

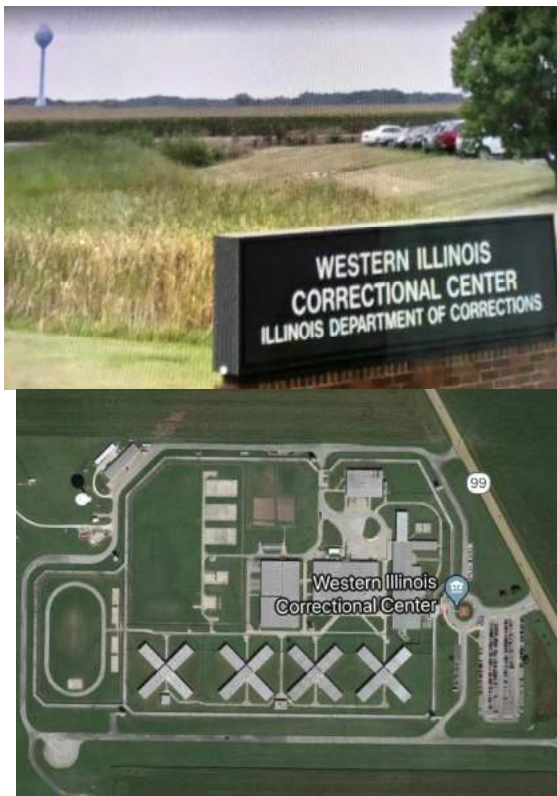


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2017 Monitoring Report for Western Illinois Correctional Center

Western Illinois Correctional Center (Western) is a medium-security male facility within the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC). It is located approximately a four-hour drive southwest of Chicago, and an hour and a half northwest of Springfield, in Mt. Sterling, Illinois.¹ Western also operates the minimum-security Clayton Work Camp (Clayton), located 11 miles from the facility.²



Vital Statistics

Population: 1,919

Rated Capacity: 1,102

Operational Capacity: 2,175

Average Age: 38³

Committed from Cook County: 46.1%

Average Annual cost per inmate: \$17,452⁴

Population by Race: 62% Black, 25% White, 13% Hispanic, and <1% Other.

Committing Offense: 10% Murder, 34% Class X, 14% Class 1, 19% Class 2, 10% Class 3, and 13% Class 4 felonies.

(Source: IDOC 2017)⁵

Key Observations:

- At the time of JHA's July 2017 visit, lack of any mental health staff assigned at the facility was a primary concern, as was lack of staff in several other key areas. Since the visit, as of the end of 2017, there have been some significant staffing improvements.
- While JHA spoke with many dedicated staff at the facility doing the best they could with limited resources, staff professionalism at Western generally was an area in need of greater training, development, and accountability.
- Out-of-cell time for inmates who are unassigned, that is, those who do not have work or school assignment and who make up over 60% of Western's population, was minimal, amplifying inmates' frustration and impacting other quality of life issues.

Executive Summary

Administrators at the time of the July 2017 JHA visit reported that they were ðhurtingö for programming, healthcare, and clinical services staff.⁶ The Assistant Warden of Programs (AWP) position, overseeing programming and healthcare, had been vacant more than four months. As discussed further below, at the time of the visit, Western had no mental health staff assigned to the facility and was functioning with staffing coverage from other facilities. Additionally, medical healthcare staffing, alongside mental health staffing, was also short. Lack of correctional counseling staff was reportedly increasing inmate anxiety about their inability to get issues addressed. JHA also noted concerns regarding several other vacancies, including needed maintenance positions.⁷ Since the visit several positions have been filled; notably the AWP position was filled in September and three mental health staff had been hired by mid-October.

In the prior year, Western had an influx of inmates from maximum-security facilities as some inmates with demonstrated good behavior were permitted to transfer to medium-security facilities, generally, if they had less than 30 years left to serve. Some staff and inmates at Western reported that this made them uncomfortable, but most did not see much difference in the characteristics of the population given that some men at medium-security prisons previously could have been serving more than 20 years or even life.⁸ Nonetheless, more than one third of the population at Western will still return to the community in less than a year.⁹ Some inmates serving short-term sentences felt uneasy because that they did not expect to be incarcerated with others serving lengthy sentences. Likewise, an inmate who had served a longer sentence opined that the minimum-security population or those with shorter incarceration terms do not ðunderstand the mentality of a person who has been locked up a long time.ö

As one long-term inmate stated, coming from many years incarcerated at a maximum-security facility, he felt the biggest areas of concern at Western were ðmental health, staff conduct, and cell assignments.ö This comment matched JHA's observations and review of data collected. Staff conduct and attitude were major areas of concern and had been for several years at this facility. During the 2017 visit, JHA used an anonymous and voluntary survey tool to collect more peoples' impressions than we had been able to capture via face-to-face communications on visits or through correspondence. Over half of the incarcerated population, over 1,000 men, voluntarily completed the survey. Unfortunately, only thirty-three staff completed surveys, which is less than 10% of those employed at the facility, and these results are less likely to be representative.

