



Semiannual Report

January 1, 2025 – June 30, 2025

Promoting Accountability Transparency Collaboration

Independent review of correctional practices and procedures within the
Nebraska Department of Correctional Services

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Introduction

On behalf of the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS), we are pleased to publish the first semiannual report (SAR) prepared by the Office of the NDCS Chief Inspector.

In 2024, NDCS Director Rob Jeffreys created the position of the NDCS Chief Inspector to streamline constituent services, recommend process and procedural improvements, and independently monitor internal practices including: incarcerated individual grievances, disciplinary appeals, and internal investigative processes.

In October 2024, I was appointed to become the first NDCS Chief Inspector responsible for contemporaneous oversight, providing notable data trends within all operations of the agency. The purpose of this office is to provide collaborative internal oversight and support of the NDCS mission: *keep people safe*, while ensuring compliance and transparency.

During this time, the office also selected a Registered Nurse - Deputy Inspector to investigate medical related grievances, concerns, and proactively monitor related processes through specialized oversight with a clinical focus independently through the Office of the NDCS Chief Inspector.

In this first report, internal data was collected from January 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025, to create foundational statistical data sets for analysis and identification of trends and potential improvement opportunities. Future semiannual reports will focus on the prior six-month reporting period, totaling 18 months of data for comparison.

Please visit the [NDCS website](#). I encourage feedback and questions.

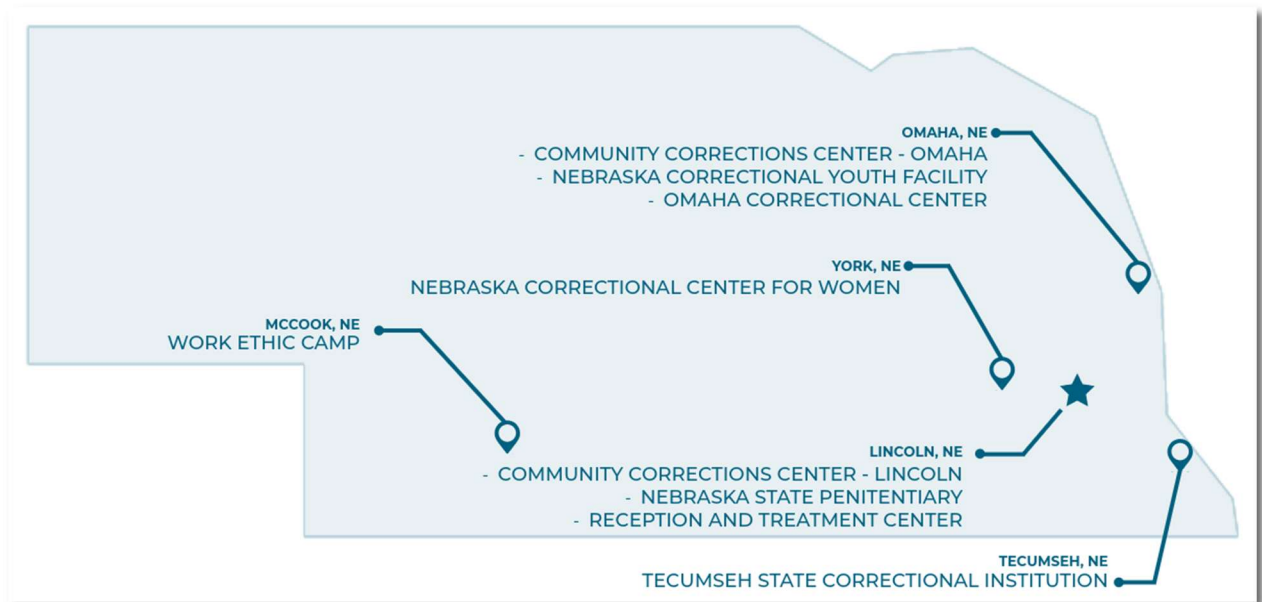


Report a concern
/ commendation

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Facilities

The Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS) operates a diverse array of facilities across the state, each designed to address specific security levels and rehabilitation needs of our incarcerated population.



<u>Facility Name</u>	<u>Acronym</u>
Community Corrections Center – Lincoln	CCL
Community Corrections Center – Omaha	CCO
Nebraska Correctional Center for Women	NCW
Nebraska Correctional Youth Facility	NCY
Nebraska State Penitentiary	NSP
Omaha Correctional Center	OCC
Reception and Treatment Center	RTC
Tecumseh State Correctional Institution	TSC
Work Ethic Camp	WEC

Population Table

These tables show the average daily population (ADP) by facility for incarcerated individuals housed within NDCS facilities for fiscal year 2024 and 2025.

Average Daily Population (ADP) by Facility Fiscal Year 2025					
Facility	ADP	Operational Capacity	% Operational Capacity	*Bed Capacity	% Bed Capacity
CCL	580	575	100.89%	660	87.89%
CCO	174	113	153.72%	179	97.04%
NCW	326	344	94.80%	420	77.64%
NCY	69	95	72.53%	141	48.87%
NSP	1287	1023	125.79%	1352	95.18%
OCC	782	495	157.98%	789	99.11%
RTC	1369	1105	123.86%	1250	109.50%
TSC	1042	1200	86.80%	938	111.04%
WEC	184	125	147.04%	200	91.90%
Total	5812	5075	115%	5929	98%

**Bed capacity does NOT include: SNF, Medical/Med Observation, BIPU, NCCW MH/PM, Plan Rooms, Secure Mental Health, Subacute/Chronic Care, ISDP and RH beds.*

Average Daily Population (ADP) by Facility Fiscal Year 2024					
Facility	ADP	Operational Capacity	% Operational Capacity	*Bed Capacity	% Bed Capacity
CCL	587	575	102.09%	660	88.94%
CCO	175	113	154.87%	179	97.77%
NCW	310	344	90.12%	420	73.81%
NCY	76	95	80.00%	141	53.90%
NSP	1287	1023	125.81%	1352	95.19%
OCC	791	495	159.80%	789	100.25%
RTC	1438	1105	130.14%	1250	115.04%
TSC	1025	1200	85.42%	938	109.28%
WEC	191	125	152.80%	200	95.50%
Total	5880	5075	116%	5929	99%

Nebraska statute defines operational capacity as 125 percent of the capacity for which the facility was originally designed (Neb. Rev. Stat. § 83-961). For Fiscal Year 2025 the average daily population for NDCS is 115 percent of operational capacity. NDCS also relies on bed capacity, which is set by the agency director and reflects the number of people a facility can realistically manage at a given time. For Fiscal Year 2025, the average daily population for NDCS is 98 percent of bed capacity. Bed capacity provides a practical, management-based figure that guides day-to-day decisions and planning.

Nebraska law also defines an overcrowding emergency as occurring when the inmate population exceeds 140 percent of operational capacity (Neb. Rev. Stat. § 83-962). NDCS continues to monitor population levels in relation to these statutory definitions to ensure safe and effective management of the system.

Constituent Services

A strong constituent services model within our agency further enhances oversight by providing clear avenues for reporting concerns. This model handles inquiries fairly and efficiently, encourages individuals to voice concerns without fear of retaliation, and reinforces institutional accountability. By establishing transparent and accessible reporting mechanisms with an independent review process, our facilities can promote policy compliance and improve conditions, ensuring that any internal and external constituent has access to express their concerns.

Overview

The Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS) constituent services is a new process that was implemented in January of 2025. This allows the Office of the NDCS Chief Inspector to independently ensure concerns are addressed and generate valuable data for areas of improvement. Internal communication deconfliction processes have been instituted across facilities providing prompt, consistent, and reliable responses to public inquiries and concerns. Facilities have identified designees to address facility-specific inquiries, supporting effective constituent communications.

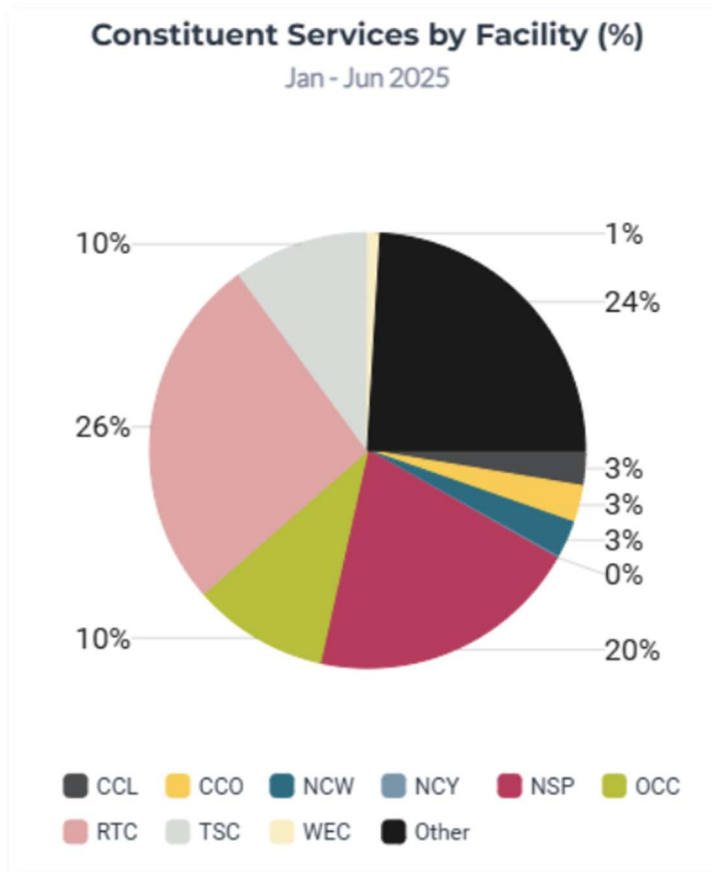
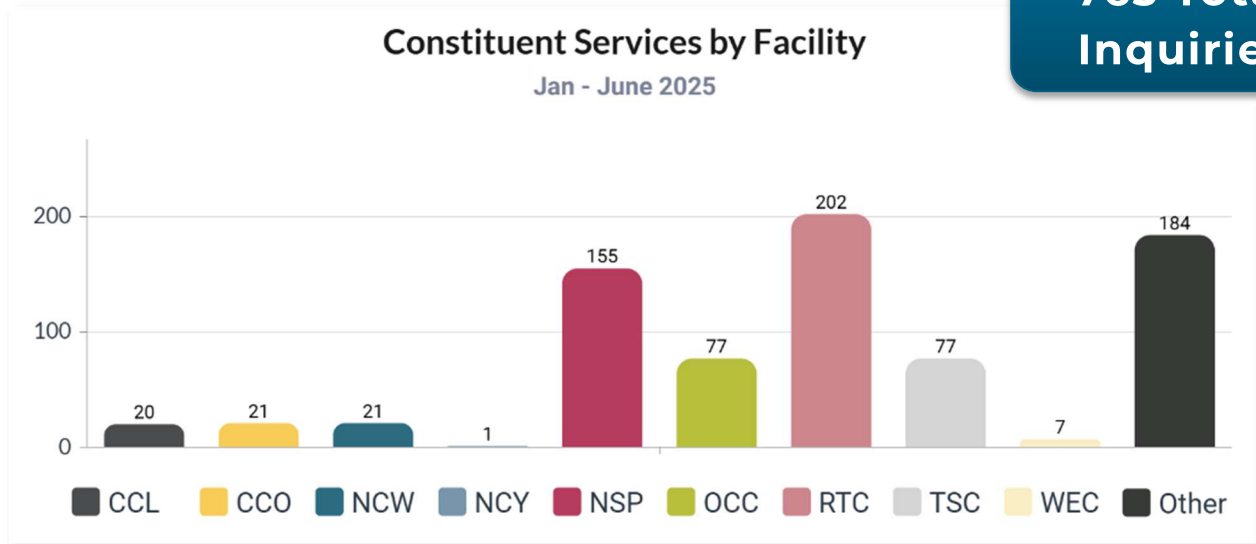
This data enables our office to identify concerns that have been raised by the public, incarcerated individuals, and stakeholders. Additionally, responses to constituents can be documented, creating institutional insights, while promoting consistency in communication.

Identifying improvement opportunities, our office created an avenue for reporting concerns directly on the agency's website. Concerns submitted are sent to the Office of the NDCS Chief Inspector directly, recorded, and then routed to the appropriate team members for review and response or handled by our office.

This section highlights the pertinent constituent statistics for our first reporting period between January through June of 2025. Subsequent sections will discuss improvement opportunities based on those statistics.

Outcomes

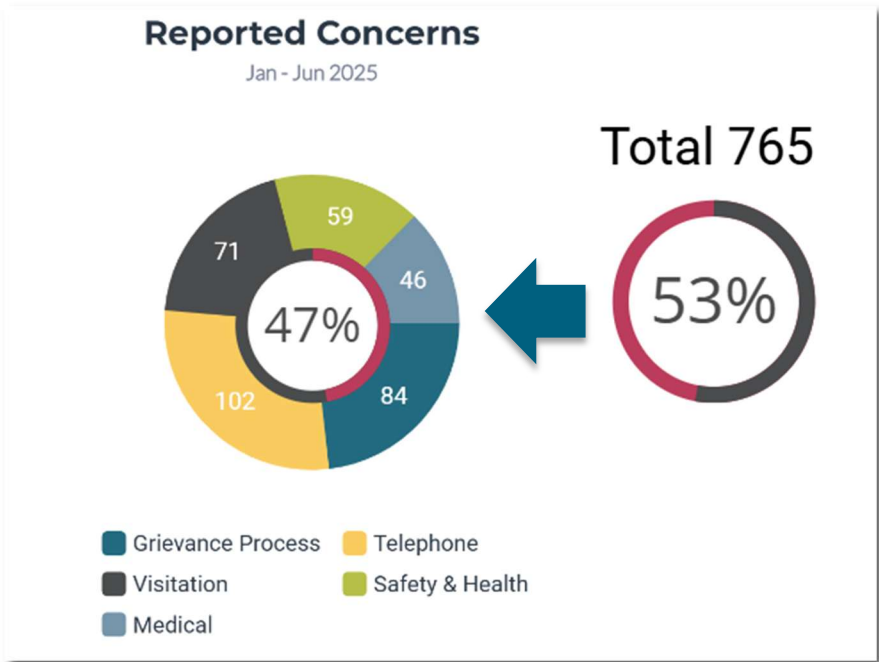
**765 Total
Inquiries**



Data recorded for NSP and RTC consist of nearly 50% of all reported concerns.

