

Knox County Sheriff's Office Corrections Division

2025 Annual PREA Report



This is the Knox County Sheriff's Office's annual report of data collected and aggregated pursuant to the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Standard 115.88-PREA Annual Report. The purpose of this report is to assess and improve the effectiveness of the agency's sexual abuse prevention, detection, and response policies, practices, and training. Facilities included in this data collection are the Knox County Jail, Roger D. Wilson Detention Facility, and the Knox County Work Release Center.

KCSO FACILITIES

KCSO Facilities All Knox County facilities have remained fully compliant with the standards set by the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA), continuing our commitment to protecting the safety, dignity, and rights of every individual in our custody. Over the past year, we've kept our focus on preventing, detecting, and responding to any reports of sexual abuse or harassment across our facilities.



Staff receive ongoing training to stay current on PREA protocols, including how to respond to incidents and support those involved. Facilities conduct regular audits and assessments to make sure our practices meet federal guidelines and reinforce a zero-tolerance culture. Any concerns reported are investigated promptly, and our documentation processes ensure everything is handled thoroughly and transparently.



Our goal remains to create a safe and respectful environment where inmates and staff alike are encouraged to report their concerns and know they will be taken seriously and without retaliation.

2025 Audits

PREA Audit Categories

1. Prevention Planning
2. Training and Education
3. Reporting
4. Response and Investigation
5. Medical and Mental Health Care
6. Screening, Classification, and Housing
7. Data Collection, Review, and Transparency
8. Facility Operations and Environment

The Knox County Jail (KCJ) completed its triennial Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) audit in May 2025. The final audit report confirmed that KCJ **met all required PREA standards**, demonstrating strong operational practices and a sustained commitment to inmate safety, staff accountability, and compliance with federal requirements. The auditor documented the following results:

- **40 standards met**
- **0 standards not met**
- **5 standards exceeded**

These findings reflect the facility's continued emphasis on maintaining a safe and secure environment, as well as its proactive approach to PREA implementation.

The auditor identified **five PREA standards in which KCJ's performance exceeded the minimum compliance requirements**. These areas were recognized for exemplary practices, enhanced implementation, and a demonstrated commitment to going beyond baseline expectations. The exceeded standards were:

- **115.11 – Zero Tolerance of Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment; PREA Coordinator**
- **115.13 – Supervision and Monitoring**
- **115.33 – Inmate Education**
- **115.51 – Inmate Reporting**
- **115.88 – Data Review for Corrective Action**

General Information

The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) was passed into law in 2003 by President George W. Bush. The act mandated zero tolerance of sexual abuse inside correctional facilities and developed standards to detect and prevent sexual abuse and sexual harassment of those incarcerated. This report serves as an annual review to assess and improve the effectiveness of sexual abuse prevention, detection, and response policies, practices, and training within the Knox County Sheriff's Office Corrections Division under §115.88 and §115.89 of the national PREA standards. Therein, the Knox County Sheriff's Office will:

- Review and aggregate incident-based sexual abuse data annually to improve the effectiveness of sexual abuse prevention, detection, and response policies, practices, and training to include:
 - a. Identifying problem areas;
 - b. Taking corrective action on an ongoing basis, and
 - c. Preparing an annual report of its findings.

- Compare the current year's data and corrective actions with those from prior years and assess the agency's progress in addressing sexual abuse.

- Publish the annual report of its findings and corrective actions on the Knox County Sheriff's Office website.

PREA Definitions

Sexual Abuse of an Inmate by Another Inmate: Any of the following acts, if the victim does not consent, is coerced into such action by overt or implied threats of violence, or is unable to consent or refuse:

- Contact between the penis and the vulva or the penis and the anus, including penetration, however slight;
- Contact between the mouth and the penis, vulva, or anus;
- Penetration of the anal or genital opening of another person, however slight, by a hand, finger, object, or another instrument; and
- Any other intentional touching, either directly or through the clothing, of the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks of another person, excluding contact incidental to a physical altercation

PREA Definitions

Sexual Abuse of an Inmate by an Employee or Civilian: Any of the following acts, with or without consent of the inmate, detainee, or resident:

- Contact between the penis and the vulva or the penis and the anus, including penetration, however slight;
- Contact between the mouth and the penis, vulva, or anus;
- Contact between the mouth and any body part where the employee, contractor, or civilian has the intent to abuse, arouse, or gratify sexual desire;
- Penetration of the anal or genital opening, however slight, by a hand, finger, object, or another instrument that is unrelated to official duties or where the employee, contractor, or civilian has the intent to abuse, arouse, or gratify sexual desire;
- Any other intentional contact, either directly or through the clothing, of or with the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks, that is unrelated to official duties or where the employee, contractor, or civilian has the intent to abuse, arouse, or gratify sexual desire;
- Any attempt, threat, or request by an employee, contractor, or civilian to engage in the activities outlined above in 1-5 of this section;
- Any display by an employee, contractor, or civilian of their uncovered genitalia, buttocks, or breast in the presence of an inmate, detainee, or resident; and;
- Voyeurism by an employee, contractor, or civilian

