



## Oklahoma County Detention Center

201 N. Shartel Avenue  
Oklahoma City, OK 73102  
Phone: 405.713.1930 / Fax: 405-713-1978

**TO: OKLAHOMA COUNTY CRIMINAL JUSTICE AUTHORITY**

**C/O: CHAIR TRICIA EVEREST**

**FROM: GREG WILLIAMS, JAIL ADMINISTRATOR**

**DATE: January 29, 2021**

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On July 1, 2020, OCDC took over operation of the Oklahoma County Jail. The safety of Oklahoma County is our top priority. Now, six months into the operation of the jail, this report will provide an update.

When it comes to the population of the facility, OCDC relies on the public safety determinations of the D.A.'s office and district judges, and we defer to the D.A.'s office and district judges in that regard. Where the District Attorney has charged

#### **VISION STATEMENT**

**Operate a secure, safe, efficient, and humane facility for employees and arrestees that promotes teamwork, harmony, honesty, integrity, commitment to progressiveness, sobriety, and respect;**

**Promote efficiency while maintaining a safe environment for citizens, employees and arrestees by responsibly managing the resources and the trust given to us by the citizens and elected officials of Oklahoma County, never forgetting that the safety of Oklahoma County is our top priority; and**

**Work with our community, volunteers, and partner agencies to provide effective and professional public safety services for all who have been placed in our custody.**

a person with a crime and the district court has entered an order requiring that person to be detained at OCDC, we defer to those determinations. Further, it is a court order, and we are required to comply with it. In any event, we certainly cooperate with the public safety determinations by the D.A.'s office and district judges.

The OCDC population is also driven by detainees who have been convicted in district court and sentenced, but for which there is no cell at the Department of Corrections. We work with the Department of Corrections to move detainees into their custody as soon as possible, but the DOC is limited in how many they can accept at any given time.

The OCDC has made several reforms to reduce the effects of overcrowding. The OCDC has remained persistent in its vision, and worked to shift the paradigm toward a more humane and compassionate experience for detainees. KWTV News reported that detainees recognized the improvements occurring since July 1. "Their efforts are noticed," one detainee said. 'They're coming in and doing a lot of cleaning and the plumbing issues, they're trying to take care of our bedbugs.' 'I think it's gotten better, for the good,' another

said." [www.news9.com/story/60012092c3717c0baa978863](http://www.news9.com/story/60012092c3717c0baa978863).

While there's much work left to be done, our achievements are measurable. For example, in the short time we've operated OCDC, we have,



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- Reduced administrative segregation population by 58%
- Reviewed hundreds of applications, hiring 76 new employees including 52 Detention Officers
- Paid out \$1000/month in "Hero Pay" to increase retention efforts
- Provided nearly 600 hours of training over a six-month period
- Increased Academy training time for 2021 by 33%
- Renovated 62 previously inoperable cells
- Increased time spent outside the cell by 20%
- Expanded support and recovery programs
- Instituted child welfare visits and visitations without a court order
- Lowered the price per telephone call for our detainees
- Drastically increased spending on pest control and sanitation securing a weekly contract for services
- Reduced hands-on use of force using alternative methods for physical management of detainees

As we continue our efforts in the next 6 months, we are prioritizing the resolution of legacy issues which will help prevent future escapes, deaths, and allow us to best serve those placed in our custody, while maintaining safety in Oklahoma County. We are pushing to receive funding to upgrade our doors and locks, continuing our robust staffing efforts, and continuing to be good stewards of the funds entrusted to us. We look forward to our continued public service.

### 180 DAY UPDATE

#### ***Improving Detainee Programs***

Despite inherent difficulties of engaging volunteers during a pandemic, OCDC re-established and increased relationships with external partners to benefit detainees with productive services while incarcerated.

In recovery efforts alone, OCDC held its first internal AA meeting with fifteen (15) detainees, restarted the Celebration Recovery program, and made support materials accessible to detainees which were donated from partners such as Rob's Ranch, Oxford House, and Prison Fellowship.