JHA's survey responses at Western reflected only two percent of the inmate survey respondents felt that staff at Western treat the incarcerated population with respect, which mirrored the complaints that we commonly received. One staff member shared that some staff at the facility believe in making an inmate's time as difficult as possible. Inmates echoed this report and expressed that there are staff at Western who subscribe to a punitive philosophy. While this anti-rehabilitative attitude is not acceptable generally, it is particularly problematic given the fact that, despite being a higher security medium facility, nearly half of the men incarcerated at Western have less than two years left to serve. Research suggests that staff attitudes toward prisoners have implications for programming and reentry success.¹⁰

Although JHA visitors felt that some staff and agency leadership acknowledged staff conduct issues at Western, at the time of the visit, it was not clear what was being done at the facility to resource and help support the creation of a healthier culture. Over the past few years, efforts have been underway at the agency level to increase staff training and morale. Some staff at Western reported that with leadership setting a positive example, other staff were adopting a more rehabilitative and communicative approach. A few inmates also noted that there had been some recent more promising developments. While this was encouraging, there was definitely need for greater accountability.

Since the 2017 JHA visit, supervisors at Western have received Core Correctional Practices (CCP) training, which has been shown to benefit prison environments and outcomes.¹¹ Administrators further noted that all staff have received National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) training as required in relation to the *Rasho* mental health litigation settlement agreement,¹² counselors have received training in CCP and Cognitive Behavioral Programming, and there are plans to certify some staff to teach CCP and verbal judo, which is another tactic for using communication to deescalate conflict, so that all Western staff will be able to receive a two-day training on these subjects during annual training sessions at the facility.

JHA received numerous complaints from inmates regarding lack of movement and rehabilitative opportunities at Western. Men housed at the facility would typically be double-celled and if unassigned (more than half the population) could expect only to be out of their cells for three daily meals and about 20 hours total of dayroom and recreation in yard or the gym per week. This is on average less than three hours out-of-cell for some recreation daily plus movement to dietary. JHA has continually advocated against warehousing incarcerated people and in favor of increasing out-of-cell time throughout IDOC and adopting greater presumptive out-of-cell time requirements.¹³

We note that, in general, lack of out-of-cell time exacerbates other problems. For example, confining inmates without programming can erode their mental health, and cellmate issues are intensified by excessive time in cell. JHA has continually advocated for increasing time out-of-cell across the board in IDOC facilities and has found over the last few years the lack of time out-of-cell in some medium-security, non-disciplinary settings, particularly concerning. More than one inmate told JHA that they felt the locked-down environment made some people "worse," or even more dramatically, "monsters." One inmate commented, "The toughest challenge is staying focused while coping with all the unnecessary deprivations;" while another inmate more hopefully acknowledged "[Western] is nearly intolerable in many ways, but does have its good points."

Some of the good points include programming and skill-building opportunities to the extent these are available.¹⁴ Inmates also mentioned some particularly good staff, including outstanding teachers and a security staff member who reportedly responded quickly to an inmate's medical emergency.¹⁵ As a survey comment explained, "[t]here are a lot of good officers but are being overshadowed by the bad ones." However, some people also shared that they felt that staff who treat inmates well are themselves sometimes treated poorly. At Western, JHA spoke to many dedicated staff members who welcomed our perspective, were forthcoming with information

about the facility and their challenges, and appreciated the value of productive inmate activity, lamenting staffing and budget issues¹⁶ that inhibited improvements at the facility.

However, overall tensions at the facility resulted in about half, 49%, of the inmates who completed JHA's surveys, reporting that they did not feel safe, and a slightly higher percentage, 58%, felt that the facility in general was not safe for inmates.¹⁷ Some staff also reported that they did not feel safe.

JHA believes with proper staffing, resourcing, and leadership initiative, Western can demonstrate improvement. Many experts in corrections acknowledge that the success of security and programming are intertwined and that inmate idleness and lack of productive activity, and other quality of life issues, present safety issues and other unacceptable costs. Some issues may be inexpensively or naturally improved by improved communication and proper staffing. Given the numerous staffing and resourcing deficits, it was not surprising to hear many issues persist at Western during the 2017 visit.