PREA Definitions

- **Sexual Harassment**: Includes any of the following acts:
 - Repeated and unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal comments, gestures, or actions of a derogatory or offensive sexual nature by one inmate directed toward another
 - Repeated verbal comments or gestures of a sexual nature to an inmate by an employee, contractor, or civilian, including demeaning references to gender, sexually suggestive or derogatory comments about body or clothing, or obscene language or gestures

PREA INCIDENT TYPES BY ALLEGATION:

PREA allegations are classified into four categories based on the outcome of the investigative process. These categories help ensure consistent reporting and transparency in how incidents are reviewed and resolved.

Every allegation made is investigated. If an allegation of sexual abuse is substantiated, the perpetrator will be charged with a criminal act, and KCSO will work closely with prosecutors to ensure prosecution. Any reports made in bad faith will also be referred to prosecutors, and criminal and/or disciplinary charges will be pursued.

Substantiated – The allegation was fully investigated and determined to have occurred based on the evidence.

Unsubstantiated – The allegation was investigated; however, the available evidence was insufficient to confirm whether the incident did or did not occur.

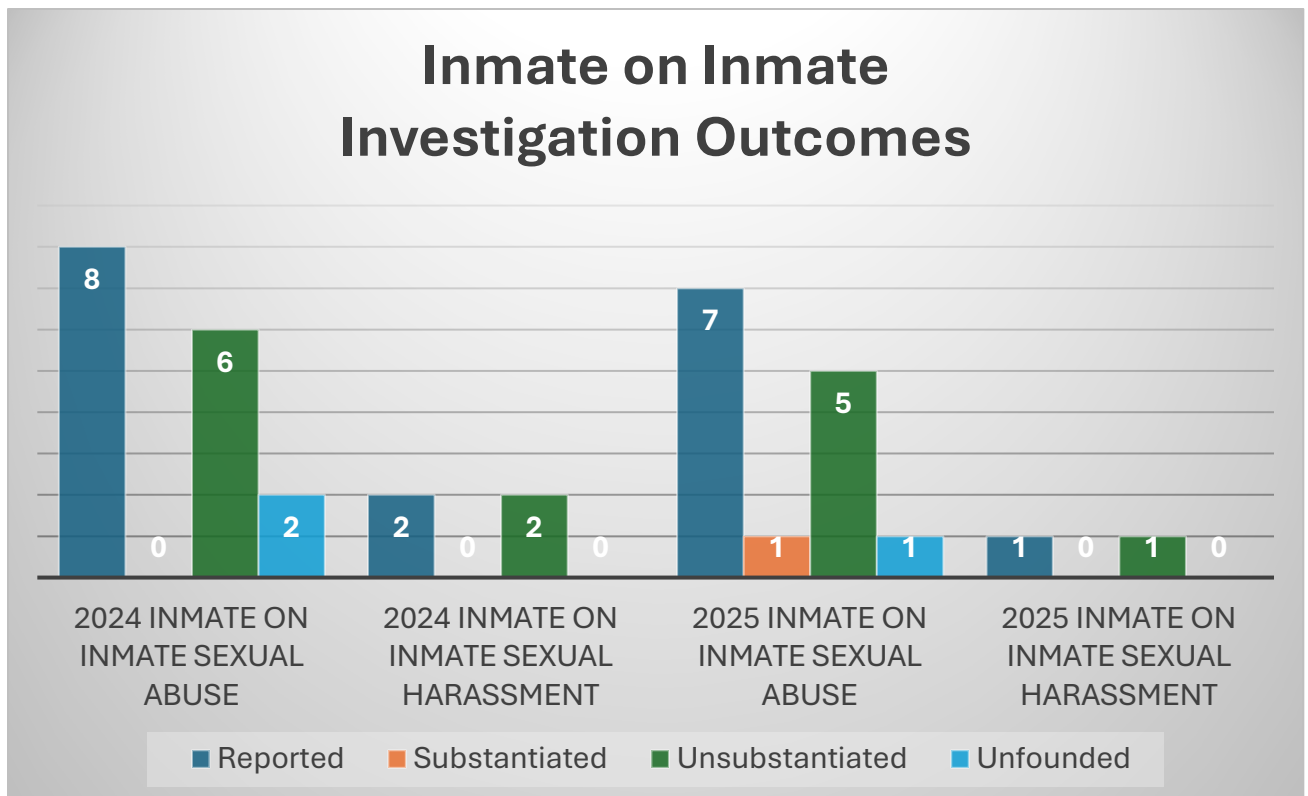
Unfounded – The allegation was investigated and determined not to have occurred. Evidence clearly shows the event did not take place.

