Idaho Sheriffs' Association

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March 26, 2025

Sheriff Andy Creech
Payette County Sheriff's Office
1130 Third Avenue North Room #101
Payette, ID 83661

Re: 2025 Jail Inspection

Dear Sheriff Creech:

I completed the inspection of your jail on March 26, 2025. Thanks to Lt. McDonald and Dep. Crimins for their help in completing the inspection paperwork and the tour of the facility.

I began the inspection process by reviewing all of the documents that were provided pursuant to the letter of instruction that your agency received at the December Sheriffs' conference. The checklist of the Idaho Jail Standards showed that no applicable standard was out of compliance during 2024. However, your average daily population reports showed that you were overcapacity a good deal of the time during 2024.

The work schedule for the detention deputies showed that you always had a minimum of at least two deputies scheduled for every shift in the facility.

The list of uncertified deputies showed a total of five deputies, as of January 1, 2025. One had completed P.O.S.T. in April of 2024 and was waiting final certification. Three had graduated from the College of Western Idaho and were waiting final certification and one had been hired in September of 2024 and was waiting to attend the Idaho P.O.S.T. Detention Academy.

One of the items requested was the Average Daily Population reports for each month during the past calendar year. I noted that September showed an ADP of 72.13 and December showed an ADP of 71.77. Both are in excess of your maximum capacity of 69. As follow-up, I requested the daily population reports for both months. In September, I noted that you were over capacity 23 of the 30 days, or 76.7% of the time. In December, I noted that you were over capacity 20 of the 31 days or 64.5%. I also noted that in November, your average daily population was exactly at 69.

The Payette City Fire Department inspected your facility on March 7, 2024. There were no violations noted. I requested and received a copy of the Fire Safety Officer's reports for May,

June, September and October of 2024. Deputy Crimin is your Fire Safety Officer. I noted that the same safety concerns that were reported in May were still being reported in October. It appears that nothing has been done to correct these concerns.

A fire drill was conducted on September 18 and again on September 27, 2024. The drills appear to have included a total of eleven deputies, plus the Fire Safety Officer, Deputy Crimin. The documentation was well done. It is not clear whether the local Fire Department responded as part of the drill.

Based on the training records I received; it appears that all of your detention staff are up to date on their minimum training requirements.

I reviewed the security check logs for the following dates in 2024: April 5, July 5, September 2, October 26, and December 14. All security checks were within the Idaho Jail Standard limit of 60 minutes. However, I noted that, according to the Guardian printouts, the checks were set at 30 minutes. I recommend that your policy and practice are coordinated within the Jail Standard limits.

You did not have any Special Security Checks that needed to be completed between the dates requested, May 15 through May 25, 2024.

The medical services contract with Dr. Sean Hackett covers all of the necessary medical services for your facility. Since this contract was initially signed in 2017, and this is the second term of a new Sheriff, and undoubtedly, new County Commissioners, I recommend that an updated contract be signed in the near future.

I reviewed your policies dealing with Sexual Assault, Abuse or Harassment, Violation of Idaho Code 18-6110, Emergency Procedures and Transfers of Medical Information. In reviewing the Sexual Assault, Abuse or Harassment policy, the content was quite adequate. However, the policy still is title PREA and refers to PREA. PREA is the Federal Prison Rape and Elimination Act. The Idaho Sheriffs' Association voted to not be a PREA state as a whole but allows individual counties to maintain PREA standards and certifications, under the direct supervision and inspection of the U.S. Marshall's service. This includes the policies on violation of Idaho State Law, 18-6110. The Emergency Procedures and Transfers of Medical Information appear to be comprehensive and complete.

In reviewing the orientation / FTO schedule of training the VINE program is not listed in the necessary training for orientation. This was corrected when I pointed it out to Lt. McDonald.

The final item on the pre-inspection information was a copy of the Inmate Search Preference Form. This form appears to mirror the universal form and is adequate for its intended purpose.

As part of the inspection process, I interviewed Lt. McDonald. He explained that he had been the Jail Commander for about 6 years. He also explained that the overall average daily population in the jail was 72.13, which is over your maximum capacity of 69. Lt. McDonald stated that the Payette County Jail was over capacity about 50% of the time during the previous year.

Lt. McDonald confirmed that your minimum staffing is two deputies on duty and that you never go below two deputies on duty in the jail. He also confirmed that all deputies, with one exception, are certified within a year of employment. A waiver request has been submitted to the P.O.S.T. Council for the one individual.

Lt. McDonald explained that the records retention policy is to keep everything at least five years, then only destroyed upon resolution of the Board of County Commissioners. He also explained that everything the jail generates, with the exception of medical files, is public record.

I asked several questions about policies and procedures. Lt. McDonald was able to explain all of them in compliance with the Idaho Jail Standards.

The final item I asked about was the various methods that inmates can report sexual assault, abuse, or harassment. He was able to explain several methods that inmates have to make such reports.