Finding: More than half of Western's population is unassigned with limited opportunity for productive activity and time out-of-cell.

While there were more than 750 work and school assignments at Western in 2017, this still means that more than half of the population at any time is not engaged in regular, productive assigned activity.¹⁸ Work assignments are supposed to be rotated every six months unless waiver is granted, with the exception of industry assignments.¹⁹

Some inmates who had transferred from maximum-security facilities to Western lamented the length of time it would take them to get back into school at Western, or the fact that they were not eligible for many jobs. Some inmates were precluded from jobs due to criteria that was different at Western than at higher security facilities, and it was an adjustment for inmates to go from being the best of the higher-security population and having the most privileges and programming opportunities to starting from square one at Western.

Staff also mentioned that the fact that the facility now housed more sex offenders made allocating work assignments more difficult. At the time of the visit, sex offenders were not permitted to work in dietary, for example. JHA believes that individual determinations should be made regarding the suitability of an inmate for a work assignment based on the inmate's more recent behavior instead of categorically precluding work assignments based on offense.

Western's medium-security general population housing consists of four X-houses, each comprised of four wings with capacity to house 112 men. Inmates are largely housed together by assignment, e.g., school or work if applicable. At the time of the 2017 visit, six wings housed solely unassigned inmates, while other units housed a mix of assigned and unassigned men.

Inmates in general population at Western were scheduled to receive a maximum of an hour and a half of dayroom per day, with only about a quarter of the wing or housing unit using the dayroom at a time on a rotating schedule due to security concerns involving having many men out at once. We were told only one officer is assigned to two wings per housing unit. This

equaled at best 10.5 hours out-of-cell time a week for dayroom. Some other facilities offer dayroom to the same inmates on two staff shifts per day, increasing out-of-cell opportunity. Administrators noted that increased dayroom time tends to result in increased fights; however, JHA believes some of the conflict results from the scarcity of access, as discussed below in relation to issues with use of phones and showers.

Summer yard was scheduled to be offered for a maximum of an hour and a half, on a rotating schedule by housing unit with three days of yard followed by one day without. Thus, varying by week, inmates could have five or six yard opportunities, for an additional maximum of nine hours of out-of-cell time.²⁰ Gym was not offered in the summer months. At the time of JHA's visit, administrators indicated they were looking at offering more gym opportunities to increase out-of-cell opportunities. During the winter months, gym is run on the yard schedule, and an additional gym line has been added at night since the visit. Administrators noted that scheduling additional recreation time would conflict with time used for movement for meals given the time necessary to run lines to feed the population.

As inmates in medium-security facilities have movement for meals, at the time of the visit, the typical unassigned inmate at Western would have this meal time movement, in addition to less than 20 hours of scheduled out-of-cell time weekly. Evolving best practices dictate that anything less than two hours of out-of-cell time daily is considered restrictive housing.²¹ Western, like other IDOC high-medium-security facilities, is dangerously close to holding inmates, even those under no disciplinary restrictions, in essentially maximum-security conditions when time out-of-cell time is so restricted. The major distinction seems to be that Illinois's three male maximum-security facilities, Stateville, Pontiac and Menard, do not have dayrooms and have less formal educational programming than high-medium-security facilities like Western.

JHA has strongly and repeatedly recommended that IDOC and Illinois reevaluate these restrictive practices and mandate greater out-of-cell time across all security levels, as well as refrain from restricting out-of-cell time as punishment. JHA also advocates for more cautious use of all out-of-cell disciplinary restrictions given that research suggests such restrictions can be counterproductive.²² Inmates frequently tell us that high-medium-security facilities like Western, which in IDOC are typically comprised of X-house style housing, used to be "18/6" meaning that inmates could expect to be out of their cells six hours a day. JHA believes that out-of-cell time for inmates at high-medium-security facilities like Western should return to at least these levels. However, we recognize that staffing levels would likely need to be adjusted to make this feasible.

Finding: Lack of mental health staff and services at Western was a major concern.

When JHA visited Western in September 2014, shortly after new policies were instituted for treatment of inmates identified as Seriously Mentally Ill (SMI) pursuant to the *Rasho* litigation,²³ administrators expressed confidence that additional staff and more access to care would be provided, with programs on the rise as a result. Expansion of healthcare staffing, including mental health, and access to treatment were noted as positive developments that had occurred in the few years prior to 2014.²⁴ In September 2014, mental health staff at Western offered group therapy including: a reentry group for inmates on the mental health caseload who were within six

months of release; a weekly transgender support group;²⁵ and a sex offender therapy group. Some inmates then lamented that they could not participate in certain groups because they were not on the mental health caseload. Staff noted that group therapy was limited to what they considered to be the highest need inmates, but that they wanted to expand offerings as the facility hired additional staff, including providing more parenting programming. By the time of the July 2017 JHA visit, there were not any staff to support mental health groups and the groups noted in 2014 were no longer offered.