Ongoing – The investigation is still in progress, and no final determination has been made at the time of reporting.

INMATES AND INCIDENTS INCLUDED IN DATA COLLECTION

- Inmates housed in any KCSO Correctional Facility between January 1, 2025, and December 31, 2025.
- Any incident of sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, or sexual abuse involving inmate-on-inmate or staff-on-inmate

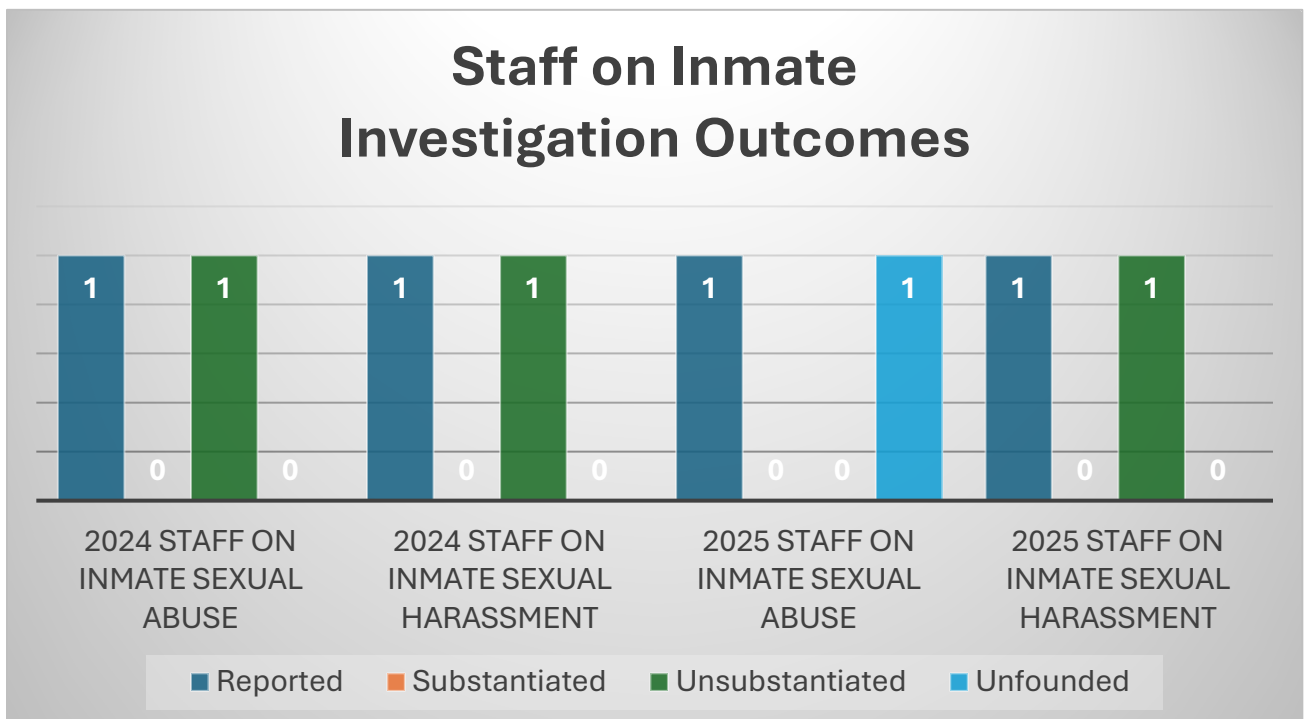
The following graphs depict the breakdown of the 2024 and 2025 sexual abuse and sexual harassment data from all Knox County Correctional Facilities.



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INCIDENT REVIEWS

PREA standard 115.86 requires an incident review of each alleged sexual abuse incident unless the incident was unfounded. The review must consist of the following individuals: line supervision, upper management, medical/mental health care staff, and an investigator. After reviewing an incident, the team recommends corrective action and monitors compliance to ensure adherence to their recommendations.

- The review team considered whether the allegations or investigations indicated a need to change policy or practice to better respond to sexual abuse.
- The review team considered whether the incidents or allegations were motivated by race, ethnicity, gender identity, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or intersex identification, status, or perceived status, or gang affiliation, or were motivated or otherwise caused by other group dynamics at the facility.
- The review team examined the areas in the facility where the incidents allegedly occurred to assess whether physical barriers in the area may have enabled abuse.
- The review team assessed the adequacy of staffing levels in areas where alleged incidents occurred.
- The review team assessed whether monitoring technology should be deployed or augmented to supplement supervision by staff.