance to see each other more.
I love home.
Would like for pre-release programming to start sooner. 18 months not enough time to finish. Would like 1 year in halfway house
I would just like to be close to home, because of my parents can't really travel far from their health issues so I would like to be closer to my parent
Because it would better prepare me for my community and society. Establishing jobs and building family networking.
Benefits, better programming.
I am assuming that if I'm closer to home I would have access to more resources since people like you wouldn't have to drive so far.
I would love to be closer to DC before I am released because that would allow me to reconnect with my family and kids.
Petersburg or Cumberland. Better programs that can help me in the real world.
Proper re-entry assistance.
My family.
Want to participate in SOTP and be closer to my release residence of Ohio (parents' house).
Lack of visits here at this facility, lack of programming and education here, lack of religious programs.
May be able to get visits and get an opportunity to take some release preparation courses or get a chance to do some work release programs.
It would be easier to see my family and hopefully more re-entry programming.
I'd like to be given a chance to leave a little better off financially then when I came.
More access to family and resources for re-entry.
So that it won't be a hassle for my family to see me
Feeling of being closer to home, would be a bit smoother, more likely you'll be around more people that's from your neighborhood, visitation (bus charges \$50 for transit for people to come down if not immediate family members).
Feeling safer here than place with African Americans.
Anything getting me closer to my family is a positive step.
I would like to be returned back to Petersburg, VA (Low FCI).
Just don't like it here.
Because if I'm closer to DC I can have a better relation with my family and friends.
The closer we're to the actual sources, the quicker we'll be able to receive need info and act on it.
I would like to build a relationship with my family.

### Compared to other inmates, how do you feel DC inmates are treated at Rivers CF?

Answered: 48 Skipped: 15



Please give an example of better or worse treatment:

Responses
We don't get respect from staff or rec
Their overall treatment of everyone is completely lacking and absolutely unprofessional
Everybody says we get treated better but I don't see that
There are not many activity out here for us there are more activity here for the other race like Mexicans
Less job opportunities, treat us like we are not citizens
Tension level is high, five race riots in my experience. About three good arguments and there will be a race riot here. We're not in favor, badly outnumbered.
Disproportionate numbers, DC guys have bad reputation throughout the system. Lots of gangs. Gang environment structured. They have the upper hand.
For example, I may request to move to an open cell-room first, the staff denies me and then a Spanish inmate requests the same staff to move to the same room, the cell-room will be given to him
Very few DC people. Example is the soccer field.
I just think the fact that we are from the city, and the stuff are of the country it's imbalance of respect
Staff may ignore you or give an aggressive response to whatever you ask. If the Hispanic guys ask then they're most acceptable to listen.
Staff needs to understand that there are DC men can work, can be a good asset to their program. Compared to what I've seen.
Meals, flood in SHU- if I do it they're going to write me up take all my stuff if Mexicans do it they just clean it up.
This is dominantly compound and they pretty much set their way with everything.
Staff here at Rivers treats DC inmates as if we are TRASH, the staff is very disrespectful.
No jobs Race Black and being from DC and population decrease.
population is less DC Inmates so we are often overlooked or under looked
All the activities are for Mexicans, only serving Mexican food in the chow hall and commissary.
the staff , UDO, HDO team, and warden basically treat DC inmates more aggressive with punishment, lock down (RHU, taken off good time, taking privileges, loss of jobs all these DC inmates get done to them.
Other inmates hate me here. They do not like me at all. I'm the wrong color, religion, and politics for this compound which is now almost all Hispanic catholic liberal leftist democrats. An example? How about telling me to kill myself? 50 times a day.
Outcast, black sheep- all 007 and 016 inmates are treated different. If we ask a question about halfway house we are treated as if we are asking the wrong question
The Latino community receives various considerations not given to the blacks (DC).
Favoritism to one group over another
We are not given the same things as the Mexican inmates
Immigrants have the numbers so staff caters to them more
Ratio of DC inmates population is very low