We introduced and increased child welfare calls and virtual visitations with children through the Department of Human Services, and expect expanded services after COVID-19 concerns lessen.

To better equip our detainees for release, OCDC distributed information to both detainees and loved ones introducing them to Diversion Hub, which assists detainees after their release by providing life-stabilizing resources and empowering individuals to reduce their encounters with the criminal justice system. OCDC is also partnering with Goodwill to provide clothing for detainees upon release.

Going forward, OCDC has discussed plans with the Veteran's Administration to create a designated Veteran's POD in order to provide access to services and benefits specific to the needs of a military veteran. Although we cannot move forward with creating the POD while COVID-19 restrictions are in place, we continue to lay the groundwork for this project by reviewing veteran detainees to determine eligibility.

We also plan to continue looking at ways to improve the lives of our detainees while incarcerated. For example, we are planning a literacy program for detainees with little or no reading and writing skills as well as an art program. We are also examining how to leverage technology to allow detainees and their children to read together in conjunction with our literacy program, or permitting chaplains to provide individual virtual spiritual guidance or collective worship experiences



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during pandemic conditions. We are working with Metro Tech to allow detainees access to GED testing while incarcerated using Metro Tech resources. Finally, we are continuing conversations with the Office of Juvenile Affairs about needs and services for that population, as well as initiating dialogue with OCCY concerning transition of all juveniles into alternate detention placement during 2021.

### ***Improving Detainee Conditions and Services***

In addition to the programs above, other tangible improvements to the lives of detainees in OCDC include a fully implemented offender banking system which now issues debit cards to released detainees, rather than paper checks.

OCDC also increased the time spent by detainees in recreation or outside of the cell time by 20%, reduced the cost of calls from .25/minute to .16/minute through a new telephone system and provider contract, and expanded its food service contract in order to provide meals of better quality and calorie count. OCDC expended more than \$115,000 on detainee bedding and clothing to increase detainee health and safety, after OCSO terminated all purchases for clothing and bedding for the facility at least 90 days prior to 7/1/20.

OCDC Administration has worked with Turnkey Medical to replace leadership and staff in the facility and engage proactively with OCDC steering partnership to enhance overall medical and mental health care and cooperation with OCDC employees. We also entered into a MOU with the Disability Law Center to better address concerns and improve living conditions of disabled detainees in OCDC care.

### ***Improving Staffing, Ratios, and Training***

OCDC is committed to increasing staffing, while continuing to address staff shortages directly related to quarantine of staff based on exposure to or a positive test for COVID-19, additional staff required to provide COVID-19 testing services, and staff needed to adhere to additional COVID-19 safety efforts. Currently, approximately 10 employees are off work relating to positive COVID-19 testing and 142 employees have reported back to work after COVID-19 related leave. OCDC has expanded the Turnkey medical contract, adding staff for COVID-19 testing and record keeping.

OCDC Human Resources is working to shift to a customer service mentality throughout the facility. We performed a staff utilization analysis to create a more efficient staffing pattern and implemented new training for clerical positions to free up Detention Officer time in order to perform their critical duties.

Other efforts to increase staffing included a job fair with 41 applicants, and online marketing through Indeed.com which resulted in reviewing hundreds of applications and hiring 76 new employees, including 52 Detention Officers. We also hired off-duty law enforcement officers for 85-90 shifts/month of hospital security, allowing detention staff to man posts at the detention center. OCDC added an Executive Assistant to help coordinate schedules and provide administrative support to the Jail Administrator and his leadership team, and added an HR assistant to help with onboarding new staff and assisting HR director.

In order to increase retention of staff, OCDC implemented a \$1000 monthly "hero pay" program funded through a CARES Act allocation from Oklahoma County and evaluated positions for reclassifications and promotions creating more opportunity for advancement at OCDC. We also applied for and received commissioning authority from CLEET for current and future qualified personnel. Starting gross pay for a Detention Officer is \$2729/monthly and starting pay for clerical is



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\$2352/monthly. The HR department performs payroll audits for accuracy, which is a time-intensive task further complicated by the current payroll system.