As mentioned above, when JHA visited the facility in July 2017, administrators reported they had no mental health staff onsite who were assigned to the facility, despite being allocated for three for-profit vendor Wexford Health Sources (Wexford) Mental Health Professionals (MHPs). However, administrators stressed that other facilities sent their mental health staff to Western to provide some coverage. In draft review, administrators also noted that the Transfer Coordinator's Office was pre-screening men for mental health issues and not sending them to Western during this timeframe.

However, in May 2017 data, the most recent made available at the time of the July visit, Western reported 525 men on the mental health caseload, 380 on psychotropic medications, and 83 identified as Seriously Mentally Ill (SMI),²⁶ for whom comprehensive multi-departmental assignment, disciplinary reviews, and weekly reviews for segregation placements were to be conducted. There had been 16 mental health watches and four hunger strikes recorded in May 2017. There was a backlog of 304 men for appointments with MHPs and 113 waiting to see the psychiatrist, via telepsychiatry (telepsych).²⁷ This was obviously a major concern.

At the time of the visit, facility administrators reported they had had no applicants for some social work positions. Staff also noted that they sometimes lose mental health staff to the nearby Division of Mental Health Services (DHS) facility, Rushville, which houses individuals civilly committed as Sexually Violent Persons.²⁸ We were told that there was a sex offender assessment tool not being used as Western lacked licensed staff necessary for its use at the time of the visit.

Administrators and some of the staff survey respondents acknowledged that there was an issue at Western with the lack of availability of mental health services. We were told that crisis care was being provided by other non-mental health staff who were trained as crisis intervention team members and mental health staff from other facilities, and that these mental health staff were also making required segregation rounds.

Since the visit, as of mid-October 2017, three mental health staff have been assigned at the facility. As of December 28, 2017, administrators reported at Western there were 432 men on the mental health caseload, 335 on psychotropic medications, and 90 identified SMI. With the new staff assigned to the facility, the mental health backlogs had been reduced to 63 men waiting for MHP appointments, and 45 for telepsych.

JHA has continued to hear reports of concerning mental health care backlogs and lack of staffing at many IDOC facilities over the past few years. We have urged IDOC to regularly make more data concerning these issues public and increase recruitment efforts.²⁹ The first annual report of the court-appointed *Rasho* Monitor, unsealed and made public in September 2017, several

months after it was filed, details generally the status of IDOC's compliance with the settlement agreement and particularly discusses concerns regarding psychiatric care deficits.³⁰ Since SMI inmates may be housed at any facility, and since all inmates should have access to mental health treatment, it is important that improved coverage reach and be maintained at all IDOC facilities.

Finding: Many inmates expressed concerns regarding staff professionalism and fair treatment.

Western inmates reported they wanted better access to and communication with correctional counselors. Only seven percent of the inmate survey respondents felt their counselor was effective, while the majority, 51%, strongly disagreed. At the time of the 2017 visit, Western had eight counselors at the medium-security facility and one assigned to Clayton; however, one was on a military leave and there were five counselor vacancies in addition to a casework supervisor. Given actual staffing and numerous duties of counselors,³¹ with caseloads upwards of 448 men, it was not surprising to hear access issues. JHA has long commented on the inadequacy of counselor staffing and training throughout IDOC.³²

Reentry issues, such as not finding out until close to a release date that a parole site was denied, also were issues with which inmates felt counselors were unhelpful. However, parole officials are likely responsible for the untimeliness of such notifications and requirements of parole conditions, such as use of electronic monitoring, may be subject to legislative requirements that are beyond the parole official's control to modify. Only eight percent of the inmate survey respondents reported that they felt helpful reentry information was provided by staff, while 40% strongly disagreed. Several inmates requested more reentry oriented programming and noted their desire to assist their family through obtaining employment.

Inmates reported that one major issue at the facility was lack of respect. As one man stated "we are already serving our punishment but we don't need the extra humiliations and the attitude by IDOC staff." Only two percent of the inmate survey respondents reported that staff at Western treat inmates with respect, while the majority, 70%, strongly disagreed.³³ Some older inmates who had been incarcerated for many years at maximum-security facilities and had been stepped-down to medium-security at Western, stated that because inmates at Western typically cycle out more quickly than inmates at higher security facilities, with a third of population returning to the community in less than a year, staff are less respectful.