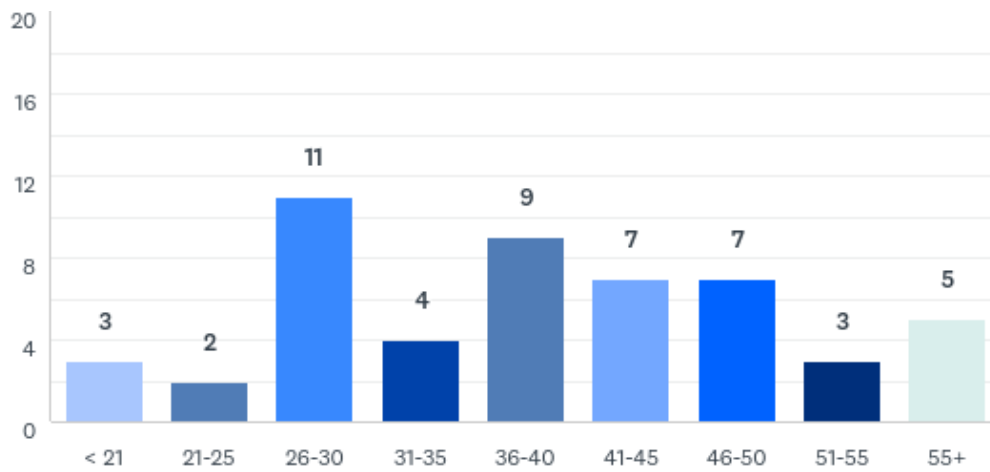
This is an immigration mentality hold up place we the D.C. residents receive same treatment used for them
They are very disrespectful
We seem to be a minority at this institution
The Spanish get everything
feel like it's 50/50 treatment, some staff better b/c DC, other "he's from DC, probably did it" - don't say it, but that vibe
They don't let us celebrate no DC traditions. They have no activities for us, There are no black dishes in the chow hall
They lie and say we start trouble
Staff non-responsive on programs, tension between cellmates, job placement, staff attention, meals

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

Responses
Haven't been here long enough. Would not recommend coming here.
Ever present concerns because of lopsided numbers. But no fear because I've been in and out of prison since age 18, now 44. Incident where black kicked a soccer ball onto the roof, Spanish guys ganged up, staff locked all the inmates in the yard. Worried I'm not able to protect myself. I stay active and alert on the yard.
The food served also is provided as to the needs of Spanish inmates food
For right now that is it
Us being locked down in a low is a problem for me. All these locked doors. If I wanted High security I would go to a Med. or Pen. This location is for DC inmates. I'd rather be back in the BOP. The only good thing here for us is the transportation provided for our family to come see us.
No tension
Staff are very disrespectful to dc inmates and show a lot of respect to the Mexican inmates, all the Mexican inmates get hired for the best jobs first
My time sentence of 9 years is up, I'm to serve 7 yrs 6 months of the 9 years but I also got court ordeal 4 months jail credit now this 1 yr and 2 months plus the 7 1/2 of the 9 yrs leave 6 yrs months to serve of now. I've done so with can I not be released. either take 1 yrs 2 months from the 9 leave 7 year 8 months/ now subtract the 85% on *7% I've done my sentence (serving time)
It is my personal opinion that we are all treated as second class citizens of the United States. We are "nothing" here to Geo Group except inmates who are to be warehoused as cheaply as possible so they, Geo Group, can make a profit. Geo is in business to make money, not spend it on us at all. That is reality.
It could be better
Needs improvement
we are minority number amount the general population
The DC Residents treatment worse
Stressful
They show favoritism to the Mexicans and treat the blacks like trash, they say it's that way cause they get more money for Mexican then blacks. They don't be wanting DC inmates to go back to the BOP.

