

PREA Volunteer and Contractor Training Template for Small Jails



According to the National Standards to Prevent, Detect, and Respond to Prison Rape (also known as the “Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) standards”), all jails must train volunteers and contractors who have contact with inmates on their responsibilities under the agency’s sexual abuse and sexual harassment prevention, detection, and response policies and procedures (§115.32 *Volunteer and contractor training*). According to the PREA standards, a contractor is defined as a person who provides services on a recurring basis pursuant to a contractual agreement with the agency; a volunteer is someone who donates time and efforts on a recurring basis to enhance the services and programs of the agency.

The level and type of training that volunteers and contractors receive needs to be based on the services they provide and the level of contact they have with inmates. All volunteers and contractors must be informed of the agency’s zero tolerance policy regarding sexual abuse and sexual harassment and how to report these incidents. The agency also needs to maintain documentation that volunteers and contractors received and understand the training.

This document is intended to provide small jails with a template they can use to offer PREA training to volunteers and contractors. This template is customizable and should be tailored to your facility, the experience level of your volunteers and contractors, and the training format(s). Text in capital letters and in brackets (such as “[AGENCY]”) should be replaced with facility-specific information. Italicized text (such as “*Discuss as a group*”) provides guidance for the trainer, including information that needs to be added to the training.

This template can be adapted for a variety of training formats. If your agency is interested in creating a video for its volunteers and contractors, this template can be adapted into the video script. This information can also be incorporated into your agency’s volunteer or contractor handbook and/or presented orally or in writing by staff or inmate educators. Whatever format(s) you chose, be sure that the information is presented in a sensitive manner that encourages inmate safety and promotes a jail environment that is free from sexual abuse and sexual harassment.

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[AGENCY] Guide on Sexual Abuse Prevention and Response for Volunteers and Contractors

- A. **Format of volunteer/contractor training:** *Indicate how the training will be provided – such as in a video, brochure, or information sessions and the length of time, if applicable.*
- B. **Frequency of training:** *Indicate how often this training will occur – monthly, as needed, during volunteer/contractor orientation, etc.*
- C. **Training supervisor:** *Indicate the staff person who is responsible for overseeing PREA training for volunteers and contractors, even if that person does not supervise volunteers or contractors.*
- D. **Materials needed:** *Indicate what materials are needed for the training, such as a handbook, video, handouts, etc.*
- E. **Documentation procedures:** *Indicate how participation in the trainings will be documented – digital tracking system, sign-in sheets, written acknowledgement in volunteer/contractor personnel files, etc.*

1. Introduction to Volunteer and Contractor PREA Training

All inmates who are in the custody of [AGENCY] have the right to be free from sexual abuse and sexual harassment. Our volunteers and contractors are extremely important to our agency and have a role in preventing, detecting, and responding to sexual abuse in this jail.

The following information is about our agency's zero tolerance policy for sexual abuse and sexual harassment, how to report incidents or suspicions of sexual violence in a custodial setting, and additional information on this topic.

The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) of 2003 is a federal law that was created to put an end to sexual abuse against inmates in federal and state prisons, jails, lockups, community corrections facilities, and juvenile detention centers.

What have you heard of PREA? *Briefly review responses and provide clarification, as necessary.*

Our jail is committed to complying with all of the requirements of PREA in order to protect inmates from sexual abuse and to ensure they get the help they need if they are victimized. PREA requires all volunteers and contractors to receive specialized training

in their responsibilities to prevent, detect, and respond to sexual abuse in custody. Every person who works or volunteers in this jail will receive this information.

2. Zero Tolerance

[AGENCY/FACILITY] has zero tolerance toward all forms of sexual abuse and sexual harassment.

What does zero tolerance mean to you? *Briefly review responses and provide clarification, as necessary.*

“Zero tolerance” means that sexual abuse, sexual harassment, and sexual misconduct will not be tolerated in [AGENCY] facilities. One incident is too many.