Several men complained of staff using harassing language, in some instances even over the intercom from the pod control area, commonly referred to as the "bubble." Some reported staff making inappropriate comments about inmates' female relatives. Several inmates also reported that their loved ones were treated rudely when they visited the facility. While some inmates characterized staff conduct as inappropriate, unprofessional, "horse play," most reported they found the comments offensive. There were many reported instances of staff swearing and calling incarcerated men names. Some felt that staff were discriminatory against the elderly and disabled. Several inmates stated that staff used racist language and acted in a discriminatory fashion against people of color. Some reported that some staff racism extended to mistreatment of other staff who are people of color. About 97% of the staff at Western are Caucasian. A few inmates suggested that staff anger management classes should be made available. Inmates also

felt that staff provoked them to act out against staff or other inmates, for example, by calling them names or failing to move incompatible cellmates, as discussed below. We also heard reports of some staff not dealing well with inmates whom others believed had mental illness. While twenty-eight percent of the survey respondents reported that there was at least one staff member at Western whom they could ask for help, a larger percentage of nearly a third, 32%, strongly disagreed.

Even more seriously, several inmates reported that correctional officers who assault inmates wrongly accused the inmate of resisting to justify use of force. Inmates stated particular areas reportedly lacking camera coverage were areas where such staff on inmate assaults occurred.³⁴ Inmates also reported that shakedowns at times resulted in confiscation of permitted property³⁵ or were unnecessarily humiliating or destructive, were retaliatory, or even physically brutalizing. Several inmates reported staff assaults on cuffed inmates. Many inmates felt there was not accountability for staff misconduct. JHA cannot confirm or deny any such allegations and continues to urge increased camera capacity at IDOC facilities and holding staff responsible for misdeeds.³⁶ Administrators responded that all allegations of staff misconduct are taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.

Only three percent of the incarcerated population who responded to JHA's surveys felt that Western staff followed rules, while the majority, 60%, strongly disagreed. For one example, multiple inmates stated that they will be denied food if they miss chow lines, which is contrary to agency policy whereby inmates cannot be punished by withholding food. Administrators responded that make up chow lines should be available and JHA encourages inmates to report this issue if it occurs. Several inmates stated that staff seemed to create rules arbitrarily or enforce them that way. For example, some said food was not allowed in the dayroom by some staff, or seasoning could not be taken to dietary, while this was a common practice allowed by other staff. Rules should be consistently enforced for facility safety. Other instances inmates reported of staff not following rules included correctional officers introducing contraband by chewing tobacco inside the facility. While the majority of inmates and staff survey respondents indicated that they did not believe contraband was a problem at the facility, there were some neutral responses and a few who indicated that contraband was a problem.

Other reported staff conduct concerns included more seemingly minor issues such as staff refusing to turn on the dayroom television. There were many and various reported concerns regarding staff shorting already minimal out-of-cell time. Some inmates also reported that some staff were not making proper announcements causing them to miss their limited out-of-cell opportunities. In some cases, inmates reported staff would not pop, or unlock and open, cell doors; during a prior visit some attributed this issue to mechanical malfunction. Administrators reported that some technological improvements had been made since the visit that should help address such issues, but that this system was also tied to other computerized controls for physical plant operations where state funds have been requested for upgrades and maintenance, but these funds have not been granted. Administrators also replied that announcements are made and that line movement occurs at the same time so that it is predictable. Inmates also reported late escorts for programming and abbreviated time to eat in dietary.³⁷ Staff reported inmates were supposed to be allowed ten minutes and this was adequate. At the time of the visit, some inmates with assignments were upset that they were not offered alternative recreation or dayroom times, and

reported that this was causing issues like not being able to call their families or shower. Since the visit an additional gym line has been added in part to try to address those with assignments missing recreation opportunities. As stated above, lack of movement, delayed movement, and too much time-in-cell were common complaints.

Finding: Inmates expressed little faith in the grievance system.

Only two percent of inmate survey respondents reported they felt the grievance process was effective, while the majority, 64%, strongly disagreed. Only ten percent of survey respondents reported they would feel comfortable filing a grievance, while 50% strongly disagreed. Older inmates also opined that because of short stays and inexperience, younger inmates are less likely to use the grievance process. As noted above, a third of the population at Western has less than one year to serve and 15% were under 25-years-old.