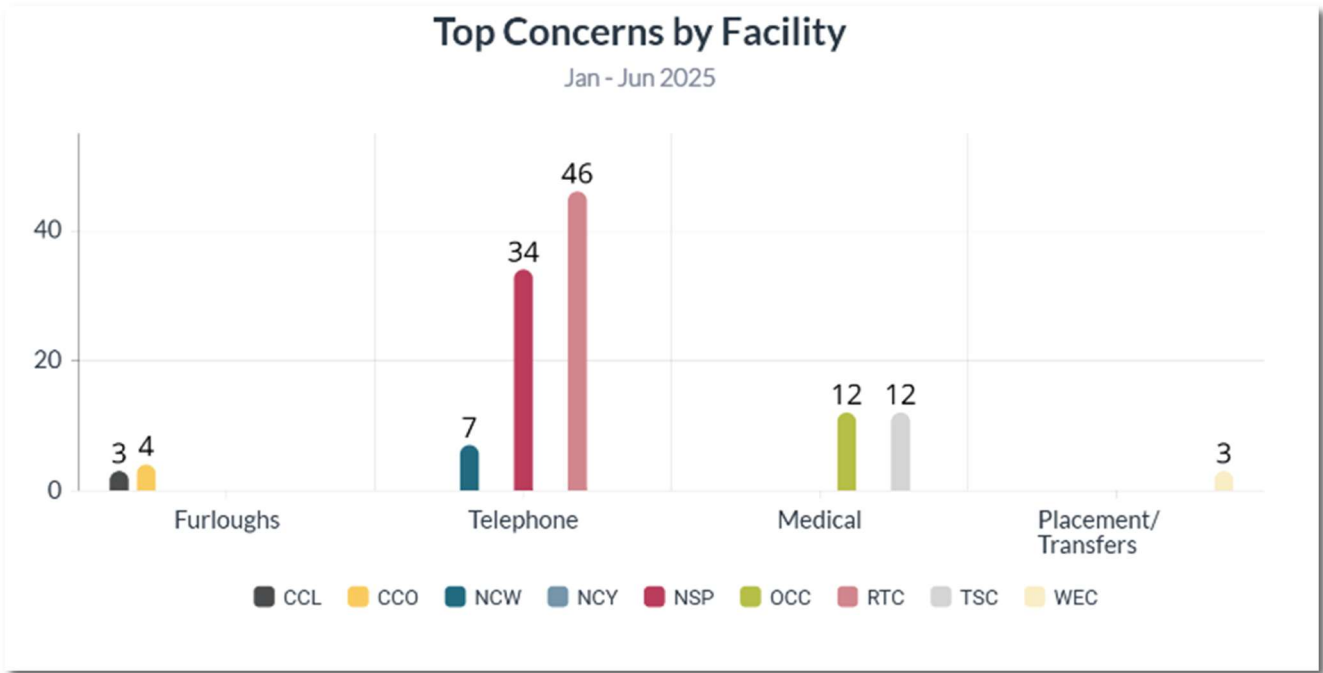
Concerns can either be submitted by incarcerated individuals or the public. Incarcerated individuals can send correspondence for complaints, while the public can call, email, report a concern on the website, or send letters.

Notable Trends



The top five concerns agency-wide comprise 47% of all inquiries.

The most frequently discussed topics were telephone-related issues, which accounted for 13.3% (102) of all inquiries, followed by grievances at 10.9% (84) of all inquiries during this period.



During the reporting period, a total of 765 inquiries were addressed through constituent services. Among these inquiries, more than 48 recurring topics were identified as consistent concerns raised by constituents. Facilities identified four concerns as their most reported topic.

Improvement Opportunities

While data collection still only represents January through June of 2025, notable trends can be perceived which represent further improvement opportunities. Acknowledging that telephone-related concerns are common for constituents indicates NDCS can begin addressing potential problems with vendors and improving telephone operations.

Another example of constituent feedback indicates a need for educational opportunities regarding the furlough process. The department can utilize these insights to develop training materials.

Continuously collecting constituent data is imperative for identifying areas of improvement.

Website Reporting

As previously mentioned, constituents can make phone calls, send emails, or address letters to the department to report concerns. A link was created on the NDCS website named "Report a Concern" that allows constituents to submit concerns while remaining anonymous or provide their contact information for appropriate follow-up when necessary.

The online portal is independently monitored by the Office of the NDCS Chief Inspector, and all concerns are tracked to identify patterns. An additional benefit of reporting concerns through the website is that all communications can be saved, referenced, and cataloged for future use.

Documentation Initiatives

In addition to the website reporting features, documentation standards were implemented to improve transparency. Reported concerns are tracked, assigned a case number, and routed to team members for response. Upon receiving a response, the entire record of correspondence is saved for reference, creating a reliable record, which allows for future improvement opportunities. Retaining responses supports accountability and enhances effective communication. This documentation initiatives further the agency's commitment to respond appropriately to concerns and preserve insightful correspondence.

Grievances

The grievance process plays a crucial role for the population in ensuring fairness, accountability, and transparency within our facilities. Grievances can address institutional misconduct, ranging from issues with team members' conduct or living conditions to violations of their rights. Grievances provide incarcerated individuals with a formal way to communicate concerns to be investigated and addressed accordingly. Operationally, grievances serve as a management tool that helps identify trends, provide administrative remedies for complaints, and reduce conflict.

Overview

Grievances are an administrative tool that provides incarcerated individuals with an accessible avenue to express complaints and seek resolutions. However, disciplinary actions, issues outside of NDCS control, and classification decisions may not be addressed through this process.

Since October 2024, NDCS has been implementing a project to move from paper to electronic grievance submissions.

Types of grievances:

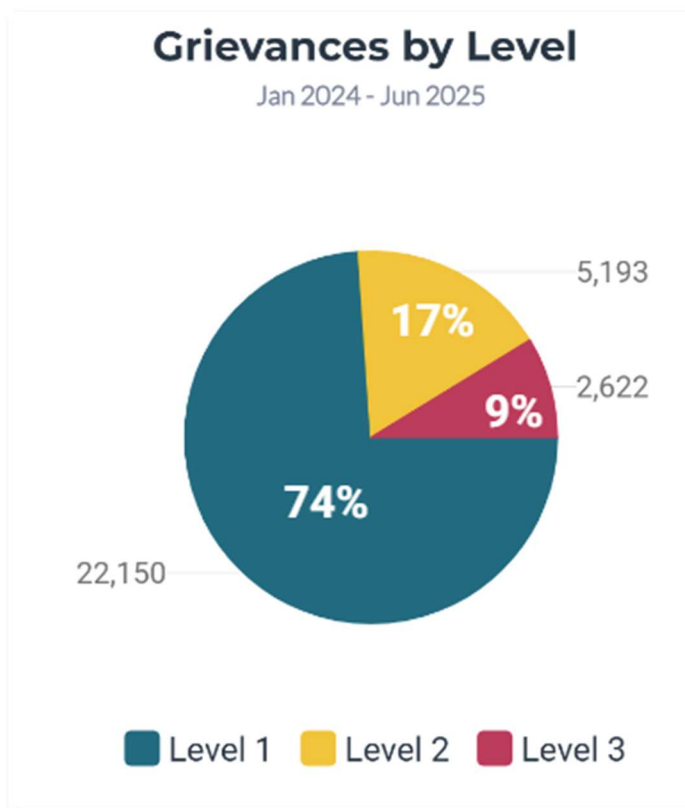
- **Regular Grievances:** This process has three levels, starting at the unit level, then escalating to the warden, and finally to the director. Grievances can be escalated to the next level if they follow established procedures. The director's decision is final.
- **Emergency Grievances:** These are for issues that pose a substantial risk of serious harm to an incarcerated individual and need a quick resolution. They can be escalated to the next level if they meet the criteria for an emergency.
- **Sensitive Nature Grievances:** Incarcerated individuals can send these directly to the director without going through the usual facility steps. The incarcerated individual must explain why they are bypassing the regular process. There is no further internal escalation for this type of grievance.

Grievance levels:

- **Level One Grievances**, formerly called Informal grievances, are submitted at the unit level.
- **Level Two Grievances**, formerly called step one grievances, are submitted at the warden/ designee level.
- **Level Three Grievances**, formerly called step two grievances, are submitted at the director/ designee level.

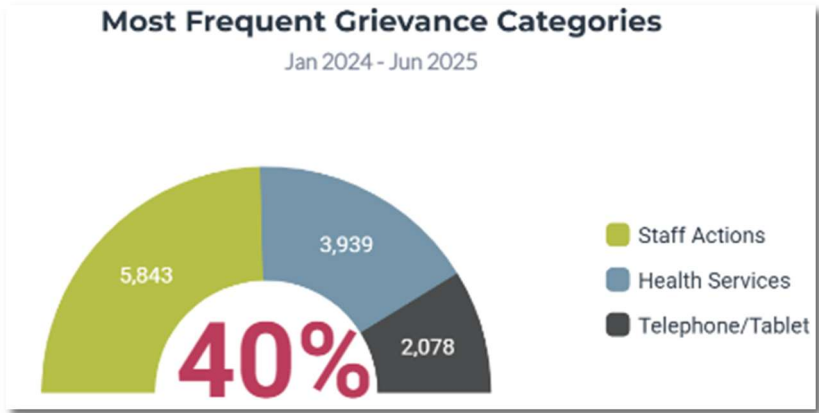
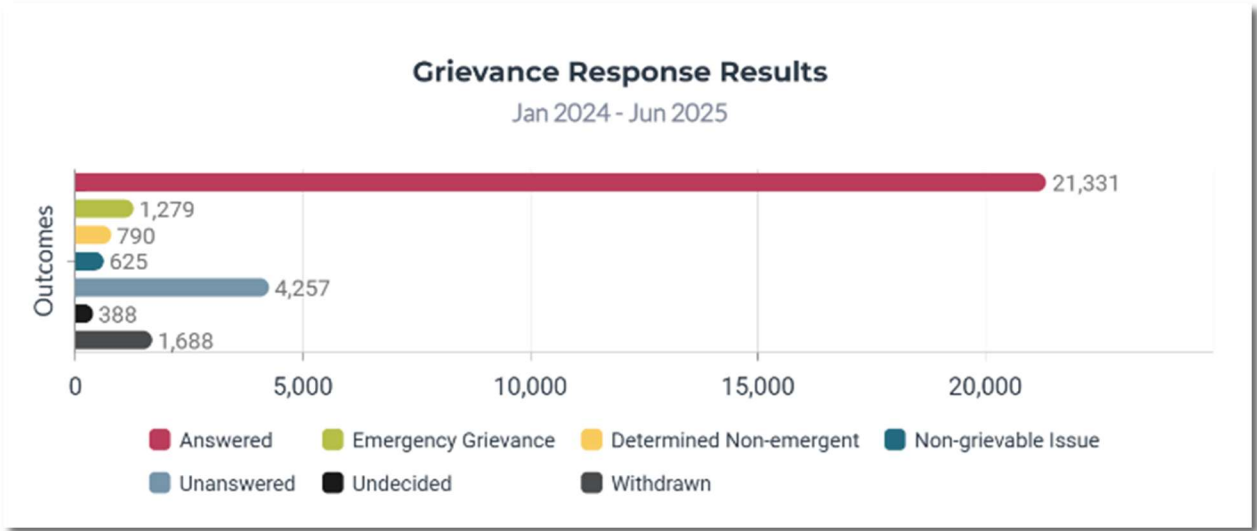
The next sections highlight the pertinent grievance statistics. Subsequent sections will discuss improvement opportunities based on those statistics.

Outcomes

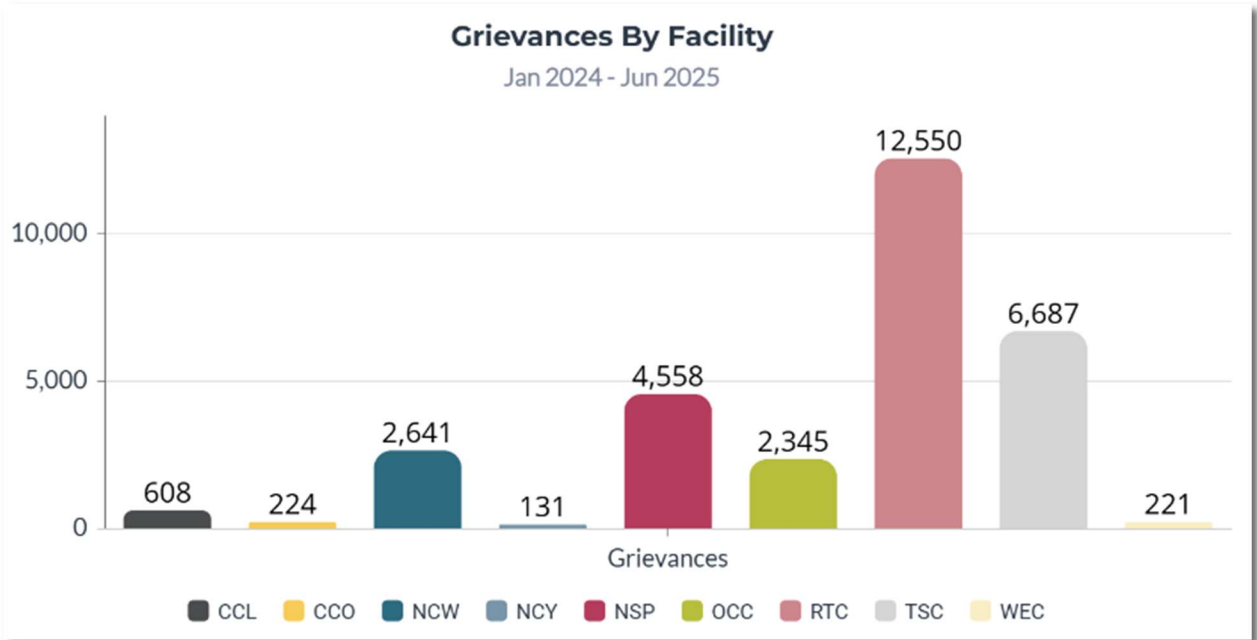


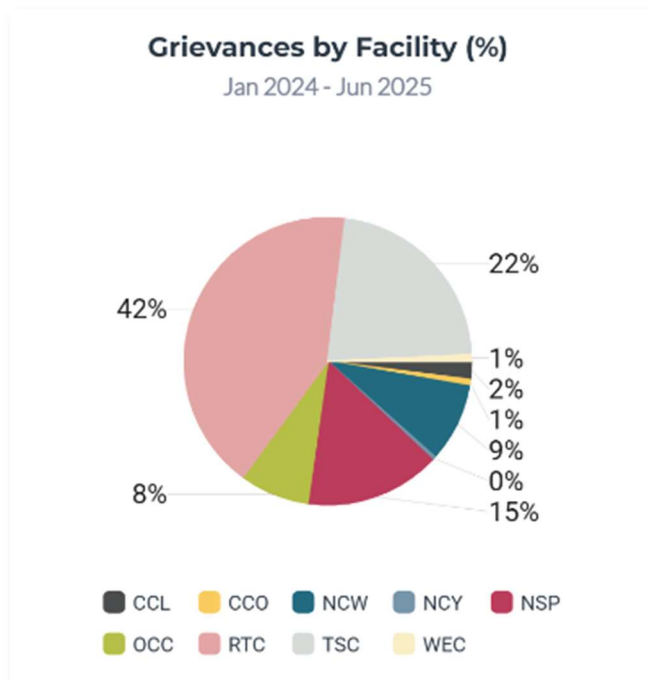
29,965 Total Grievances

Grievances can be returned for not following the correct submission policy. Grievances can also be unanswered for a variety of reasons such as the nature of the grievance does not require an answer or the concern was previously answered in a different grievance.