I next interviewed Dep. Crimins. He told me that he has worked for Payette County for about four and a half years and he had not worked in corrections or detention prior to coming to work for Payette County.

When asked, Dep. Crimins explained that there are never less than two deputies on duty in the jail, but that there is not always a female deputy on duty. When that occurs, the dispatch personnel assist with the searches of female inmates.

When asked, Dep. Crimins stated that he believed that the facility was overcapacity about 60% of the time during the previous year.

I asked Dep. Crimins what he would do if an earthquake occurred while he was on duty. He replied that he would do a lock down, then a head county, call supervisors, check for injuries and structural damage. These are all reasonable responses to such a catastrophe.

Deputy Crimins was able to explain the policy regarding when strip searches of inmates occur as well as where all strip searches are documented. He was also able to explain multiple ways that inmates can report suspected violations of the zero-tolerance sexual assault, abuse, or harassment policy.

When asked, Deputy Crimins explained that inmates complain that they only get medication three times a day. He further explained that this process helps to eliminate inmates from “cheeking” their medications or hiding them for future use or abuse. When asked he said the biggest complaint about the food is the portion size. Some inmates do not believe that the portions are large enough.

Deputy Crimins was able to explain the policy on procedure on releasing inmates as well as when inmates are allowed recreation.

In closing, Deputy Crimins, when asked, said that expanded housing units need to occur and repairs of the showers in the inmate housing areas should be a top priority.

I next interviewed two inmates. One male and one female. Both said that this was not their first time in the Payette County Jail. One said that they had been incarcerated this time about seven months, the other about four months.

Both inmates said that there are at least two deputies on each shift and there are generally a male and female deputy on each shift.

Both inmates stated that they had been asked about their medical history when they were booked into the facility. They said that they had seen a medical professional within days of being booked or were given the opportunity to see the medical professional but declined. They both could explain how to request to see the medical professional for non-emergency treatment of an ailment.

One inmate said that they did not know the evacuation route out of the jail, while the other said that they did. Neither inmate said that the evacuation routes are posted in the housing units. I also took note that I did not see the evacuation routes posted in any of the housing units.

Both inmates were familiar with the zero-tolerance policy on sexual assault, abuse, or harassment. They were familiar with information given at booking, posters in the housing units and a short video that is shown every time they log into the kiosk in the housing unit. Both inmates could explain multiple ways to report sexual assault, abuse, or harassment if necessary.

One inmate said that the only time inmates were in temporary bunks, commonly known as ‘boats’ was due to medical issues. The other inmate said that they had several ‘boats’ in their unit due to overcrowding.

Both inmates said that the deputies check on them every 25 to 40 minutes and that the deputies are appropriately interactive with the inmates.

When I asked the inmates about the food at the Payette County Jail, they both said that it is not that bad. One commented that they eat a good deal of turkey, in various forms. Both agreed that other jails have worse food service.

In closing, one inmate commented that the deputies really try to help the inmates with their problems. The other was concerned that the deputies do not always come into the housing unit to check on the inmates, but they believe that this is due to the long hours and multiple shifts the deputies are working and that they are tired.

During my walk-through of the facility, I noticed that the facility was generally clean. The showers in most areas are in poor repair and need to be re-tiled or otherwise repaired. The ventilation system in the female housing unit did not seem to be working. This unit was warmer and more humid than any other place in the jail. The “spaghetti mess of extension cords plugged

into extension cords in the inmate worker housing unit were obviously a violation of the International Fire Code and create a fire and electrocution hazard in the unit.

As I toured the facility and spoke briefly with inmates, I heard several concerns. I relayed those to Lt. McDonald. If founded, some of those could rise to violations of the Idaho Jail Standards.

Summary of Entire Idaho Jail Standards Compliance

A total of Mandatory Standards out of compliance: 3

18.01 The facility has a rated capacity established in accordance with these Standards. Except in emergencies, the total number of inmates in each cell or housing unit does not exceed its rated capacity. The number of inmates which may be housed in a particular cell or room, housing unit, or facility is based upon available square footage, sanitary fixtures, and other physical plant features as specified in these Standards.

18.12 Temporary holding cells provide at least twenty-five (25) square feet of floor space per occupant but are not smaller than forty (40) square feet. Occupants have access to toilets, lavatory with hot and cold water, and an immediate source of fresh potable water.

18.13 Detoxification cells shall provide at least twenty-five (25) square feet of floor space per occupant but are no smaller than forty (40) square feet. Occupants have access to toilets, lavatory with hot and cold water, and an immediate source of fresh potable water.

Total of Recommended Standards out of compliance: 1

18.05 All inmate living areas should provide visual access to natural light, unless prohibited by security concerns.

Based upon the jail inspection and finding at least three mandatory standards out of compliance, I must recommend the Payette County Jail for a non-compliance designation for the Idaho Jail Standards for the 2025 inspection year.

Please give me a call if you have any questions or if I can be of assistance to you.

Sincerely,

Ben Wolfinger

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