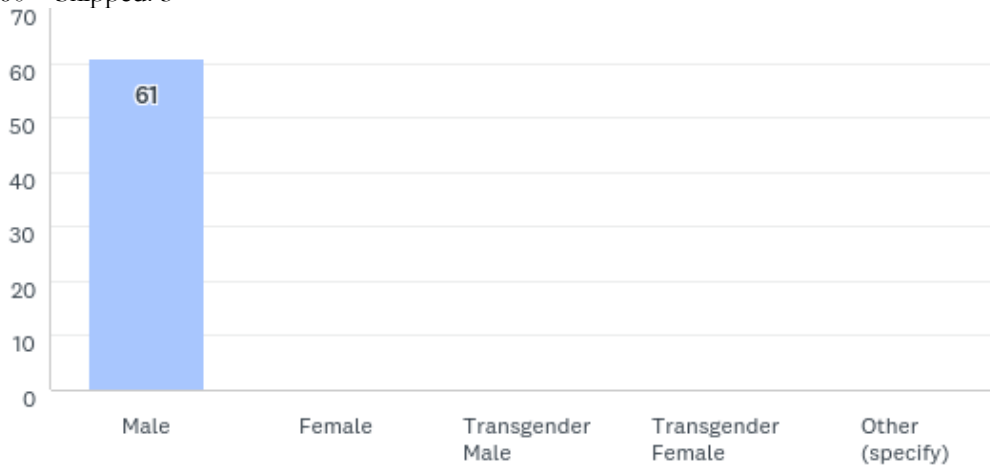
### How old are you?

Answered: 50 Skipped: 13



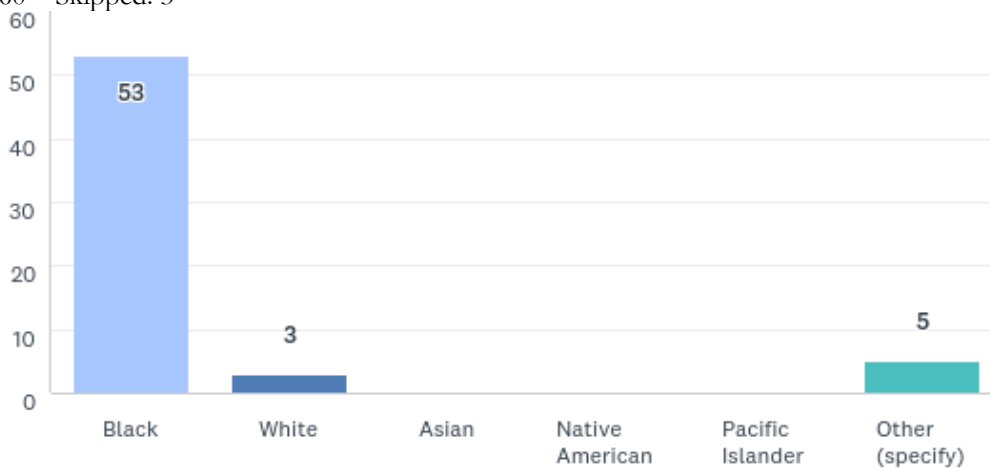
### What is your gender?

Answered: 60 Skipped: 3



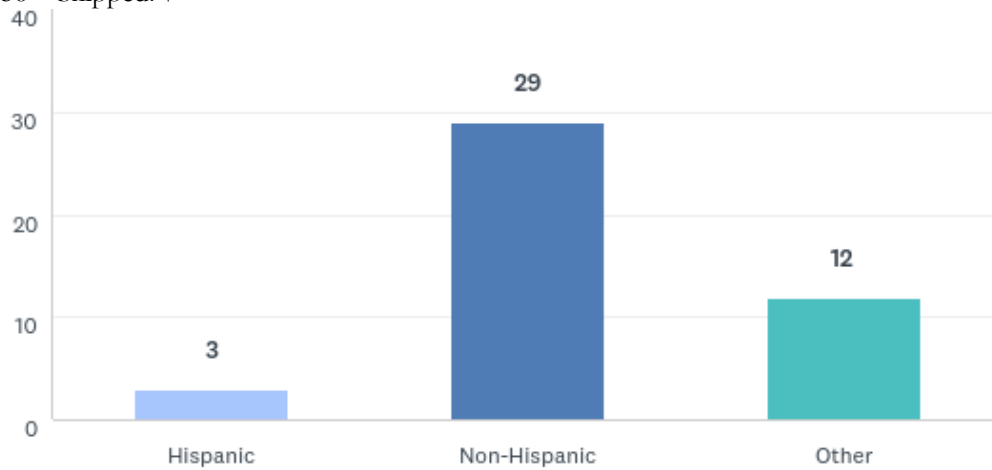
### What is your race?