Together these three categories of complaints comprise 11,860 (40%) of all grievances submitted agency wide.

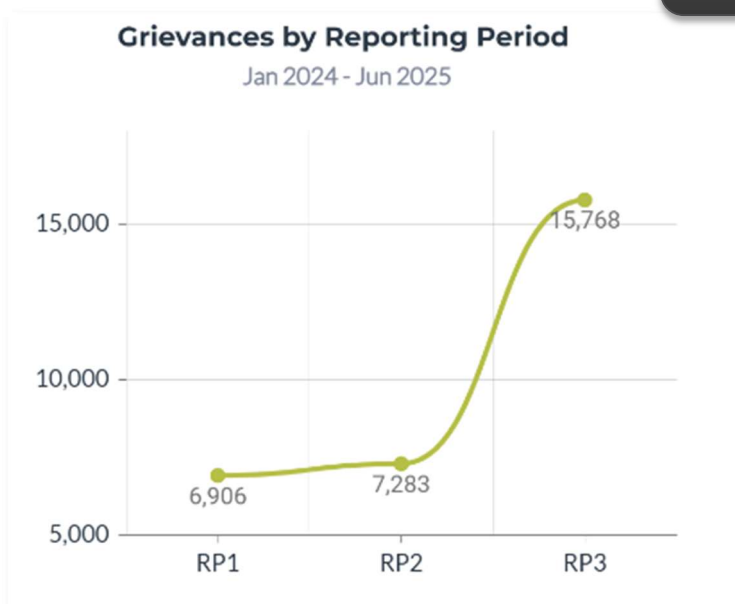




2x more

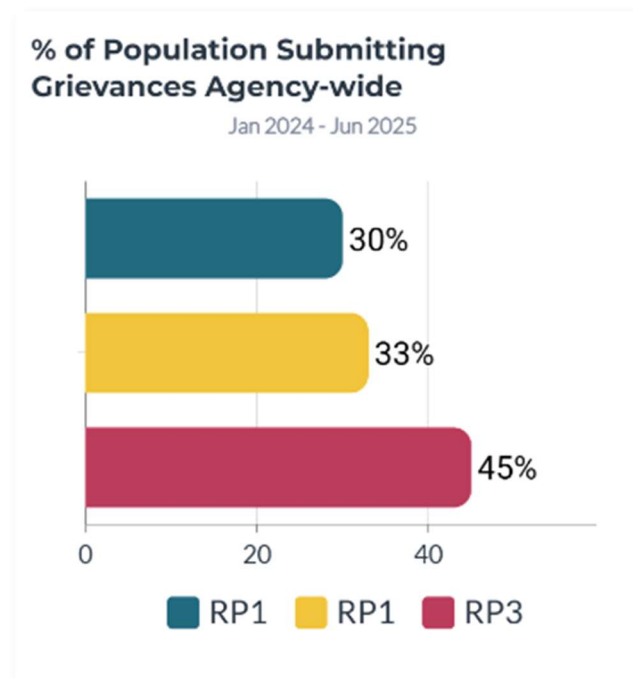
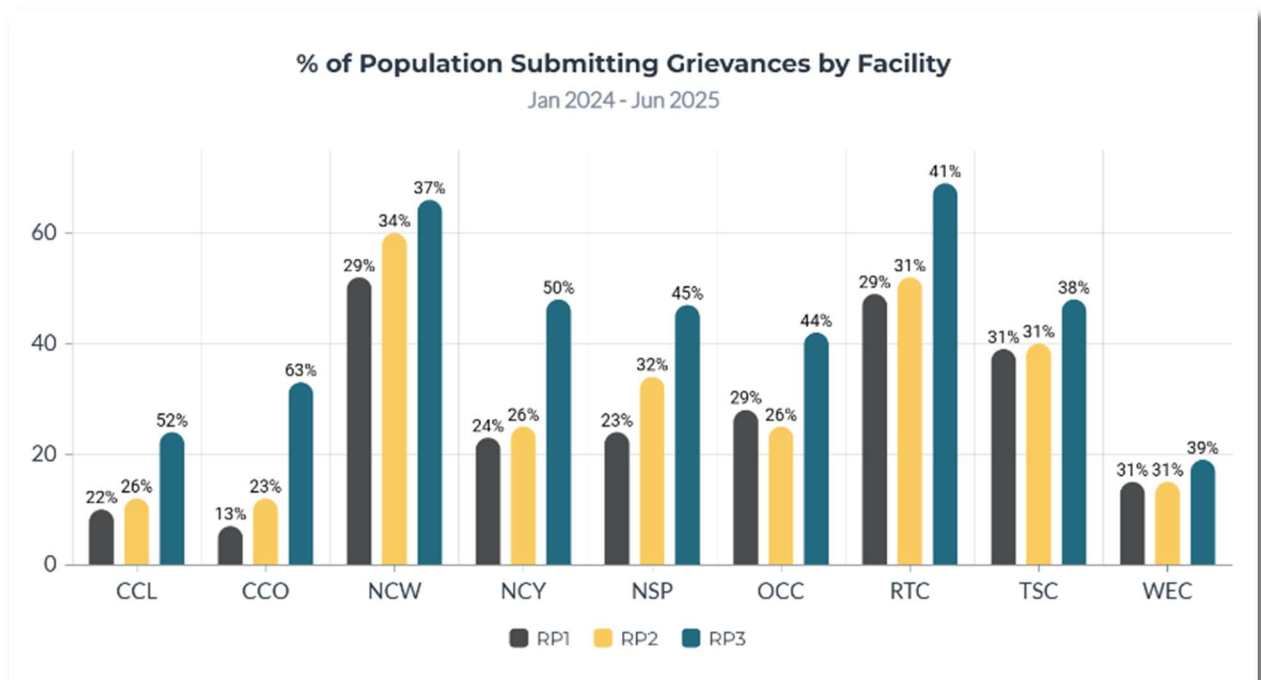
RTC collectively had two times more grievances than any other facility.

Notable Trends



2X more in RP3

This trend can be attributed to the implementation of the electronic grievance process (available on the incarcerated individual's tablets).



Ease of access to the electronic grievance system has contributed to increased utilization throughout the facility and agency.

Improvement Opportunities

NDCS has utilized a three-tier paper grievance process since its implementation in 1985. This process had several issues. Paper forms often got misplaced, leading to inconsistencies in logging and submission times. This lack of precise processing times made it possible for both incarcerated individuals and staff to manipulate deadlines.

To address these problems, NDCS switched to an electronic grievance system. This new process allows incarcerated individuals to file grievances at any time, and the system automatically logs a precise submission time. This prevents time manipulation and ensures that only trained staff can access the grievances, which helps maintain confidentiality.

While the electronic system has improved how timelines are managed and ensures unanswered grievances are automatically escalated, it continues to be refined to support the communication of concerns.

Training and System Development

A key part of this transition has been the introduction of formal training for both staff and incarcerated individuals, which began in 2019. Before this, no formal training existed for the grievance process. Now, NDCS offers ongoing initial and refresher courses for staff, as well as a newly developed class for incarcerated individuals. The incarcerated individual class, which is being rolled out across facilities, helps them understand and use the tablet application correctly. The department is also creating new visual aids and updating orientation materials to standardize the information provided to everyone. This focus on training ensures that everyone understands the new system and can use it effectively.

NDCS is continuously evolving to accomplish better response times. OCC and NSP are exploring the option of a dedicated grievance coordinator, whereas RTC and TSC already have staff designated for that role. The agency continues to work with the vendor to resolve system issues as they arise.

Disciplinary Appeals

The disciplinary appeals process for the population is a crucial mechanism for ensuring fairness, accountability, and justice within our facilities. When an incarcerated individual challenges institutional decisions or discipline, the appeals process offers a structured way to review, and potentially correct actions taken by facility team members or administrators.

Overview

The Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS) Appeals Administrator was selected in February of 2025, with the goal of having a subject matter expert on the incarcerated individual's disciplinary process. The disciplinary appeals process for the population is a crucial mechanism for ensuring fairness, accountability, and due process within our facilities. When an incarcerated individual challenges institutional disciplinary decisions, the appeals process offers a structured way to review, and potentially correct actions taken by facility team members or administrators.

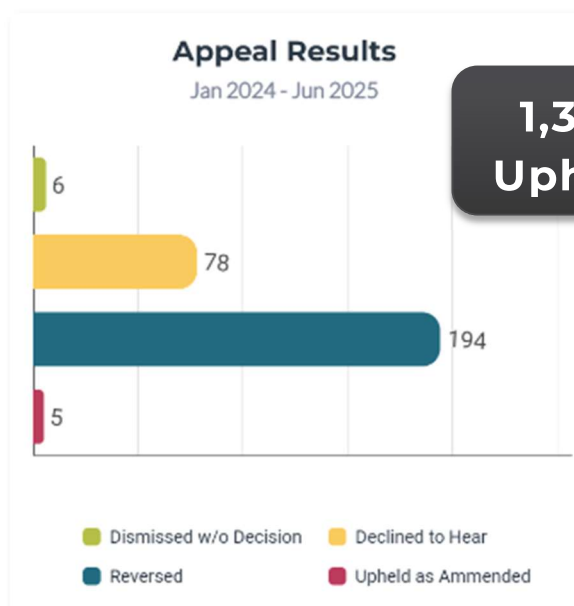
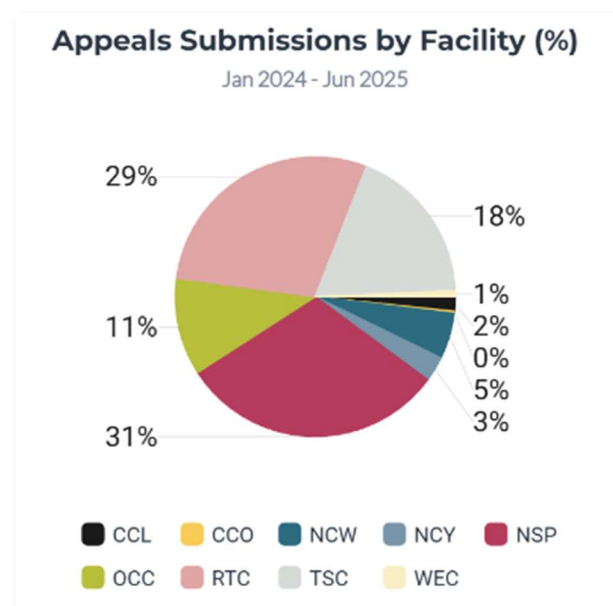
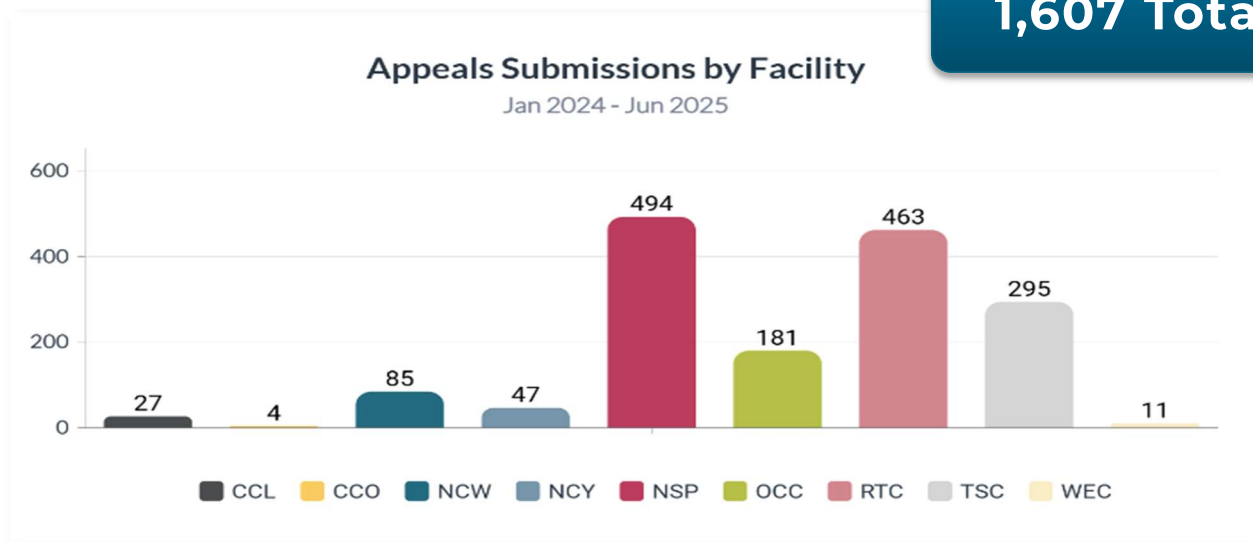
The appeals administrator serves agency-wide, enhancing the operational effectiveness of the Institutional Disciplinary Committee (IDC) and safeguards incarcerated individuals due process rights. All disciplinary appeals are written and reviewed by the appeals administrator, who focuses on systemic issues within the system, concentrates on compliance, and improves agency-wide procedures. Since appeals are now handled by a dedicated team member, greater uniformity and consistency can be expected.

Since assuming the position, the appeals administrator has developed initiatives to strengthen IDC hearing practices by increasing the participation and use of treatment team members. The appeals administrator has also promoted cooperation throughout the agency by hosting agency-wide meetings of disciplinary coordinators.

The next sections highlight the pertinent appeals statistics. Subsequent sections will discuss improvement opportunities based on those statistics.