OCDC emphasized robust training for its staff, including mentor training, which allows current Detention Officers to conduct on-the-job training for new hires. OCDC transferred the training unit from Spencer to be onsite at OCDC, and then secured an outside training location at the Moore Norman Technology Center (OKC South Campus). OCDC increased training to reduce contraband introduced into the facility, prepare for implementation of the new Jail Tracker system, and implement other defensive training, such as use of pepper jet as an alternative method to control use of force. We sent three employees to a DOC self-defense instructor training in order to refocus self-defense training from a law enforcement approach to a correctional approach, which includes stress compliance holds and hold escape techniques.

In total, OCDC provided nearly 600 hours of training in its initial 6 months, including 14 in-service classes during the months of November and December. The following is a breakdown of training conducted in 2020 for employees and contract staff:

<b><u>Number of Employees</u></b>	<b><u>Class</u></b>
54	Detention Officer Pre-service (total of 4 academies)
22	Clerical Pre-service (total of 4 academies)
60	Clerical observation training (9 classes)
10	Mentor training (4 classes)
6	JPX training (1 class)
46	Pepper Jet (3 classes)
57	Contract staff (Detainee Con Games) (4 classes)
64	Jail Tracker
114	Classroom In-service (14 classes)
3	Self-defense instructor school

Starting January 2021, OCDC expanded the Academy from 3 weeks (Monday through Thursday 0700 to 1730)(126 hours) to a 4 week Academy (Monday through Thursday 0700 to 1730) (168 hours). By adding the extra 42 hours OCDC is able to add communication skills exercises (verbal and nonverbal), scenario-based training (uncooperative detainee, refusal to lockdown, medical emergency, contraband) along with two additional days of defensive training. This expansion also allows for a small amount of time for additional review of material with the students, ensuring retention of information presented.

Ultimately, the public safety determinations of the D.A.'s office and the district judges drive our population, and we defer to the D.A.'s office and district judges in that regard. OCDC did, however, continually work to reduce detainee population through efforts with public defenders, District Judge Ray Elliott, Department of Corrections, and reclassifying some groups of the population. By reclassifying the Administrative Segregation population, OCDC reduced the count of that population from 78 to 32 detainees.

### ***Improving Facilities and Equipment***

Through repairs and renovation, OCDC reduced the number of inoperable cells by 62, and hired new staff in order to increase the timeliness and quality of repairs and maintenance, increase cleaning, eliminate pests, and ultimately improve sanitary conditions and reduce the number of detainees sharing a 3-person cell. Dale Frey has been hired to oversee building maintenance and repairs and change the way maintenance runs across the board.



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To maximize sanitation efforts, OCDC purchased cleaning equipment that is “shank proof” for safe use and purchased industrial cleaning floor machines. OCDC also entered into a contract with Orkin for weekly pest control service as another step in our commitment to improving sanitary conditions throughout the facility. Comparatively, according to Oklahoma County records, OCSO spent less than \$1,000 per year on pest control in FY18 and FY19.

OCDC replaced and upgraded the badging system for the facility, issuing new badges for all employees and distributing new uniforms (after COVID-19 delays) to 65% of its workforce. It has installed new wiring throughout the secured area of the detention center, replaced a camera system switch affecting operability, and transferred the entire desk phone system to new service and equipment to better support ongoing functionality.

Outdated televisions are being replaced with smart TVs and external speakers which will enhance services for both detainees and staff, as well as provide opportunities for families of detainees and community/external partners of OCDC. For example, due to these upgrades and new electrical wiring, internal messaging for detainees regarding COVID-19 health and safety, as well as other essential operational concerns is more accessible. These systems also facilitate the ease of movement of televisions for more optimal viewing by groups of detainees.