Answered: 60 Skipped: 3



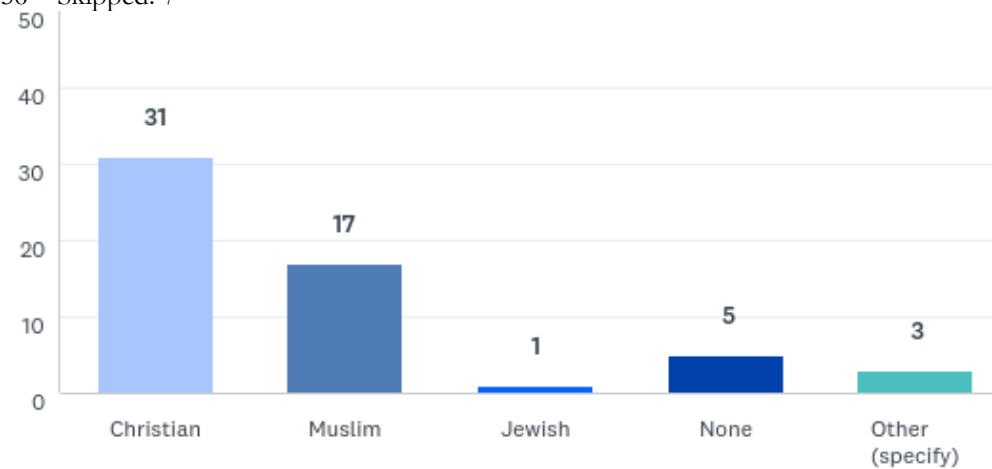
### What is your ethnicity?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 7



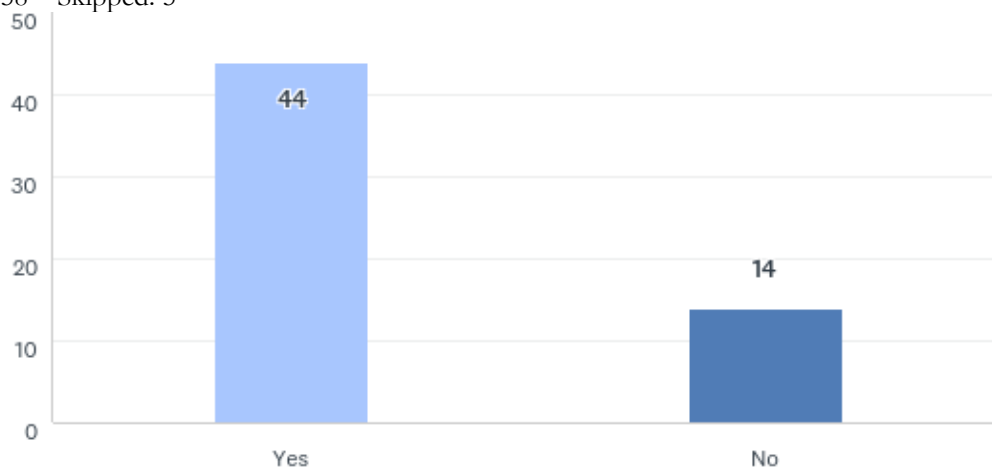
### What is your religion?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 7