Outcomes

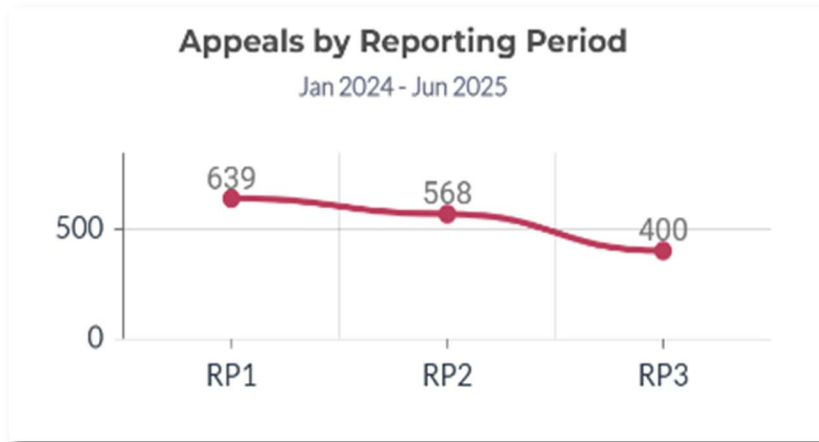
1,607 Total



1,346 Upheld

RTC and NSP account for 60% of all appeals submissions. Agency wide only 12% of all violations were reversed on appeal (a disciplinary action may include multiple violations, and within the same appeal some violations can be upheld while others are reversed).

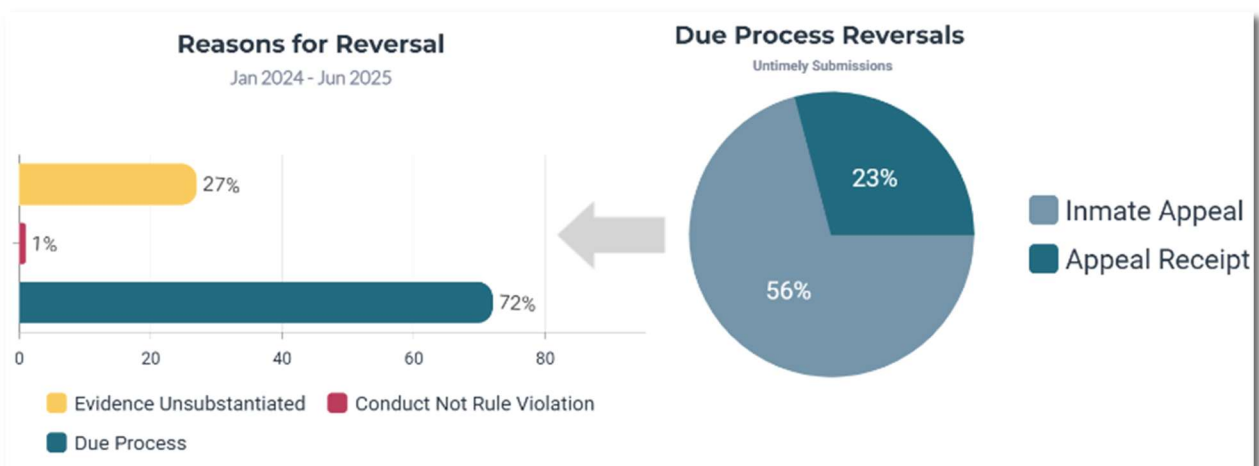
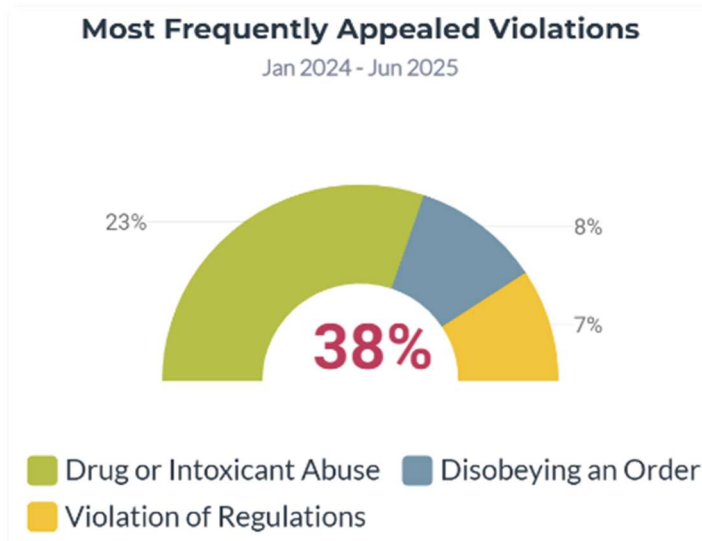
Notable Trends



Between the reporting period (RP), NDCS observed noticeable shifts in the number of appeals across facilities which highlights greater consistency in the disciplinary process.

The most common violation appealed was 5-I-H "Drug or Intoxicant Abuse."

Half of all due-process violations (55.5%) were because team members did not submit an appeal within the required ten-day period. An additional (22.8%) of due-process-related reversals, were due to incarcerated individuals not receiving their appeal response within 30-days.



Improvement Opportunities

An examination of appeals data reveals areas needing additional improvement. The most frequent violation on appeal was “Drug or Intoxicant Abuse.” Review indicates possible ongoing misunderstanding relating to this violation. Further education for incarcerated individuals and additional training for team members could mitigate confusion relating to Drug or Intoxicant Abuse violations.

Timely notification requirements represent another area of concern. Team members’ failure to submit timely incarcerated individual appeals as well as informing them of appeal decisions represent several due process-related reversals. The appeals process could benefit from implementing facility specific solutions.

Unit Disciplinary Committee Monitoring

Recently, the Unit Disciplinary Committee (UDC) reports were forwarded to the appeals administrator with possible procedural compliance concerns related to 24-hour notification standards. These reports raised concerns about procedural compliance related to notification practices across our agency. Currently, the Office of the NDCS Chief Inspector is collaborating with facility wardens to evaluate and monitor this process, identifying improvement opportunities which will be expanded on in future reports if warranted.

Treatment Team Members in Institutional Disciplinary Hearings

Institutional Disciplinary Committee (IDC) team members received a memo from the appeals administrator in June 2025, reminding them to include treatment team members in hearings. Through evaluation of IDC practices, a meeting with executive team members and IDC coordinators, the inclusion of treatment team members was identified as a necessary area of improvement. The initiative brought NDCS into compliance with Nebraska Revised Statute 8304, 122 and Title 68 Chapter 6, Section 007 of the Nebraska Administrative Code. Furthermore, NDCS realizes that treatment team members provide a unique and valuable perspective that could improve IDC outcomes.

While necessary to include treatment team members, concerns were expressed regarding adequate time for primary duties. In response, IDC were instructed to invite treatment team members to every hearing. Treatment team members were given additional instructions to attend whenever possible. Another potential issue was the perception of the population. Treatment team members have unique relationships with incarcerated individuals, and imposing sanctions may jeopardize client relationships. In acknowledgment of this, treatment team members were not given authority to impose sanctions but were still allowed to share their expertise with IDC.

Documentation was also improved as part of this initiative. IDC were asked to document in the record whenever treatment team members were or were not available. These steps promote greater participation of treatment team members in addition to strengthening the overall record.

IDC Evidence Procedures

Title 68, Chapter 6, Section 008.08 of the Nebraska Administrative Code stipulates that incarcerated individuals must ask designated team members for evidence at least 24 hours in advance of a disciplinary hearing. While current facility operations suggest that IDC coordinators are the team members handling evidence requests, no written policy specifically identifies those team members, potentially causing confusion. Communication was distributed in June 2025, designating IDC coordinators as the official recipient for evidence requests. Identifying IDC coordinators through written means clarifies the evidence request process, further aligning practices with administrative code.

The initiative instructs incarcerated individuals to write the Disciplinary Committee Coordinator to request relevant evidence. This process ensures that requests are adequately forwarded to the appropriate team members, mitigating confusion, and lost requests. In support of fair IDC processes, incarcerated individuals were further reminded of the deadlines for submitting evidence requests in addition to being informed of official designees. Communication was shared agency-wide, ensuring practices were consistent across institutions. Consistency also allows incarcerated individuals to comply with IDC processes easier when transferring facilities.

Team members received further communication notifying them of the new designees. Team member notifications also contained information on expectations for video evidence requests, reaffirming that appropriate requests for any relevant evidence should be documented and fulfilled. New documentation expectations were reiterated in team member communications, instructing team members to upload any requests made by incarcerated individuals, for evidence, regardless of relevance. Documenting these requests allows the record to reflect requests, which provides the appeals board with greater insight into why certain evidence was either included or denied.

Use of Force Monitoring

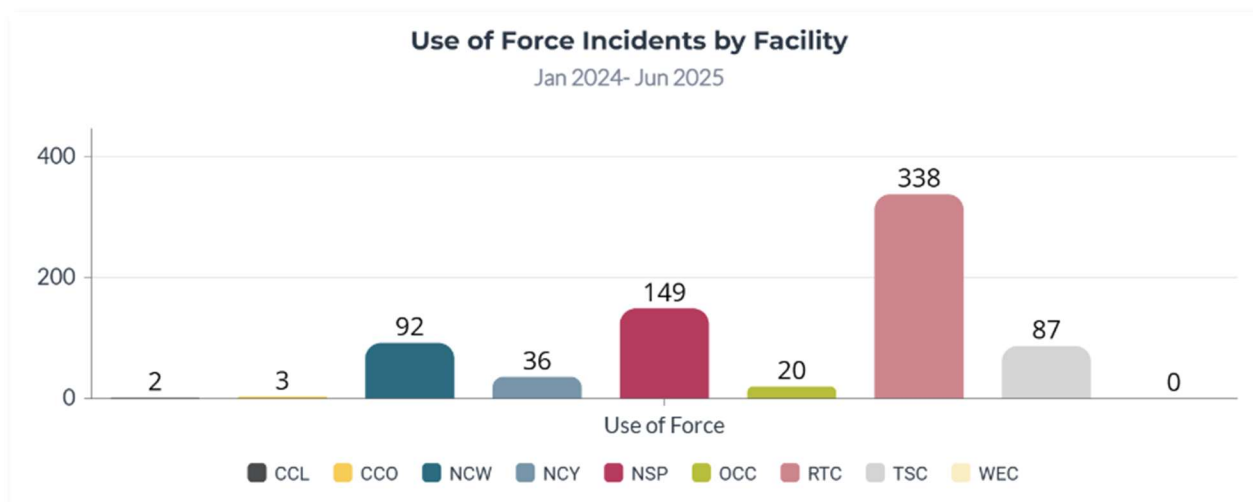
The office of the chief inspector monitors use of force incidents, use of force training, use of force policies, and reviews all complaints of excessive use of force. The chief inspector also serves as an ad hoc member of the use of force review committee whenever needed.

Overview

Within the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS), use of force is a term that describes the response to an incident where physical intervention is necessary to protect, resolve, or minimize an incident. The agency takes great care in training team members on the use of force continuum, emphasizing de-escalation tactics as a primary avenue for resolving incidents. When using force becomes necessary, team members are trained holistically to only use the amount of force necessary to resolve the incident. This careful and intentional approach to using force allows team members to resolve situations with reduced physical harm potential.

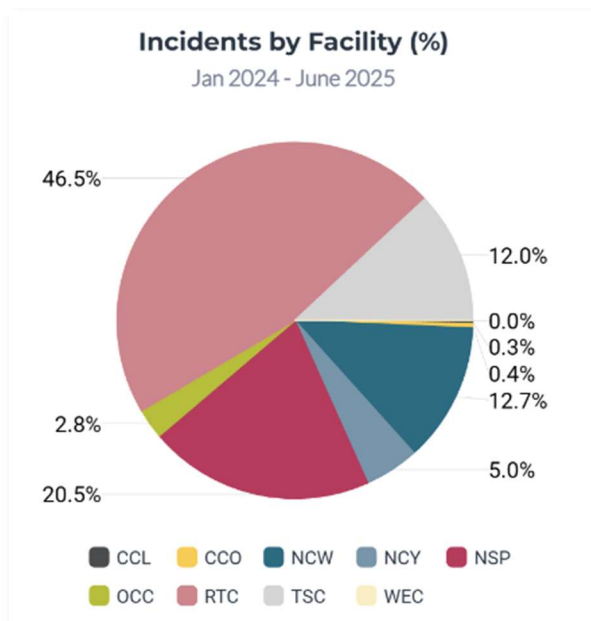
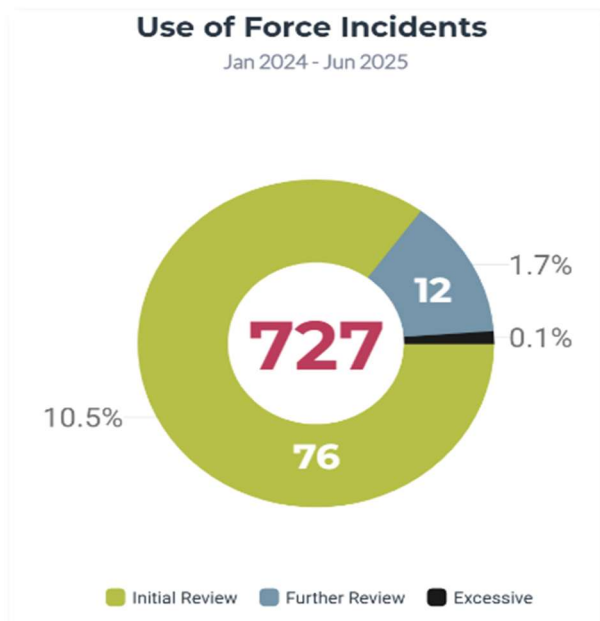
The next section highlights pertinent use of force statistics for these reporting periods. Subsequent sections will discuss improvement opportunities based on those statistics.

Outcomes

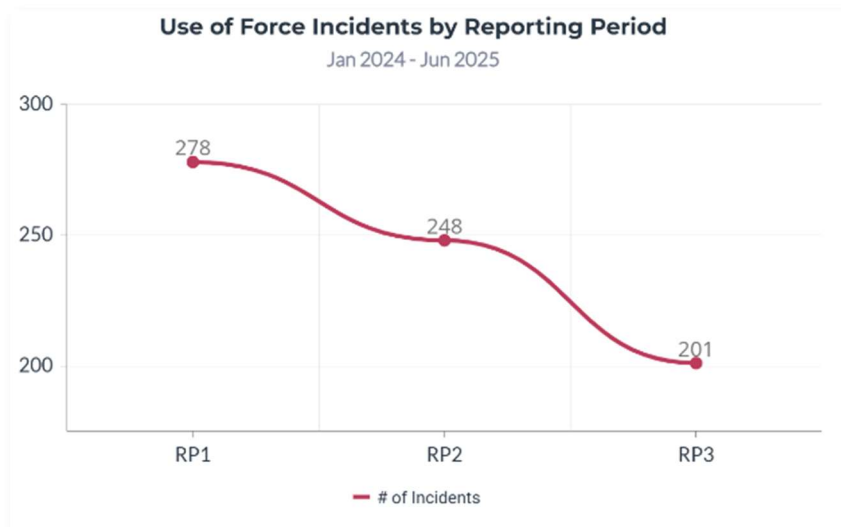


Of the 727 use of force incidents agency wide, 76 incidents warranted further review by the use of force committee and 12 were recommended for investigation.