I want to be sure you understand what we mean by these terms, so let’s review the definitions together. Sexual abuse includes—

1. Sexual abuse of an inmate by another inmate; and
2. Sexual abuse of an inmate by a staff member, contractor, or volunteer.

Definitions

1. “Inmate” means any person incarcerated or detained in the jail.
2. “Staff” means an agency employee, including civilian staff.
3. “Contractor” means a person who provides services on a recurring basis through a contract with our agency.
4. “Volunteer” is a person who provides unpaid services to our agency.

Sexual abuse of an inmate by another inmate includes any sexual contact when the victim does not or cannot consent, including if an inmate is coerced or threatened.

What do you think coercion means? *Briefly review responses and provide clarification, as necessary.*

Basically, coercion is any time someone is pressured or manipulated to do something they wouldn’t otherwise do. For example, an inmate might take advantage of another inmate who has a mental illness or disability, or may offer protection in return for sexual favors. Any time an inmate is unable to give consent to sexual contact – for any reason – it is considered sexual abuse.

When we refer to “sexual contact”, we don’t just mean sex. Sexual contact includes any time an inmate’s genitals come into contact with another person’s mouth, genitals, or buttocks, even if there is no penetration. This also includes when an inmate intentionally touches another inmate on the genitals, breast, groin, inner thigh, or buttocks, without their consent.

According to our state’s penal code, sexual abuse/assault is defined as.... *Include your state’s sexual assault statute if it differs from the PREA definitions of sexual abuse.*

Can you give me some examples of sexual abuse that might occur here in the jail?
Briefly review responses and provide clarification, as necessary.

There is no consensual sex between inmates and volunteers or contractors. Sexual abuse of an inmate by a staff member, contractor, or volunteer includes all of the abusive sexual contact we just reviewed. Sexual misconduct also includes any display or “flashing” of the genitals, buttocks, or breasts of a staff member, contractor, or volunteer; and “voyeurism”, which is viewing an inmate who is not fully clothed.

By law, inmates cannot consent to sexual contact with staff members, volunteers or contractors. All sexual contact between inmates and staff or volunteers is considered sexual abuse. It is against the law for you to have sexual contact with inmates, even if the inmate agrees or seems willing. There is no such thing as consensual sexual activity between inmates and staff, volunteers, or contractors.

Our state law also defines staff sexual misconduct as a crime, punishable by...*Include your state’s criminal citation and penalties for staff sexual misconduct. For a state-by-state listing of these laws, refer to www.wcl.american.edu/endsilence/documents/50StateSurveyofOfficialMisconductStatutesFINAL_August2009.pdf.*

Sexual harassment is also prohibited in this jail. Sexual harassment of an inmate by another inmate includes: repeated and unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal comments, gestures, or actions of a derogatory or offensive sexual nature. Sexual harassment of an inmate by a staff member, contractor, or volunteer is basically the same thing, regardless of whether or not these actions are wanted by an inmate.

Just like employees, potential consequences for volunteers or contractors who sexually abuse or sexually harass inmates include dismissal from the facility, termination of the contract/volunteer duties, reporting to relevant licensing bodies, criminal prosecution, and civil liability. That means that if you sexually abuse or sexually harass an inmate in this facility, your work with our agency may end, you may be charged with a crime, and/or you may be sued...*Consider including any relevant examples of discipline, dismissal, criminal prosecution, or civil liability for staff, volunteers, or contractors who sexually abused inmates in your state, agency, or facility.*

For more information on our agency’s zero tolerance policy, refer to.....*Insert other sources of information, such as the volunteer/contractor handbook, posters, staff supervisors, etc.*

Do you have any questions about anything we have covered?

3. How to Report Sexual Abuse or Sexual Harassment

Volunteers and contractors have a duty to report any knowledge, suspicion, or information about sexual abuse or sexual harassment against inmates, retaliation by other inmates or staff, and any staff neglect that may have contributed to this abuse. That means that you are obligated to disclose any information you may have about possible sexual violence against inmates, even if you do not have proof of the abuse or you are unsure. Volunteers and contractors cannot – and should not – keep this information a secret. Failure to report any knowledge, suspicion or information about sexual abuse or sexual harassment in a custodial setting may be grounds for immediate dismissal from this facility.