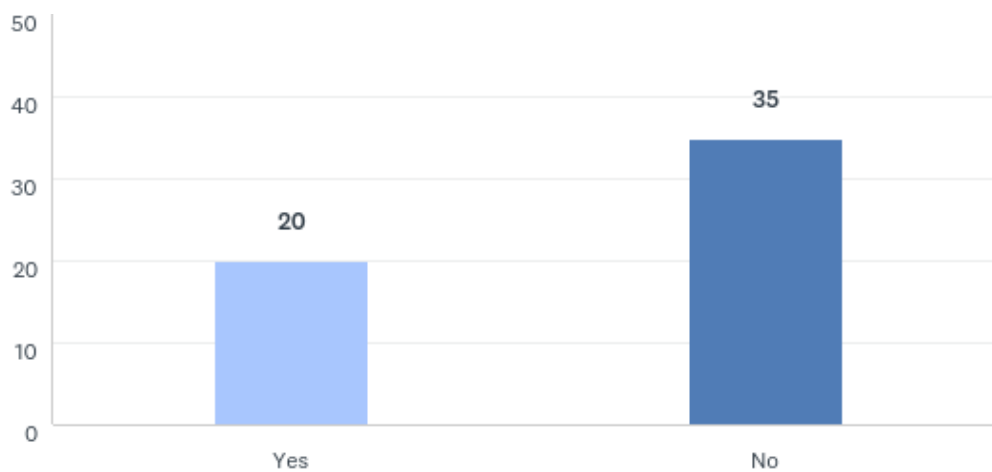
### Do you have a high school diploma or GED?

Answered: 58 Skipped: 5



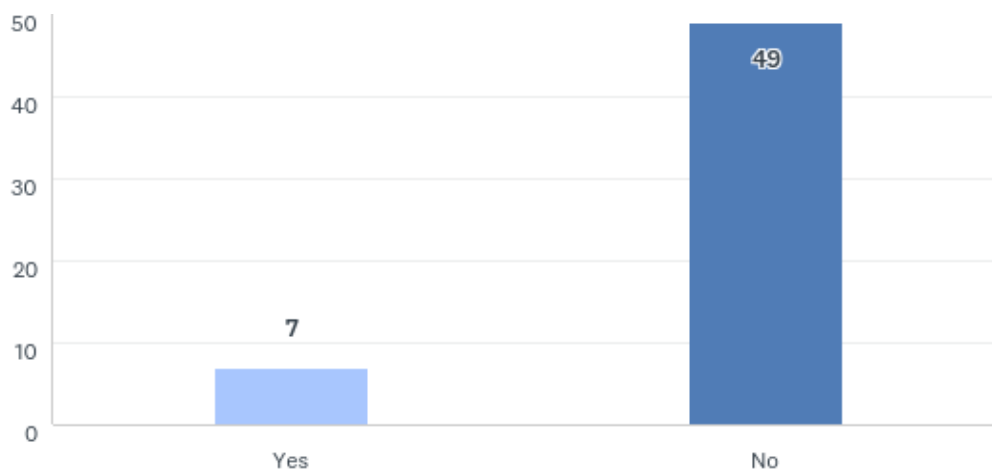
### Did you receive a GED while incarcerated?

Answered: 55 Skipped: 8



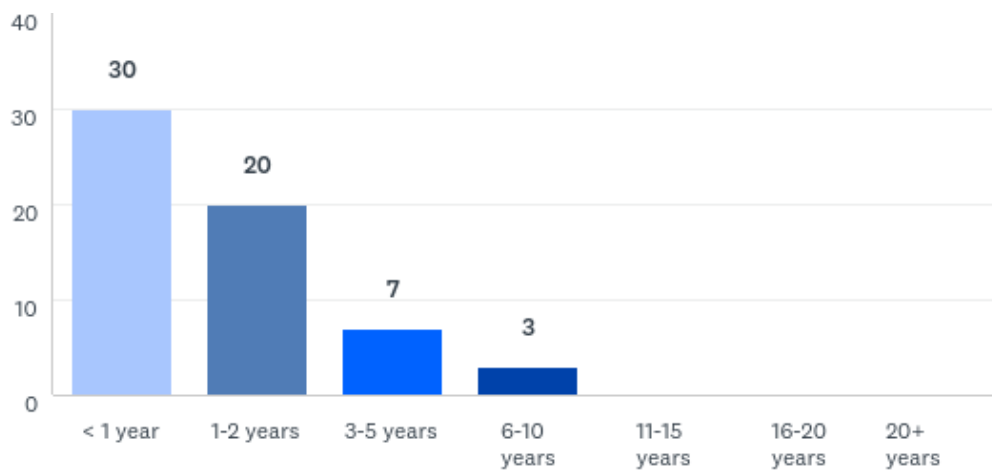
### Do you have a college degree?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 7