Some inmates reported grievance forms were difficult to get. Other inmates reported that attempts to grieve issues were ineffective due to lack of response to initial grievances and, when subsequent grievances were filed, denial was based on being outside of the 60-day timeframe for filing a grievance. Administrators reported that duplicate grievances are frequently received from inmates. A few inmates believed that their grievances were thrown away. Some inmates stated that filing grievances would result in more staff harassment, including being singled out for random cell shakedowns or body searches, and even physical abuse. Several inmates complained that the counselor on their unit was also the grievance officer,³⁸ or that the grievance officer was related to other staff, and that they felt that their issues were not being objectively reviewed due to these facts. Administrators stated that the grievance officer does not respond to counselor-level grievances, other counselors would respond to those on her caseload, and she would not deal with any grievances involving her own conduct.

Western administrators reported they recorded 1,016 grievances in 2016, with the top three areas grieved being Medical (26%), Staff Conduct (20%), and Discipline (15%).³⁹ In 2017 from January until the time of JHA's visit in July, the facility had recorded 430 grievances, with the highest areas grieved again being Medical (21%) and Staff Conduct (21%), followed by Personal Property (20%). A properly functioning grievance process helps a facility identify, defuse, and resolve problems.

It was not surprising that medical was the area of the most recorded grievances at Western, as this is common throughout IDOC. JHA again advocates for IDOC to make more such deidentified data regarding grievances, staffing, and treatment backlogs publicly available. All healthcare staff at Western other than the Healthcare Unit Administrator are contractual employees of for-profit vendor Wexford. At the time of the 2017 visit, Western reported no dental backlog but more than one hundred patients were waiting for eyecare over 90 days and there were 63 men backlogged for chronic care clinics as of May 2017. The facility had a dentist and two dental assistants on staff.⁴⁰ However, at the time of the visit, the facility had vacancies for the Optometrist, the Medical Director (doctor), Director of Nursing (DON), four nurses (out of 16 allocated, with another on a leave of absence), and one nursing assistant.

As of December 28, 2017, the facility still had no Medical Director and no DON, and vacancies for three nurses, but an Optometrist had been hired. Western had a doctor onsite once or twice a week and had a nurse practitioner assigned to the facility. JHA inquired regarding whether for-profit vendor Wexford would be penalized under the contract for not filling positions at the facility, which at the time of the visit also included the three mental health vacancies. Administrators stated that they communicated regarding vacancies, but they were unclear what consequences followed if Wexford failed to timely fill vacancies. JHA has long had concerns regarding healthcare staffing and retention within IDOC.⁴¹ Currently, much remains uncertain as there was a Request For Proposals (RFP) issued in January 2017 for the IDOC healthcare contract, but no announcement had been made regarding an award as of the end of December.⁴² On January 5, 2018, the RFP was canceled in a notice stating "IDOC intends to issue a solicitation for Comprehensive Medical and Medical Health Services within the next calendar year."⁴³ Litigation regarding healthcare within IDOC is also ongoing.⁴⁴

Twelve percent of JHA inmate survey respondents reported they were satisfied with medical services, while 46% strongly disagreed. Dissatisfaction with healthcare also may relate to other concerns relating to staff conduct, discussed above. For one example, one man in the infirmary reported that he believed he had been sent to segregation in the past for complaining about pain, so he was not willing to ask again for assistance with pain management. He also stated that staff called him racist names. Other men stated that they did not receive healthcare for pain treatment or diabetic daily checks while in segregation. While JHA has no way of verifying the truth of these reports, we are concerned that inmates may have been discouraged from seeking medical care due to impressions of staff hostility.

Also relating to healthcare dissatisfaction, the majority of the inmate survey respondents, 64%, reported that they avoid healthcare to avoid paying the \$5 copay. We believe that the fact that all inmates are asked to sign a voucher for payment, regardless of whether they will be assessed a fee, is not adequately communicated and adds to inmate confusion about when and whether copays will be deducted from their accounts. JHA was told that the business office will only withdraw funds from inmate accounts in appropriate cases. JHA continues to strongly recommend that Illinois abolish the legislatively mandated copay.⁴⁵

Relating to grievances regarding discipline, which is often interconnected with staff conduct complaints, only six percent of inmate survey respondents reported they felt the disciplinary process was fair, while the majority, 54%, strongly disagreed. Interestingly, as at other IDOC facilities, more than half of the Western staff survey respondents felt that disciplinary policies are not effective at preventing inmate misconduct, with only about 12% finding them effective. Processes considered neither fair or effective demand further review because they undermine the sense of legitimate authority within the system.