One incident was determined to be excessive, meaning the force used did not align with department expectations or policy. In such incidents, the report is forwarded to the appropriate administrative team members for corrective action.

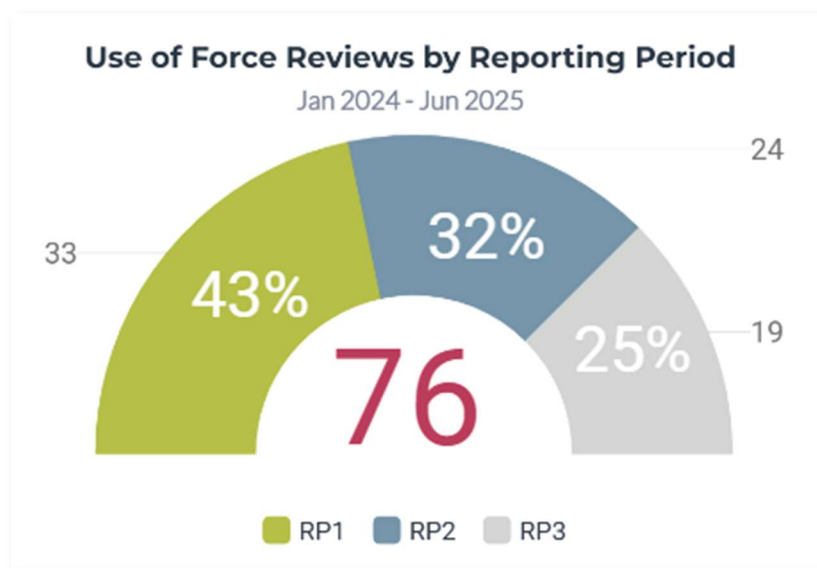


Notable Trends



During the reporting period, use of force data across the agency showed some encouraging movement.

The most noticeable shift was a steady decline in both the number of incidents and how frequently those cases required follow-up by the use of force committee



The decrease in both incidents and reviews suggest less serious incidents requiring physical intervention have occurred.

Improvement Opportunities

Based on a data analysis of use of force incidents, the following section outlines both the opportunities for improvement and the enhancements that have already been implemented. The agency is committed to reducing violent interactions across all facilities.

Group Violence Reduction Strategies

Group violence reduction strategy is an initiative that centers around prevention. The premise of the strategy focuses on an incarcerated individual's associations after high-level assaults occur. Naturally, your associations can influence a significant portion of personal behavior. In recognition of this, NDCS has developed this initiative to curb violent behavior influenced by group mentality.

When high-level assaults are identified, assaults using weapons or involving multiple people, NDCS conducts investigations into the associations of every incarcerated individual involved in the incident. If an incarcerated individual's associates are found to have influenced the incident, they are also held accountable by losing privileges such as day room access, phone time, or other restrictions

The goal of the strategy is not punitive in nature. The initiative is meant to deter incarcerated individuals from coordinating violent behavior in group settings by expanding accountability to all known associates of the incident, regardless of direct physical involvement. By holding associates accountable, NDCS hopes to curb planned violent incidents and discourage more intricate criminal actions.

Targeting Homemade Alcohol Before It Turns Violent

One of the most influential and preventable instigators of Use of Force incidents is the presence of intoxicants. Being under the influence of an intoxicant can cause unpredictable and potentially aggressive behavior.

Trash bags are one of the most easily accessible and commonly used containers to make homemade alcohol. In observation of this, NDCS has limited access to trash bags across the department. In some cases, access has been eliminated completely to prevent the creation of intoxicants.

Other basic materials used in the production of homemade alcohol are being limited and preventative measures are continually being explored. Fewer incidents related to intoxicants are already being reported, leading to less unpredictable and aggressive behavior as a result.

Sanitation Incentive Program

NDCS has introduced a sanitation incentive program to promote cleaner and calmer environments, contributing to a reduction of violent outbursts. Incentives are simple and can consist of extra property, increased recreation time, and improved access to programming. While these incentives seem trivial, tension drops when the environment remains clean and organized, less disputes occur, and incarcerated individuals benefit from extra incentives.

Limiting Outside Food Items

Outside food items that are not easy to access, can become enticing contraband in the facility if circulated. Such contraband can also cause disputes because of its rarity. As such, limiting outside food is meant to proactively decrease these disputes.

While offering outside food can be an effective incentive for program completion, the safety of the institution must be considered carefully when deciding to allow outside food items in the facilities.

True Custody Model

NDCS is shifting to a true custody model that classifies incarcerated individuals based on their behavior. The goal of this model is to create a more stable and predictable environment by housing individuals with similar custody classifications together. This new approach incentivizes positive behavior by placing incarcerated individuals in lower custody environments, while persistent behavioral issues result in a higher classification and more restrictive environments.

This model also simplifies administrative management and improves overall operational outcomes for the agency. By aligning with a true custody model, NDCS aims to reduce violent interactions and minimize the use of force across our facilities.

Improved Oversight

Use of force reporting has been adjusted in the digital documentation system. Team members will not only record what they did during an incident, but also what was observed regarding others. This gives a boarder view of what happened and makes follow-up reviews more meaningful. It also encourages a shared sense of accountability among team members.

These changes reflect an intentional effort to manage situations more effectively. The goal is to create a more stable and predictable environment where force is used less often. Reviewing prior use of force events and updating policy accordingly improves the environment and outcomes for both team members and incarcerated individuals.

Internal Investigation Monitoring

Monitoring internal investigations is vital for fostering transparency, accountability, and fairness within our agency. This oversight ensures all investigations are prompt, impartial, and thorough, building public trust and reducing legal liability. It promotes a culture of accountability, encouraging employees to uphold ethical standards and to report misconduct. This process also supports data-driven decision-making, allowing leadership to identify systemic issues and implement preventative measures.

***Special Investigations: At the request of the NDCS Director, Assistant Director, or independently from the NDCS Chief Inspector, this office will conduct special investigations, reviews, inspections, or audits within the agency.*

Workplace Harassment Prevention

The process of monitoring workplace harassment investigations serves three essential purposes, which include: maintaining compliance standards, safeguarding team members, and building an environment based on accountability. The system guarantees proper investigation of all harassment claims and demonstrates the organization's dedication to harassment prevention.

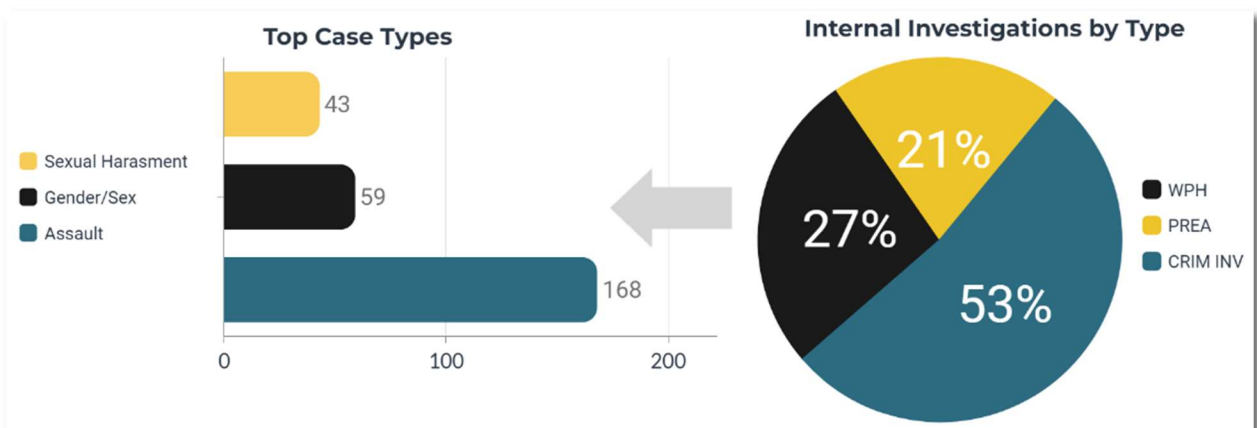
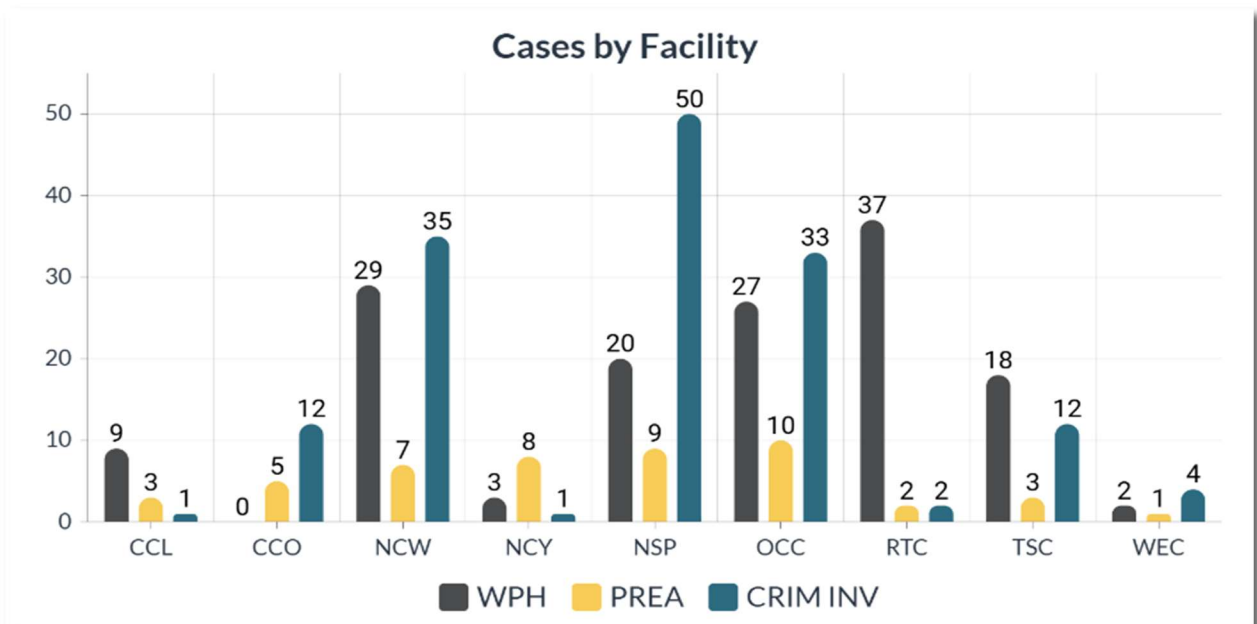
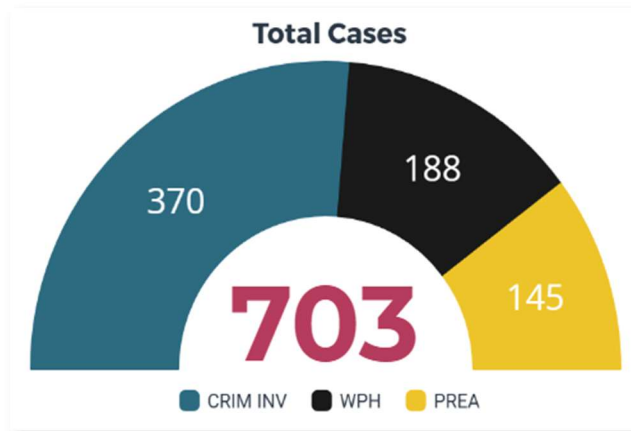
Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Complaint Monitoring

The monitoring of PREA related complaints or incidents in our facilities serves three main purposes, which include: maintaining compliance standards, safeguarding at-risk populations, and creating safer environments. The system ensures complete investigation of PREA-related claims while maintaining accountability standards and upholding facility-wide sexual assault/abuse prevention efforts.

Criminal Investigation Monitoring

Monitoring criminal investigations is crucial for ensuring due process, protecting the rights of individuals, and upholding the integrity of NDCS criminal investigations. This ensures that criminal investigations are conducted ethically and legally, reinforcing our commitment to justice and encouraging the public to have greater confidence in our agency.

All three types of monitoring, **Workplace Harassment Prevention, Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Complaints, and Criminal Investigations**, are crucial for ensuring compliance and fostering accountability. While they share common goals, they differ in their specific focus and the populations they aim to protect. All three emphasize proper investigation of allegations, reinforcing a commitment to ethical conduct, and encouraging individuals to report misconduct.



Workplace Harassment Prevention Overview

The Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS) takes workplace harassment (WPH) allegations seriously, providing protection and support for all team members. The department has trained WPH investigators in all facilities who address reported misconduct. In addition, NDCS regularly updates investigative expectations for WPH related incidents, ensuring each case is given proper attention and resolved appropriately. NDCS tracks outcomes across a variety of defined areas regarding these administrative cases. When appropriate, NDCS utilizes formal discipline relative to the nature and severity of the incident. These forms of discipline and investigative procedures ensure WPH is addressed to facilitate a more inclusive and positive work environment.

The next sections highlight the pertinent WPH statistics. Subsequent sections will discuss improvement opportunities based on those statistics.