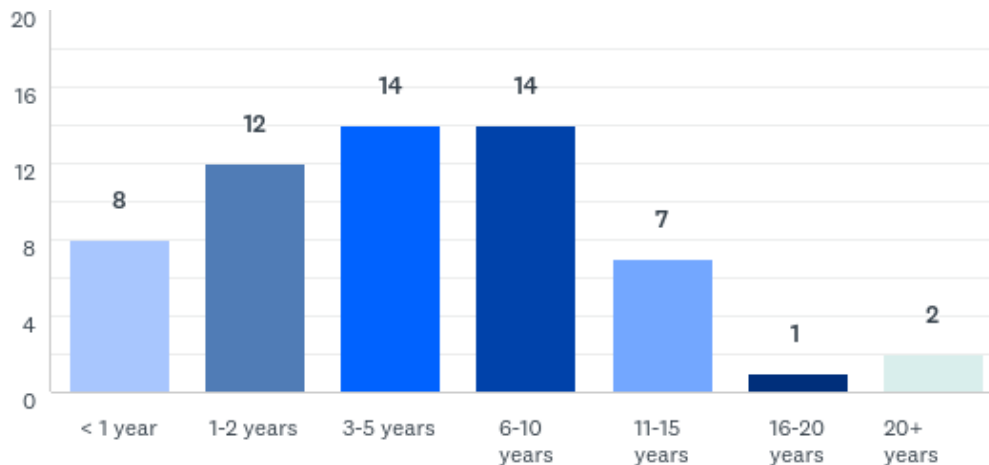
### How long have you been incarcerated at Rivers CF?

Answered: 59 Skipped: 4



### How long have you been incarcerated overall?

Answered: 57 Skipped: 6



### How would you improve the conditions of confinement at Rivers CF?

Answered: 51 Skipped: 12

Responses
Food, commissary, equal the population. All female staff- I don't feel safe 300 people on rec 280 Spanish / 20 black/ 1 female staff member
Laundry situation in SHU Call phone situation in Shu (out you with anyone) food some of responses, staff blow you off, don't get full, thorough response
Better staff with respect better food better programs
I would completely shut it down or ship all the DC inmates to a BOP operated facility
Just the food and weights
More programs, trades, vocational, hands-on
I would shut it down or ship/ transfer all the D.C inmates to a BOP operated facility
Jobs Food Better Education - College
Equal population
Food Programs Activities Commissary Chapel And More
Can't say
Programs, food, commissary
At least provide same services as BOP and follow BOP policy in resolving and running the facility and it's issues
More programs
Better and more programs, better way to do re-entry, educational transfer or work points down so I can get to better place. Don't hinder me trying to get better programming
More vocational programs, better communication between staff and inmates
I would establish more programs, make sure the compound is more evenly diverse, make the food menu more diverse and appealing, make sure every person has a cell, free follow-ups for sick call, wood instead of steel seats in the rec hall, and cheaper commissary with better options, stand-up count towards the evening instead of morning
Please! Rice and beans (too much)
Everything, commissary, visits are all right but can be better end them 2:30/2:45 when should be 3 meals
More DC inmates to match Hispanics , they think they're more powerful it doesn't work like that
Food, commissary, lower security, better hygiene, linen change and clothes.
Get DC inmates out of here
First: Having staff respect us as they respect their selves. Second: by having healthier food for us all and different food for both races Third: more comfortable bedding and chairs for our backs Fourth: more whites and uniforms Five: hooks in shower to place our towels and dirty or clean clothes
Move all D.C inmates they have no the knowledge to deal with the situation, the desire to leave. The administration is telling staff to do whatever to hold keep people here keep the head count.
more gainful education/votech/job training same access to email like other feds stricter hiring practices for staff improve quality of food