Concerningly, perhaps relating to the numerous staff conduct complaints and lack of faith in the grievance process, many inmates at Western stated that they believed things would not improve for them or that things would get worse if they expressed complaints. Some felt that inmates do not have a voice. Again, this reflects distrust of staff professionalism and disbelief in a rehabilitative non-punitive facility culture. One inmate wondered why JHA even bothered visiting because "nothing ever changes." Other people felt they would be retaliated against for

speaking with JHA. Some inmates expressed doubt that JHA would receive privileged mail sent from the facility because of suspected staff mail-tampering.⁴⁶ In fact, JHA has received and responded to more than 660 letters from Western over the last few years, including more than 250 from more than 160 different men since our July 2017 visit. While inmate concerns regarding retaliation are not uncommon to hear from incarcerated people, JHA visitors felt that at the time of the visit the climate at Western was particularly ripe for fostering inmates' anxieties. Encouragingly, some inmates have reported some positive impact of our visit and JHA will continue to do our best to monitor concerns and advocate for improvements.

Finding: Some Western inmates expressed concern regarding cellmate assignments.

Several men reported that they had trouble getting issues with cellmates addressed at Western. While this is certainly not an uncommon issue, JHA received several reports from separate inmates at Western that it was common knowledge on certain housing units that one cellmate was being bullied and taken advantage of by his cellmate and, concerning, inmates felt that there was no recourse through staff to help in those situations. Some inmates remarked that when upper-level supervisory staff are on the housing unit, these supervisors sign in and may speak with other staff, but that they were not circulating and interviewing inmates to identify issues. JHA hopes that recent staff training will help improve perceptions or issues related to lack of communication and responsiveness.

While some inmates wanted cell reassignments due to imminent fear for their own safety, some inmates reported that they did not want to be housed with someone based on the fact that their cellmate was gay, of a different race, had poor hygiene, had a significantly longer or shorter sentence than they did, or had mental illness. Some inmates felt that reporting to staff that a cellmate with mental illness was deteriorating was not met with an appropriate response. Administrators responded that Intelligence and Placement staff review all cell assignments. As mental health staff can also play an important role in managing some cell assignments, the lack of mental health staff at Western at the time of the visit was again a major concern.

Some inmates who identified as gay, bisexual, or transgender reported they were housed with individuals who had a problem with people so identifying and experienced other harassment or shunning. In addition, some inmates who identified as gay or transgender stated that staff had a problem with them fraternizing with one another, although they felt that they should be allowed to be together for a sense of community and safety. Again, several inmates reported inappropriate derogatory, homophobic, and sexualized name calling from staff. Another inmate reported that when information regarding an upcoming Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) audit was posted in common areas staff would mock inmates who stopped to read the notices. Any inappropriate conduct of this nature must be addressed by supervisors.

In an example of extreme measures taken to get a cell reassignment, during the 2014 visit, one inmate interviewed in segregation stated he asked "everyone" to be reassigned because of issues with his cellmate, but to no avail. Staff shared that this inmate eventually had defecated on the floor of his cell to protest something his cellmate had done. During the 2017 visit, an inmate reported that some inmates have had to resort to flooding cells to get staff attention. Such tensions are concerning. Numerous inmates stated that there needs to be an effective

administrative mechanism to deal with cellmate issues. Some inmates stated they had to physically fight with cellmates or refuse housing and walk themselves, i.e., voluntarily go to segregation, in order to get a different cell assignment. Others reported that assaults would sometimes be mischaracterized as fights, sending both parties to segregation.

Since early 2017, men refusing housing at Western are supposed to be housed on the receiving unit.⁴⁷ JHA opposes using discipline, such as segregation placement, to address inmate safety concerns with their cellmates and we had recommended that the practice of putting inmates who refuse housing into segregation cease. We are pleased to see departmental changes are being implemented at most facilities so that inmates can be separated and removed without disciplinary placement in such situations. Tickets for fighting or segregation time can delay or preclude positive opportunity, such as a job assignment or participating in educational programming or transferring to an Adult Transitional Center (ATC, or work release). Some inmates at Western expressed they felt certain staff would maliciously write them disciplinary tickets that would not be upheld, just to disrupt their ability to engage in certain programming opportunities, as they knew the inmate would stay in segregation up until the time of the ticket hearing. Not only is this practice unfair to inmates, it is also bad for taxpayers when inmates are denied the opportunity to earn sentence credits and skills that will prevent recidivism.

JHA has advocated for IDOC to be more responsive and accommodating to inmate requests for housing changes, as inmates' concerns regarding their cellmates can present legitimate safety issues, and complaints about a cellmate's disruptive or bizarre behavior may signal early signs of mental health deterioration. The IDOC policy change to discourage use of segregation for inmates who refuse housing is positive. However, it still remains unclear how much practices have changed, as at some facilities a few inmates still state they are housed in segregation without privileges for refusing housing or fighting with cellmates after asking repeatedly to be moved. JHA will continue to monitor this issue.