Outcomes

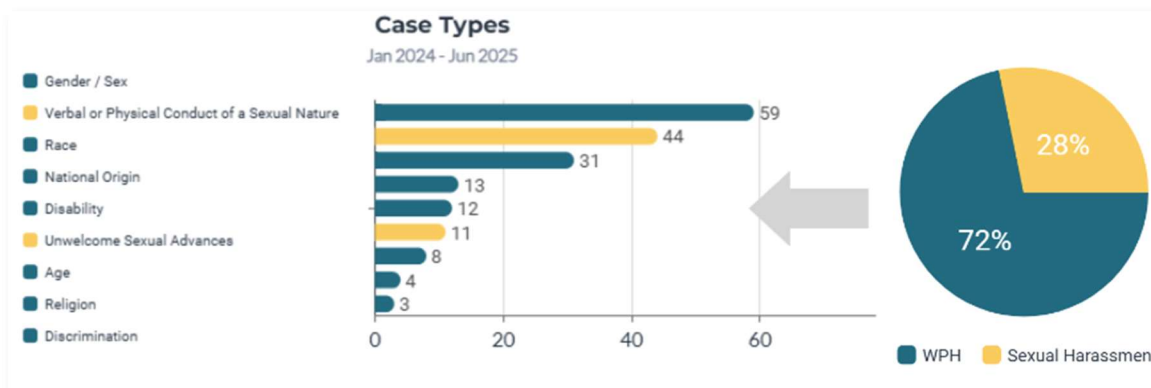
188 WPH Reports



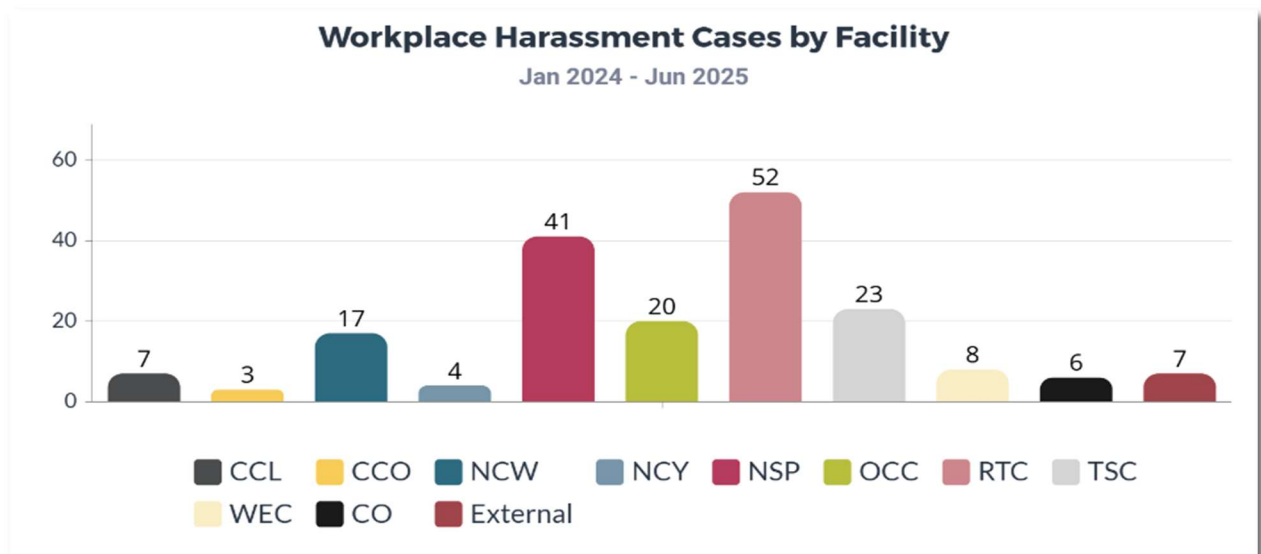
Upon investigation, 41 (21.8%) cases were found to be substantiated, while seven (3.72%) were unfounded, 127 (67.55%) cases were unsubstantiated, and 13 cases (6.91%) remain open.

**Open cases may not close within the same reporting period, causing future fluctuations in reporting data for closed cases.*

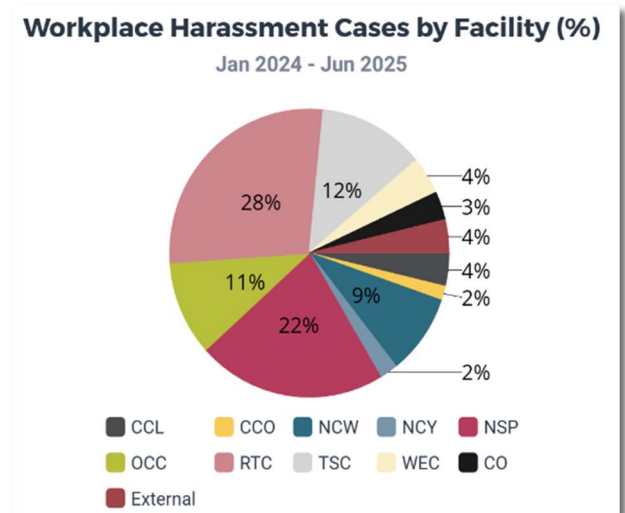
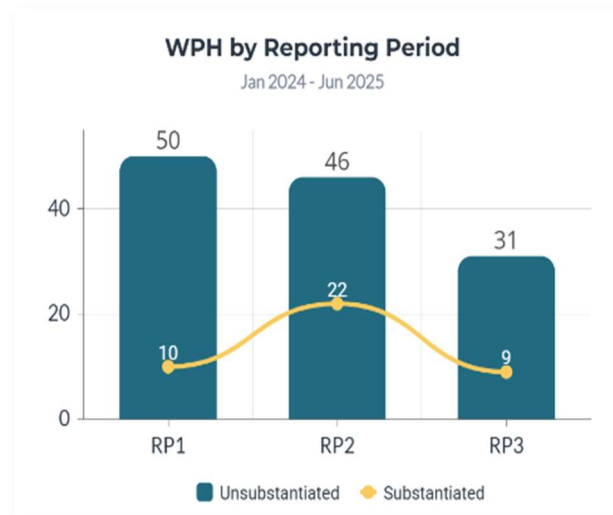
Workplace harassment reports fall into two overall categories: sexual harassment and harassment involving protected characteristics outlined in state statute.



Categories with a single investigation included: discrimination based on color, discrimination based on genetics, and discrimination influenced by both race and gender.



Notable Trends



Resolutions arising from WPH cases recorded 13 statements of charges (SOC) in reporting period one, 20 in two, and 12 in three.

In some unsubstantiated results an SOC was issued for other misconduct found unrelated to the WPH case.

Improvement Opportunities

One of the most notable improvements to WPH investigations is the implementation of refined data-tracking methodology. Every department conducting investigations within NDCS will begin tracking data in a similar manner, allowing each area to inform the other encouraging more detailed outcomes. Furthermore, standardizing data collection processes across different areas of investigative interest allows the department to identify trends and improve insights, including WPH results.

Another added benefit regarding improved data collection is the availability of information for investigators. As time goes on, collected data will be able to help inform and contextualize investigations. For example, investigators will be able to easily pull past data of previous investigations conducted on individuals to identify patterns of behavior. These methods improve WPH related investigations as well as overall investigative outcomes. Additionally, this information will be used by NDCS for training or policy improvements.

Quality Control Enhancements

Along with improved data, WPH investigators have their investigations reviewed by law clerks prior to the investigators submitting the final report, allowing for a better-quality report. Allowing law clerks to proofread reports improves the practical elements of the written report and encourages an impartial party to review and comment on the quality and readability of the investigation. Doing so provides accountability for investigators while also strengthening the investigative process. These quality control procedures allow for an improved investigative report, leading to better results overall.

Upgrading Investigative Processes

Several investigation time extensions were noted throughout the reporting period, prompting a review of the allotted time for investigations. Implementing a longer period for investigative work could lead to a higher quality in investigations regarding WPH-related cases. An additional remedy could be broadening the pool of trained investigators allowed to work on WPH-related cases. These two adjustments to the investigative process could ensure investigations are conducted properly.

A new format for reporting on the conclusion of investigations throughout the department will also be implemented, creating greater reporting improvements which provide clearer narratives for WPH investigative reports. Additionally, technology improvement regarding recording equipment for interviews and computer programs for transcribing interviews are being explored for more detailed analysis, enhancing WPH investigative process and timeliness of the investigations.

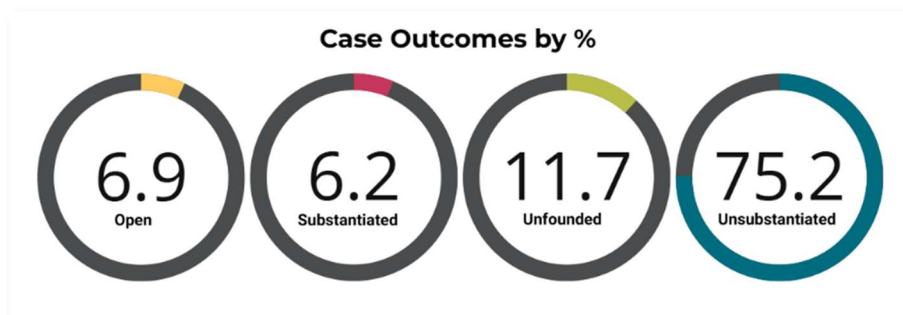
Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Overview

The Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS) continues to be in full compliance with the law and currently has robust resources to address and protect against sexual misconduct. Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) is a federal law requiring correctional systems to create protective measures against sexual misconduct. Monitoring the PREA processes in our facilities is important for ensuring compliance, protecting vulnerable individuals, and fostering a culture of safety and accountability. This ensures that all sexual abuse and harassment allegations are properly investigated, promoting accountability, reinforces the facility's commitment to preventing sexual abuse and encourages team members to uphold ethical standards.

The next section highlights pertinent PREA statistics. Subsequent sections will discuss improvement opportunities based on those statistics.

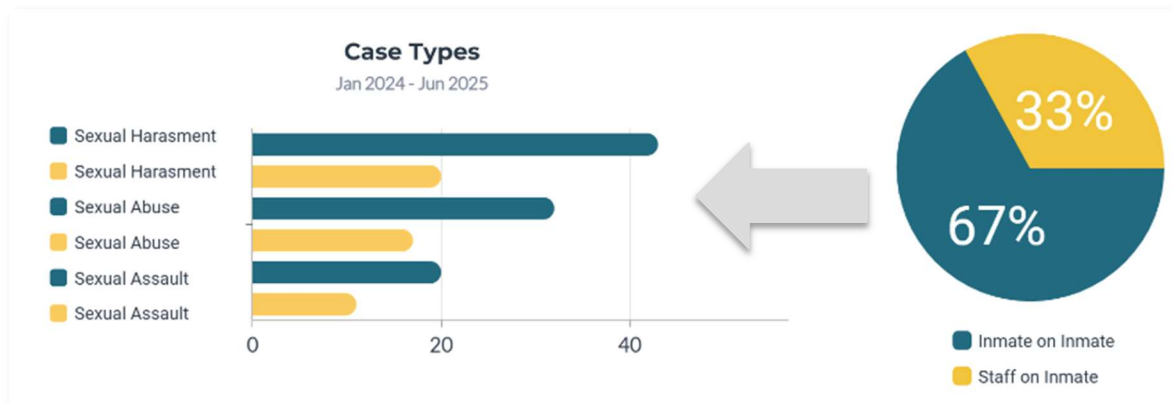
Outcomes

145 PREA Reports

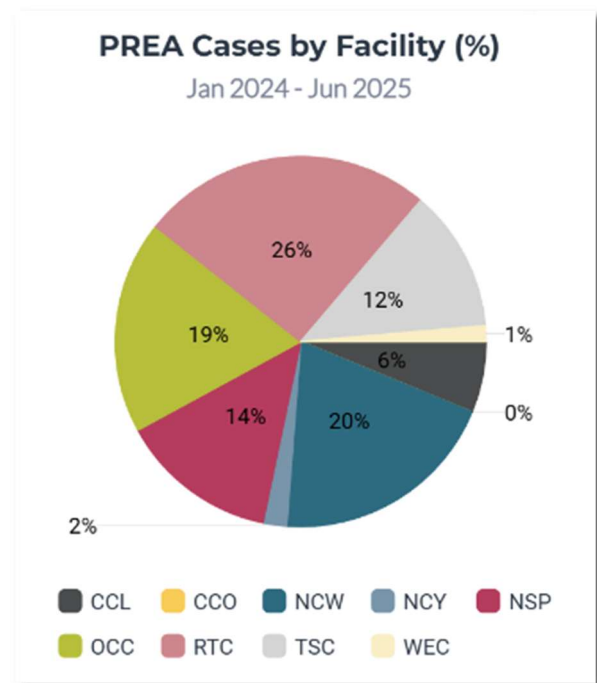
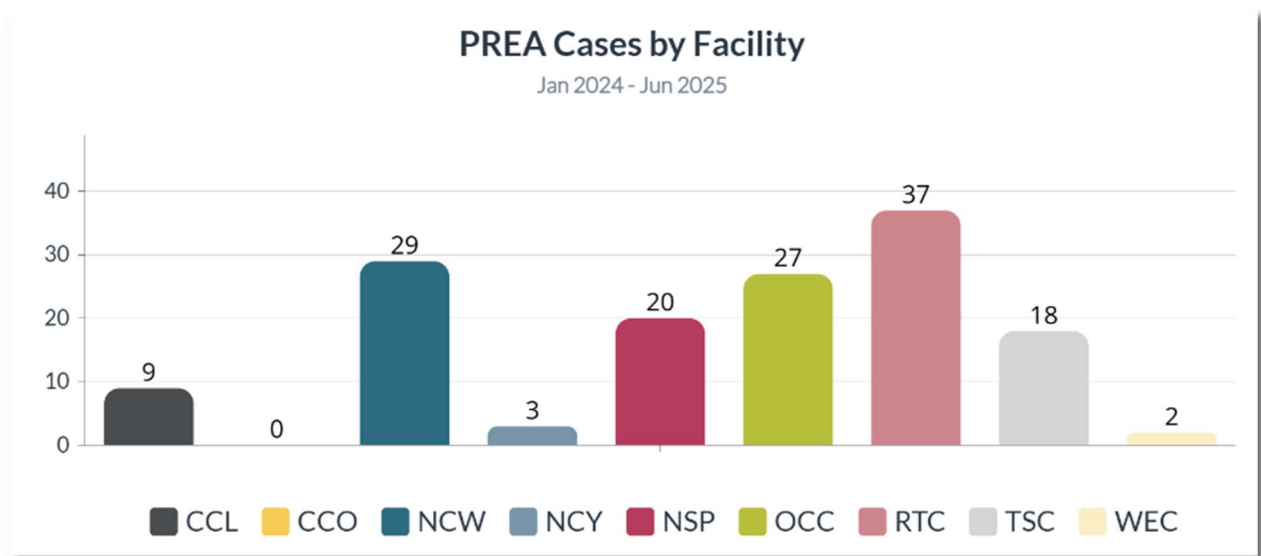


109 reports were unsubstantiated. An additional 17 were unfounded, followed by nine incidents substantiated and ten cases still ongoing.

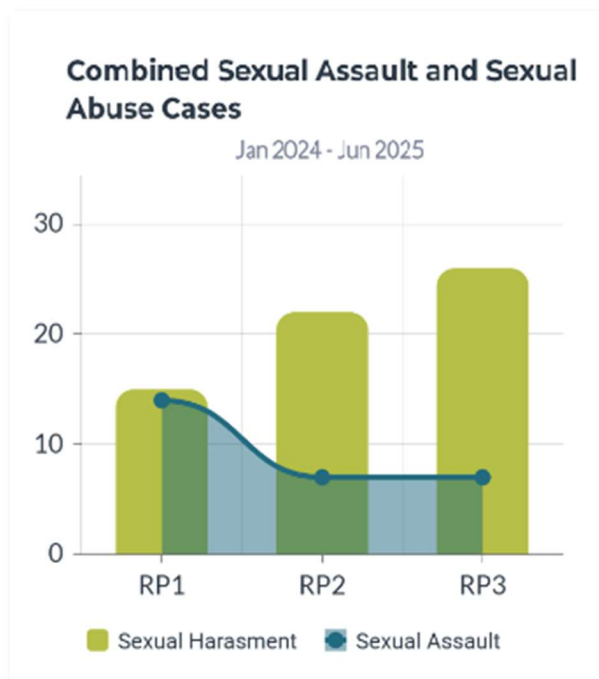
**Open cases may not close within the same reporting period, causing future fluctuations in reporting data for closed cases.*



Categories with a single investigation included: Inmate on Inmate Voyeurism and Parolee on Inmate Sexual Abuse.