After looking at it on a "whole" I'm not sure anything can improve this horrendous compound. We have beans and rice on every single lunch and dinner tray to the point of being shameful on Rivers' part. The food and meals here on this compound are some of the worst I have ever encountered in my lifetime I'd start with the kitchen is how I would improve it.
Make the facility for all immigrant , train the staff to be more professional when dealing with prisoners. have a cic staff here 24/7 to monitor and track complaints on a daily basis if dc inmates going to be here
Don't know
Food, staff professionalism, safety.
Close it
At this present time the only answer for me is removal.
Making this institution spend their money on us instead of them, we are here for many years we need good mattresses and good food. That's all!
Better food.
Turn it into a real "low facility."
Provide for training for staff and inmate population , food service , recreation.
I would completely shut it down or ship the DC inmates to BOP operated Facility
Transfer/ move us out of Rivers ASAP
Stop 10-minute movement and give ability to move whenever
To get transferred.
More variety of food, split who controls stuff you can get commissary ( backpacks, etc) increase an compound or in SHU.
I wouldn't, I would just get DC inmates away from here. PLEASE
If it's a "low" run it as such.
Get out of it, nothing's going to improve.
More in-depth access to mental evaluation and treatment. Improve food/gear it more for DC inmates.
Better food and lower price on commissary.
Programs leading to certifications, equalize population.

**Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience at Rivers CF?**

Answered: 32 Skipped: 31

Responses
All blacks got blamed for one black's behavior, on time in RHU counted
Worst jail experience ever
Food is bad - targeted towards Mexicans. No email available. GED is good, Day room beds are cold, loud, no privacy, soccer field not for DC use.
The truth is my experience has been very painstaking and quite stressful, it furthermore has sincerely affected my overall general physical and mental health!
It is not good for DC inmates. They treat us exactly like we're immigrants too.
Taught me big lesson to stay the hell out of jail
More programs, First Step Act. Vocational programs that result in certification. Interested in CDL, looking to get marketable skills.
RCI facility is structured for medium custody inmates, however, on the paper it alleges to be low custody facility. I came from a low custody facility and there is a lot of big difference between low and medium. RCI is also very dangerous trap for DC black inmates as 85% are Spanish and tensions are high.
Scale of 1-10 would give it a 3. Lack of programming especially education
We as African Americans are way outnumbered by Latino community which can be a dangerous situation if we ever had a disagreement.
The jail is designed more for younger adults instead of grown men.
Rice and beans (too much)
No- it's all right.
It's the worst since I been in. It's also stressful because there's nothing to do. So boring. Compound is too small.
Everything is okay
The staff really practice lying and not helping they make compound unsafe with inmates to inmate staff to inmate. It's a very unprofessional run place
Inmates absolutely hate me here, as I've already stated they tell me to kill myself no less than 50 times per day, week

in week out.
My experience here at Rivers has been very difficult due to me coming from a structured environment. The inmates basically do what they want and are very disrespectful to the staff. An example is the women walk past and they're whistled at and talked to in a shameful manner on a daily basis. At 4:30 am they call workers for food the majority of the inmates do not even get up which cause the staff to be hollering on the intercoms, waking the whole unit up, this is daily. The food is terrible, the commissary is much higher than BOP. It's always tension between DC guys and Mexicans this is my fear getting caught in a race riot.
I hate it.
Has been hell.
Not good.
The privileges of my classification had been violated at RCI since day one of my arrival. This administration is in non-compliance with regulation governing their contract with DOJ, BOP.
Too short to know.
All Bad
Words would never explain my experience at Rivers, because it's horrible.

## Appendix C: BOP Response

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# MEMORANDUM



**DATE:** May 28, 2020

**TO:** Jerome Brooks, S

**FROM:** Brick Tripp, Facility Administrator

**RE:** **Response to DC CIC Draft Report-July 9-10, 2019**

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**GEO Secure Services™**  
**Rivers Correctional Facility**  
145 Parker's Fishery Road, P.O. Box 840  
Winton, NC 27986

Tel: 252-358-5200  
Fax: 252-358-5202  
[www.geogroup.com](http://www.geogroup.com)

Listed below are our responses to the draft recommendations in the DC CIC draft report for their July 9-10, 2019 facility visit. DC CIC recommendations are in bold text and our responses in italics. Please let me know of any questions you may have.