We continue to make Wi-Fi available throughout the facility on a secured and non-secured basis. A school hot spot was installed and is being tested for efficacy. The OCDC website was created and went live, and we anticipate further enhancements throughout 2021. Using CARES Act funding, arraignment room video units have now been installed, configured, and tested. Tablets have also been purchased to assist with contact tracing efforts.

OCDC is working to create Jail Tracker databases—an integrated system for comprehensive and integrated detainee files to be held by OCDC for the first time in the history of the facility. OCDC has installed new servers to prepare for the system and held data conversion meetings with staff from Jail Tracker, OCSO, IT, and Oklahoma County IT, to test and prepare to load data into the new system. OCDC also held several meetings with courthouse staff to gather requirements for Jail Tracker and the video system and work out issues in transitioning to new system. Arraignment room video units have now been installed, configured, and tested. This system will also track inventory and other fixed assets and we anticipate the system will be live in 2021.

Going forward, OCDC is reviewing submitted proposals to replace an antiquated access control system which has been in place for nearly thirty years. OCDC has determined that nearly all of the seven vehicles in its possession have serious problems and are barely functional and is investing \$181,000 to purchase eight new vehicles and two more (a truck and a van) should be ready soon.

OCDC will seek funding from the Budget Board to resolve the critical issue of new locks and doors at the facility, which continue to pose an ongoing risk to detainees and staff, and hinder the safe and efficient operation of the facility.

### ***Maintaining Financial Accountability***

OCDC has diligently prepared a conservative and reasonable budget that is near completion and full approval. We are partnering with external accounting partners for compliance assistance, as well as a financial audit for FY 20 and 21. Through the first half of the fiscal year (Jul-Dec), OCDC’s expenses are tracking ahead of budget. All departments are focused on remaining good stewards of all funds entrusted to us, while continuing to improve operations.



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Transparency and accountability are high priorities at OCDC. Income statements and supporting documents are prepared on a monthly basis and distributed to all stakeholders. All proposed expenditures are first posted on the County website and must be approved by the Trust before payment is made.

Going forward, OCDC is considering an energy audit for possible reduction in utility costs. We are reaching a regular accounting schedule and gaining clarity on fixed assets belonging to OCCJA and OCDC.

### ***Improving Detention Operations***

OCDC Administration continues engage in policy review and restructure. And, we are working with supervisory staff, starting with Captains and working on down, on the secured side of OCDC to align leadership to the overall vision for the facility. For example, OCDC is working through changes in use of force methodology and alternative methods to physical management of detainees, with a mindset that “everyone goes home safely.” We have utilized assistance from cooperative agreement with ODOC to positively influence Detention Officers in terms of detainee treatment and professionalism. We have also introduced less lethal security equipment to reduce hands-on use of force incidents.

OCDC has completed promotions for Captain with one open position, and is setting higher expectations for Unit Manager positions, allowing those positions to receive higher compensation, with additional duties relating to addressing sanitation, basic detainee needs, and projecting OCDC’s vision with a positive attitude.

OCDC continues to evaluate additional areas of improvement and how to increase the positive aspects of the environment. By restructuring the intake process, OCDC provided custodial clarity, increasing the speed of the process. We are also reviewing whether an increased Quality Assurance (QA) presence in the medical area can provide a more robust response to needs. We are arranging an external audit with independent evaluators to determine whether facility requires additional resources or human capital.

The steering partnership spent a great deal of the past 180 days building trust and establishing relationships. These efforts lay the foundation for the internal paradigm shift toward valuing staff contributions and recognizing the intrinsic humanity of detainees. While mostly intangible and difficult to quantify, these steps are essential to the long-term success of OCDC’s mission. Among the measures that contribute to the OCDC’s success, CARES Act benefits have contributed to the improvement both within the facility and among its staff.

Ultimately, all members of the group are hopeful and motivated to continue the forward momentum.