Notable Trends



Combined sexual assault related cases decreased between periods, while sexual harassment cases increased.

Improvement Opportunities

NDCS recognizes the importance of capturing data, continuous auditing, and training to implement specific areas of improvement throughout the agency. These initiatives will keep our systems accountable and ensure policy and processes remain relevant.

PREA Audits

During the first reporting period, NDCS participated in three independent audits conducted by a nationally certified PREA auditor. During these audits, three areas to improve were identified: retaliation monitoring, team members of the opposite gender announcing their presence in units and ensuring completion of the four-hour specialized training for health service team members.

NDCS also began developing internal audit procedures like the national audit process, allowing our agency to ensure compliance with national and federal standards.

Federal PREA Standards Training

NDCS has embarked on developing a more vigorous training course regarding PREA standards. The training will assist team members in understanding the reasoning behind standards, fostering a more educated and informed environment regarding PREA expectations.

Compliance Team

NDCS created a stronger compliance team managed by the agency security administrator. This team is comprised of the policy and accreditation coordinator who is an American Correctional Association (ACA) certified auditor, the captain/PREA coordinator, and the safety and emergency preparedness coordinator.

Each area will work together to inform the others, creating an environment of collaboration that strengthens processes across the department. Specifically, combining these areas into one unified team ensures unique perspective and stronger compliance in all areas.

Criminal Investigations Overview

The Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS) refers to criminal investigations as investigations conducted on the population relating to criminal activity. While NDCS strives to maintain a safe environment, some criminal actions inevitably happen. When criminal conduct does occur, NDCS has a team of dedicated investigators who conduct thorough investigations to hold responsible parties accountable. Investigators in the department handle a variety of cases spanning a multitude of topics.

Criminal investigations provide an avenue to hold incarcerated individuals accountable for more criminal conduct such as serious assaults, trafficking, or other actions where NDCS Institutional Disciplinary Committees are insufficient to address the extent of the conduct being performed. Beyond accountability, investigations allow the department to gather information around the nature of the incident. This information allows the department to prevent future criminal actions by implementing procedures that prevent criminal behavior before becoming serious.

The next sections highlight the pertinent criminal investigation statistics. Subsequent sections will discuss improvement opportunities based on those statistics.

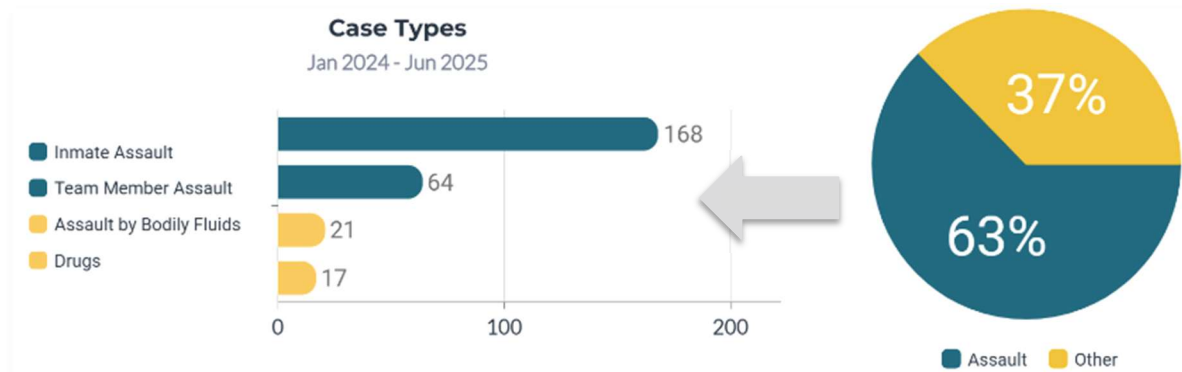
Outcomes

370 Total Cases

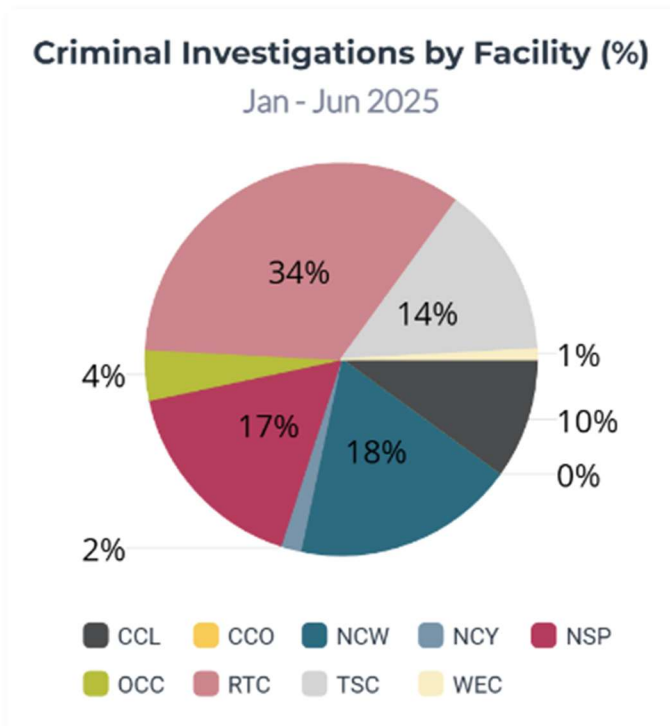
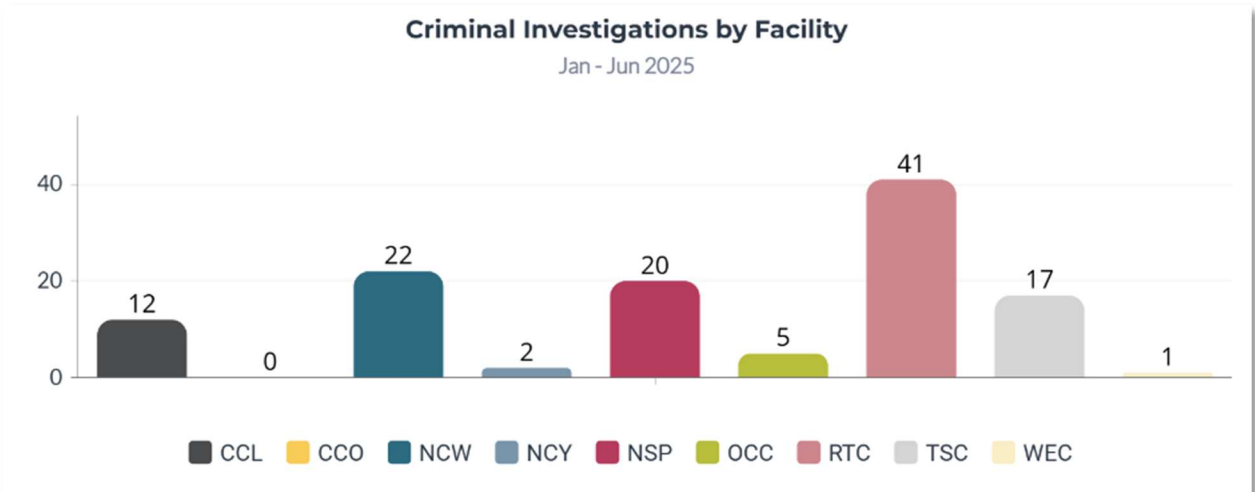


Of the 370 cases investigated, 328 (88%) were completed, 29 (8%) are pending more information, and 16 (4%) remain open.

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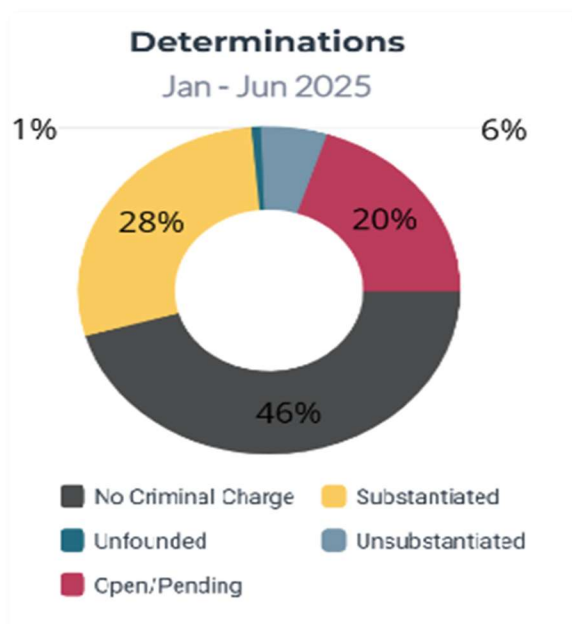


Investigations from physical assault-related incidents were the most frequent with 168 (45%) and an additional 64 cases (17%) associated with physical team member assaults.

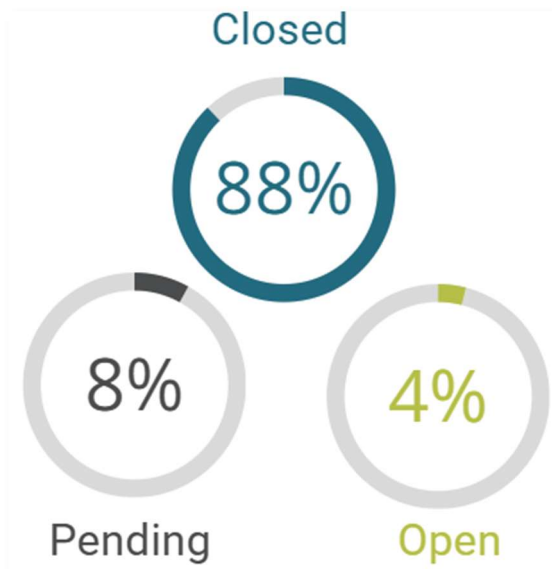
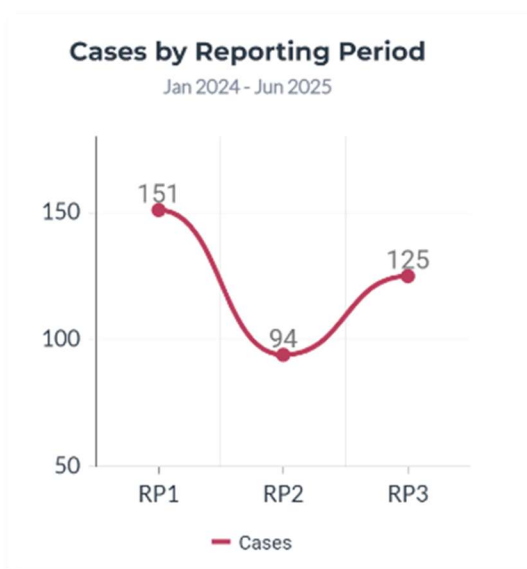


NDCS has a team of dedicated investigators who conduct thorough investigations to hold responsible parties accountable. Investigators in the department handle a variety of cases spanning a multitude of topics.

Notable Trends



Determination data related to cases is not available for 2024, but improved data tracking methods have allowed the department to track determination outcomes regarding criminal investigations for 2025 and in the future.



Outcomes consist of most cases closing within the reporting periods (88%). The number of cases pending information included 8% of all cases, and 4% of cases remained open, meaning investigations are ongoing.

Improvement Opportunities

As previously mentioned, the improvement opportunities section identifies both existing process improvement opportunities and possible areas for improvement that were identified regarding criminal investigations.

Communication Initiatives

To promote synergy across departments, multiple initiatives surrounding improved communication channels were developed. Facility communication is crucial since team members at the facility level are the individuals typically interacting with the evidence and witnessing the events warranting criminal investigation. Acknowledging this, investigators welcomed collaboration with facility intelligence teams and agency security administrators. Coordination between teams and facility executive team members allowed for improved evidence collection, reporting, and more refined investigative processes.

Another essential improvement was apparent regarding communication with the Nebraska State Patrol. Occasionally, NDCS investigators would inherit cases from other agencies, including the Nebraska State Patrol, who could ask NDCS investigative team members to assist with cases. Additionally, some criminal actions happening in facilities are reported and directly investigated by outside law enforcement agencies. Recognizing this essential relationship, NDCS enhanced collaboration with the Nebraska State Patrol to better comply with their expectations regarding these important criminal investigations.

NDCS investigative team members are also always experimenting with ways to better communicate with each other. A perceived area of improvement regarding team communication was identified with the implementation of team meetings to discuss challenging cases, investigative plans, and other pertinent information. These meetings encourage essential information sharing, improving continuous learning between investigative team members to promote best practices.

Expanding the Investigations Team

Predictably, caseloads have increased with more cases pending and a steady influx of cases continuing across periods. Due to the increase of cases, NDCS has appointed another investigator, increasing NDCS investigators to three.

Expanding the investigations teams allows NDCS to complete investigations in a timely manner. Overall, expanding the investigations team will allow for faster, better, and more detailed work.

Enhanced Evidence and Standard of Proof Procedures

Another identifiable area of improvement is NDCS evidence collection, handling, and presentation procedures. Every NDCS facility has an evidence custodian who oversees storing evidence in a manner that preserves the chain of custody of the evidence. Along with the evidence custodian, NDCS has protocols for handling evidence before securing evidence with the custodian. The NDCS investigations department has been working with these key team members to better collect, store, and preserve evidence, which will improve the efficacy of investigations moving forward.

Furthermore, investigative team members have been meeting with county attorneys to gain a better understanding of the thresholds needed for prosecuting NDCS related cases. This knowledge allows investigators to collect evidence with more intentionality. Combined, these two initiatives have greatly improved evidence collection and handling.

Team Member Training Compliance

The Office of the NDCS Chief Inspector tracks and monitors team member training to ensure compliance with established training requirements in policy and/or law.

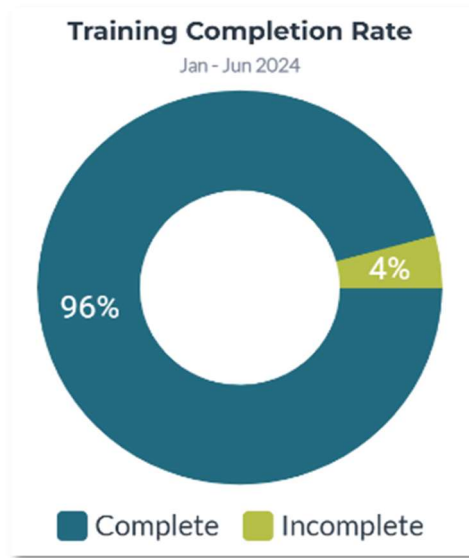
Overview

One of the most important areas of operational importance is team members. Our agency strategic plan acknowledges the importance of equipping team members, designating people as a core focus area. As such, keeping team members up to date on training requirements is imperative to the agency's goals. Well trained team members produce greater outcomes, respond more appropriately to incidents, and make our operations run with excellence. NDCS has designated yearly training for new and seasoned team members alike. New team members undergo extensive pre-service training, which is a combination of in-person, online, and on-the-job training. Veteran team members participate in service training consisting of a combination of online and in person refresher courses.