1. **Provide classes where inmates can learn to speak Spanish to increase communication between the population groups.**

*RCF will research the opportunity to provide Spanish Immersion classes to the inmate population.*

2. **Increase the number of Spanish-speaking staff by hiring individuals who can speak Spanish and incentivize existing staff to take Spanish-language classes.**

*RCF continuously strives to recruit Spanish-speaking staff RCF provides annual Spanish Immersion classes to staff RCF has an existing incentive program for staff to develop their bilingual skills.*

3. **Provide more programming and jobs for all populations so that inmates are kept occupied and engaged.**

*RCF continues to research and implement a variety of inmate programming to engage the inmate population.*

4. **Survey the inmate population annually to determine education and vocational programming needs, and consider adding, removing, or adjusting capacity of programs offered based on this information.**

*RCF will conduct annual surveys to determine the need for academic programming changes.*

5. **Create and publicize a promise for inmates to propose classes that they are able to teach to other inmates, similar to the Adult Continuation Education (ACE) classes in BOP facilities.**

*RCF will look at opportunities to implement inmate led classes.*

6. **Consider providing a ServeSafe1 Food Handler certification program in conjunction with food service jobs in the facility.**

*RCF will explore providing a ServeSafe1 certification program for inmates working in the Food Service Department.*

7. **Pursue partnerships with college programs, either local to the facility (such as Roanoke-Chowan Community College, which previously had a relationship with Rivers CF) or local to DC, so inmates can begin college education at Rivers CF:**

*RCF is already in the process of establishing college courses for inmates at RCCC, RCF will also explore establishing college courses with UDC Community College.*

8. **Update re-entry programming content with current information, particularly DC specific resources.**

*RCF currently involves CSOSA, DC Department of Motor Vehicles, DC Department of Behavioral Health, DC Board of Elections, and a number DC volunteer groups and prospective employers.*

9. **Increase the number of sessions for Release Preparation Program to allow for discussion of its content over a longer period of time.**

*RCF will explore extending the Release Preparation Program over a longer period of time.*

10. **BOP should transfer all individuals with a security level of "low" to facilities with physical plant characteristics, work and program components, *dormitory design, and movement restrictions that more accurately reflect a low security environment***

*This recommendation is directed to the BOP.*

11. **Review internal data on job placement and disciplinary sanctions and critically assess it for possible racial bias.**

*RCF finds no evidence of racial bias in either job placements or disciplinary sanctions.*

12. **Assess the reasons behind the disproportionate number of individuals from DC in RHU.**

*RCF finds no evidence of disproportion. A review of the last 12 months indicates the number of individuals from DC are below the DC percentage of the general population.*

13. **Ensure the grievance forms are provided upon request or else available without requesting from staff.**

*Grievance forms are provided upon request. Grievance forms must be issued by staff for tracking purposes and to ensure informal resolution is attempted as required by policy.*

•

**14. Ensure staff and inmates have information on when and how to use each of the two grievance systems.**

*RCF will continue to provide information to inmates and staff on how to access the Administrative Remedy Program.*

**15. Increase the amount of fresh fruits and vegetables provided at meals.**

*The RCF menu is provided by a licensed dietitian and provides the appropriate balance of fruits and vegetables and the appropriate caloric content for each meal.*

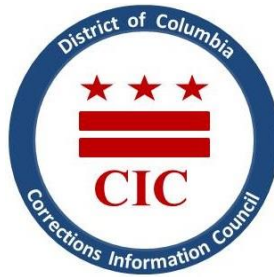
**16. Provide email access to inmates at RCF.**

*The GEO Group is currently looking at providing email access to the inmates at RCF through the Inmate Tablet Program.*

**17. End the use of dayroom bunks.**

*The dayroom bunks were added in response to contract modification requirement.*

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**District of Columbia  
Corrections Information Council**

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