Reporting a sexual assault behind bars basically means telling anyone who works here. [AGENCY's] official position is that all reports will be taken seriously and will be investigated. There are several ways to report knowledge, suspicion, or information about sexual abuse or sexual harassment.

- *List all ways for volunteers/contractors to report abuse, including verbally to their supervisors, custody staff, medical/mental health and civilian staff; in writing, via a hotline, etc.*

This jail also accepts – and will immediately investigate – a report made on behalf of a third party, such as a loved one or an attorney, as well as reports that are made anonymously. [AGENCY] will investigate all allegations of sexual abuse and sexual harassment, even if the person making the report chooses to stay anonymous.

For more information about how to report sexual abuse or sexual harassment against inmates, refer to.....*Insert other sources of information, such as the volunteer/contractor handbook, staff members, etc.*

Do you have any questions?

4. Detecting Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment

It is important for volunteers and contractors to be aware of signs of sexual abuse or sexual harassment so that you can prevent this violence and report any abuse that may be occurring. As a volunteer or contractor, you have a very important role in detecting any possible sexual abuse or sexual harassment against inmates.

What are some “red flags” to look for that an inmate may be experiencing sexual abuse or sexual harassment? *Briefly review responses and provide clarification, as necessary.*

Some common signs of sexual abuse include changes in personality; withdrawal or avoidance of other inmates or staff; weight loss or weight gain; changes in an inmate's appearance or demeanor; unexplained bruises/scrapes/swelling; complaints about stomach aches, headaches, or other pains; fears about going to a certain location in the

jail; requests for a cell/facility change; rumors or jokes about sexual abuse; acting out; as well as signs of trauma, which may include difficulty concentrating; flashbacks; sleep disturbances; panic attacks; being very alert/on-guard/jumpy; increased irritability; suicidal thoughts or attempts; and/or the development of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) or other related conditions.

If you suspect sexual abuse or sexual harassment may be occurring – or if an inmate discloses this abuse to you – stay calm and inform the nearest staff member.

Do you have any questions?

5. Maintaining Professional Relationships with Inmates

As a reminder, there is no such thing as consensual sexual activity between inmates and staff members, volunteers, or contractors. All volunteers and contractors are expected to maintain professional relationships with inmates at all times. It is your responsibility to ensure that you adhere to all agency guidelines regarding professional conduct, and that you treat inmates in a fair and consistent manner.

Some of the most important ways you can maintain appropriate limits with inmates are to avoid discussing personal information about yourself (also known as “overfamiliarity”), respect inmates’ limits and privacy, and demonstrate professionalism in all of your interactions.

Some examples of behaviors that volunteers and contractors should refrain from include:

- “Horseplay” or touching an inmate or making them touch you when not officially related to volunteer/contractor duties;
- Borrowing or lending anything to/from an inmate, including contraband or other goods;
- Doing favors for an inmate, outside the scope of your volunteer/contractor position;
- Keeping secrets for an inmate, or their family or friends.

What are some other ways that volunteers and contractors can maintain professional boundaries with inmates? *Briefly review responses and provide clarification, as necessary.*

As a volunteer or contractor, you are a visitor at this jail. Please let any staff member know if you have any questions or concerns about how to maintain professional relationships with inmates.

Do you have any other questions at this time?

If you would like more information about sexual abuse prevention or response or if you have any questions after today, you can*List other sources of information, such as the volunteer/contractor handbook, staff members, etc.*

You can also contact Just Detention International (JDI) for additional information on sexual abuse behind bars:

Just Detention International
3325 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 340
Los Angeles, CA 90010
(213) 384-1400
info@justdetention.org
www.justdetention.org

Thank you for attending today's training and for your service to this agency...*Ensure volunteer and contractors document that they have received and understand the training. Consider using a sign-in sheet or electronic signature.*