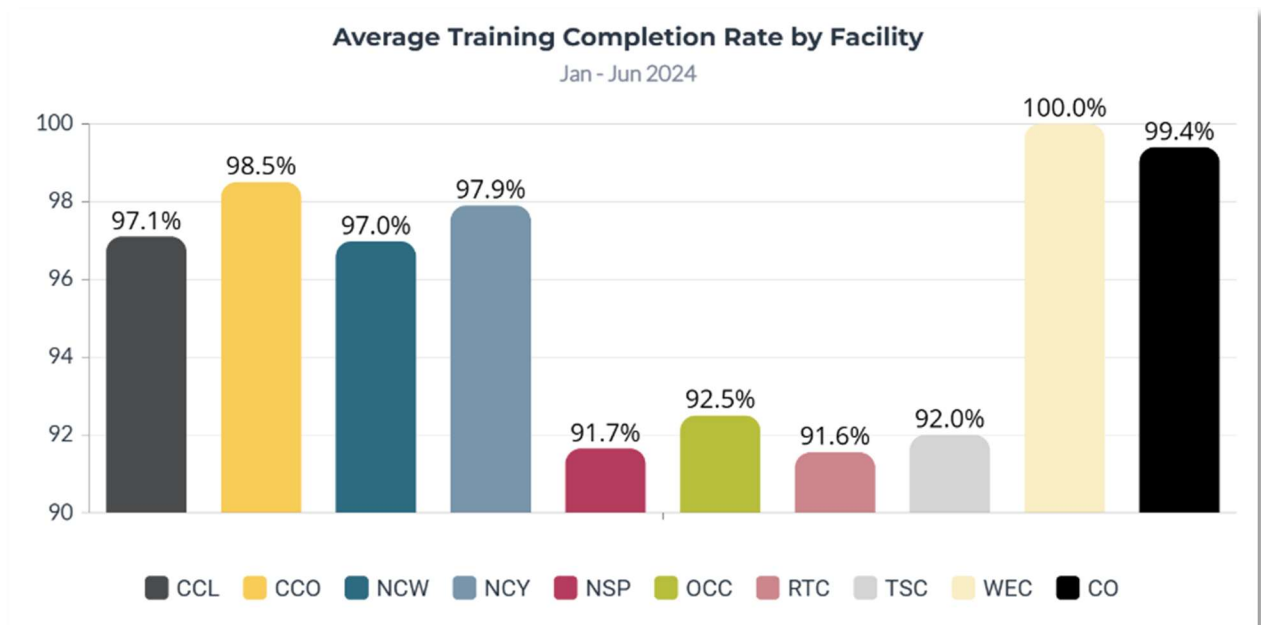
Team members are trained in a multitude of areas and tested yearly on many skills to ensure sufficient performance. NDCS trains team members on CPR/AED/First Aid techniques, PPCT Defensive Tactics, Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) skills, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) considerations and an additional 12 topics. Each training topic covers important aspects of the job and equips team members to work with our populations.

The subsequent sections will provide various overviews and facility specific compliance data related to the completion of yearly training for team members. Additional sections will outline improvement opportunities identified through data analysis.

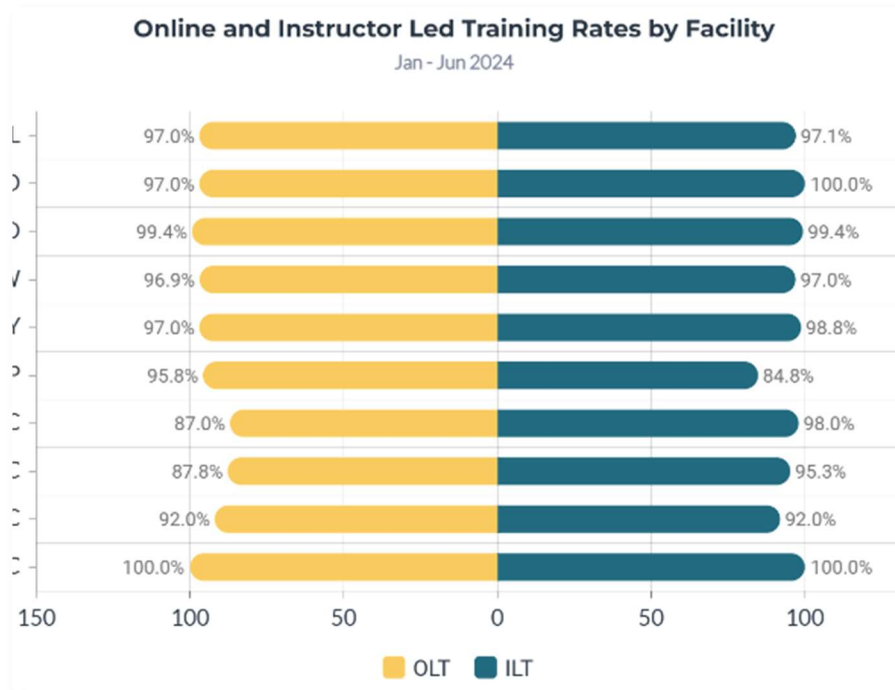
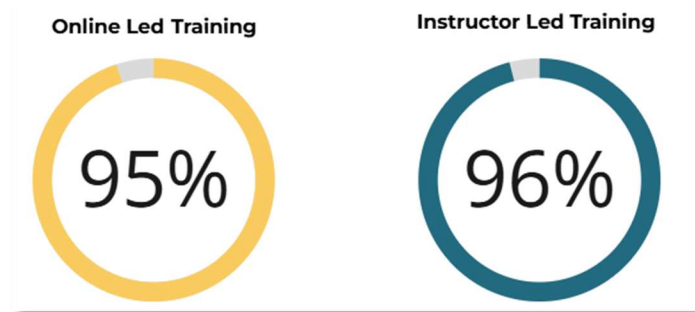
Outcomes



The training completion rates for both Online Training (OLT) and Instructor Training (ILT) were **95.82%** in 2024, representing a strong rate of completion for required training throughout the agency.



Notable Trends

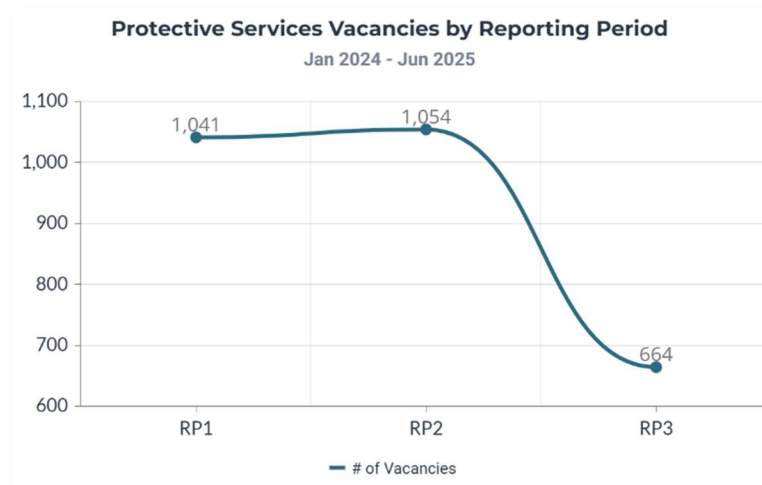


OLT training had a completion rate of 95% agency wide, while ILT training had a 96% completion rate.

All incomplete training was either excused or resulted in corrective action.

Over the past 12 months, we have seen a significant decline in protective services vacancies as well as overall vacancies across the agency.

Protective services accounts for positions specific to security – Corrections Corporals, Caseworkers, and Sergeants.



Improvement Opportunities

The following sections represent current improvement opportunities currently being implemented and potential opportunities for improvement identified through data collection contained within this report.

Targeted Training Support

NDCS remains committed to increasing team members' completion of mandatory training. While training compliance remains strong, data suggests that targeting lower compliance rates at certain facilities and across certain training platforms represents an opportunity to improve training compliance. Along with targeted support, learning about barriers to training completion at these specific sites could provide insights that make training more accessible across the department. NDCS will continue to gather compliance data related to training, identifying struggling facilities and developing targeted support to increase training compliance rates agency wide.

Training Implementation and Evaluation

When the curriculum is more engaging, completion rates are naturally improved. Continually developing curriculum using real-time feedback is an important avenue for better training curriculum. In recognition of this, tracking individual-level data regarding completion rates represents an opportunity for improvement. Individual data could reveal what specific classes are most often incomplete. Knowing this, training team members can work to address barriers regarding specific classes. Furthermore, incorporating team members feedback when a team member completes training through surveys, among other means, is a targeted way to use data to refine curriculum. Finally, evaluating delivery methods for Instructor Led Training (ILT) courses to ensure consistent delivery and engagement between training locations could help not only refine ILT, but increase attendance agency wide. All these implementation and evaluation methods represent improvement opportunities that could teach the department how to refine, administer, and remove barriers to training.

Legislative Reports

Overview

The Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS) is mandated to report on specific areas of operations within our institutions. Our agency strives to track and provide informative data to the legislature, allowing them to make informed decisions regarding Nebraska's correctional system. Currently, the legislature mandates the NDCS to report on the following areas: Mandatory Discharges, Biennium Budget Strategic Plans, Restrictive Housing, Work Ethic Camp Facility Report, Correctional System Overcrowding Report, and the Juvenile Confinement Report.

The subsequent section summarizes the outcomes from our most recent reports. By providing clear and reliable data, NDCS continues to comply with legislative mandates, displaying operational excellence.

[2025 Mandatory Discharge Report](#)

The 2025 Mandatory Discharge Report, submitted by the Nebraska Board of Parole and the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services, presents an extensive overview of discharges from NDCS in 2024. The report targets incarcerated individuals who serve their entire sentence and were released without any supervision. Out of 2,046 total discharges, 865 incarcerated individuals (42.3%) were released directly from an NDCS facility without post-release supervision or parole. Notably, 56.4% of 2024 releases (1,153 people) consisted of releases through some sort of supervision.

Reentry planning was strong with most individuals who were parole-eligible or not eligible for parole completing a personalized reentry plan before release. 89% of individuals with "no history of parole" and 92% of individuals "not eligible for parole" completed these personalized plans. Additionally, comprehensive reentry efforts included Reentry specialists meeting with individuals during incarceration.

Both agencies identified several areas of improvement to include scheduling earlier parole hearings, enhancing collaboration between agencies, expanding evidence-based programming, and strengthening access to education and workforce development.

[2024 Biennium Budget Strategic Plan Report](#)

The Biennium Budget Strategic Plan Report details the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services strategy based on our agencies four pillars: People, Policies, Programs, and Physical Plant. The report details positive trends regarding outcomes in many operational areas. One of the achievements was the reduction in team member turnover, which declined from 555 in Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 to 425 in FY 2024. The measured focus on people has improved retention and overtime expenditures.

NDCS has also witnessed progress regarding rehabilitative programming. Program completion rates have increased from 2,189 in FY 2023 to 3,771 in FY 2024. The success rate of former incarcerated individuals has also improved, reaching 72%.

Facility safety has also experienced improvements. The number of serious injury assaults decreased distinctly from 42 in FY 2023 to just two in 2025 so far, indicating a decline in the use of force incidents.

[2024 Restrictive Housing Annual Report](#)

Restrictive housing reforms continue to align around practices to only use restrictive housing for incarcerated individuals who are identified as immediate safety risks. As such, restrictive housing for women was eliminated in 2021, which validates the agencies' obligation to only use restrictive housing for safety purposes.

Results in FY 2024 show reductions in the use of restrictive housing. Shorter stays were also reported. Both short term and long-term restrictive housing placements continue to be reviewed by multi-disciplinary teams, ensuring a focus of rehabilitation. Regardless of an incarcerated individual's placement in restrictive housing, many incarcerated individuals participate in various programs.

The NDCS is continually trying to address the needs of specialized populations. Recently, the NDCS has implemented specialized housing, leading to greater access to mental health services. These units will further decrease the need for restrictive housing in the future.

[2024 Work Ethic Camp Legislative Report](#)

The 2024 Work Ethic Camp (WEC) legislative report details the facilities continued success and value. WEC was originally established to alleviate prison overcrowding and continues to do so.

WEC has admitted over 8,500 incarcerated individuals, with 6,800 (81.8%) completing the program successfully. In FY 2024, 91% of incarcerated individuals released from WEC were considered successful, while removals and program failures decreased by 50%.

WEC offers a variety of programs and opportunities. These include employment training, education services, substance use treatment, cognitive behavioral therapy. Vocational courses as well as other personal growth courses such as Inside Out Dads, Seven Habits, and Illegal to Legal are also available. These services provide a positive outlet for incarcerated individuals.

[2023 Correctional System Overcrowding Report](#)

In 2023, the Correctional Overcrowding report summarized parole statistics as it relates to the Correctional System Overcrowding Act. The report details parole progress from July 1, 2020, through November 30, 2023.

In total, 2,859 individuals were released on parole during the reporting period. Most parolees, 1,399 or 48.9%, completed parole successfully while 691 (24.2%) continued to be supervised. Another 267 parolees (9.4%) received formal sanctions and 769 (26.9%) had their parole revoked. Over 90% of incarcerated individuals released on parole completed the program successfully or are still currently under supervision without any sanction.

The report also denotes supervision activities including sanctioning statistics which reveal 5,794 intermediate sanctions were imposed across 1,484 parole clients.

[2024-25 FY Q3 Juvenile Confinement Report](#)

The NDCS Juvenile Confinement Report outlines the confinement of youthful offenders at the Nebraska Correctional Youth Facility (NCY) between January and March 2025. The report includes information on when confinements occurred, why they happened, how long they lasted, and what barriers affected the return of juveniles to the general population.

Team members recorded 51 confinement events. Forty-two were the result of sight and sound separation requirements. These federal guidelines are in place to ensure youth are kept physically and audibly separate from adult incarcerated individuals. Other reasons for confinement included investigative status (four cases), intake orientation (2), and safety issues, either due to a youth being at risk from others (1) or posing a risk to others (1).

Structural barriers remained the biggest challenge in returning juveniles to regular housing. In 45 of the 51 cases, the physical layout of the facility made reintegration difficult. The remaining six were tied to behavioral issues, where youth refused to follow team members' direction.