Finding: Although segregation practices have had some improvements, heat and ventilation remain major concerns in this housing area.

Western's segregation unit had a reported capacity of 59, but Western has housed more than this number of men in segregation status during prior visits, utilizing an additional 12 cells on the receiving unit. For example, at the time of JHA's 2014 visit, there were 69 men in segregation at Western, two of whom were identified as SMI.⁴⁸ Since that time, the facility had stopped using receiving cells for segregation purposes and the number of men who were housed on the segregation unit around the time of the 2017 visit was reportedly 58,⁴⁹ again with at least two of whom who were identified as SMI.⁵⁰ JHA continues to speak with inmates and staff who do not fully understand the *Rasho* settlement and the implications for inmates identified as SMI in segregation; in particular, many people believe that the SMI designation entirely precludes segregation placement, while mental health staff input regarding discipline, treatment, and ongoing placement is what is required.

Administrators reported that the average segregation stay was about 60 days at Western, with the longest term being 150 days. From information provided it appears that about half of the individuals held in segregation around the time of JHA's 2017 visit served a month or less in

segregation at Western, while of those who served more than a month approximately a third got out due to transfer, discharge, or parole, while a comparable percentage earned an early segregation release. However, it is worth noting that other correctional systems continue to take steps to limit all disciplinary segregation placements to under a month, or even less than 15 days.⁵¹ Western administrators reported that typically inmates with more than four months of disciplinary segregation time are sent to another facility's segregation unit, such as at Pinckneyville, Menard, or Pontiac, and that they had about nine disciplinary transfers from Western a month.

Importantly, in April 2017, IDOC started implementing changes to disciplinary rules, including increasing required showers and out-of-cell opportunity in segregation, eliminating segregation placements for minor rule infractions, and decreasing segregation terms for many major offenses. At the time of the 2014 JHA visit, segregation recreation was scheduled twice a week for one and a half to two hours at a time, and showers were offered twice a week at Western. In July 2017, JHA was informed that inmates in segregation were expected to have at least eight hours out-of-cell a week. Administrators were still working to create a group space in the vicinity of segregation to be used primarily for mental health groups and out-of-cell time required by *Rasho* for certain inmates in segregation. Men in segregation during the 2017 visit told JHA they typically received three opportunities a week for either yard time or showers. Administrators reported that they had made a request for funding to expand the segregation yard area, but that funding had not yet been approved.

During JHA's prior visits, inmates expressed that at Western excessive time was given for minor infractions, such as 30-60 days of segregation for failing to obey a direct order, with one inmate reporting that he had been sent to seg 40 times during his stay at Western. Staff at that time also stated that most of the inmates in segregation were there as punishment for minor infractions. Given this background, we expected to see a decrease in use of segregation at Western. In reviewing a draft of this report, administrators reported that segregation population has averaged about 50-55 men, and that they still see a lot of disciplinary placements for serious issues, such as fights, and also receive inmates in segregation as a result of disciplinary transfers from other facilities. However, they report they are actively reviewing individuals for segregation cuts.

During the 2017 visit, JHA discussed our concerns that since the disciplinary rule changes staff may be now charging inmates with more serious tickets in order to get them sent to segregation. For example, instead of charging an inmate with a 300-level minor ticket for disobeying an order or insolence, an incident could be recharacterized as a 200-level major ticket for a threat for instances of minor disobedience or mouthing off. We advise tracking and monitoring data around this issue. One supervisor commented in his numerous years with the department he had only received two real threats, which he added, he likely earned. This suggests that a spike in such tickets would be abnormal and merit review and staff retraining to achieve the desired effect of the rule change to prevent the misuse of harsh segregation for minor offenses. Administrators stated that they have been vigilant regarding such issues.

Western, like other IDOC facilities, had started to use a segregation step-down program. JHA believes the programs vary from facility to facility. The program at Western was reportedly

facilitated by mental health staff, presumably the ones who were filling in at Western from other facilities at the time of the visit. Some inmates during the visit reported that mental health staff coming on the segregation unit was a recent development. It was unclear whether the segregation reduction program was available to all inmates in with a particular length of segregation, or if it was used for just men identified as SMI. The first week of the program involved personality testing to identify personal strengths and asked the inmate to write an essay answering why he made the choices that placed him in disciplinary status. The second week asked the inmate to use his strengths identified in the prior assessment to improve and create goals for his time incarcerated. JHA supports permitting inmates opportunities to more quickly earn their way out of disciplinary status. However, we note that some inmates may need significant staff assistance to succeed with the tasks and the program will have to be modified for those with lower literacy levels. We look forward to hearing more and seeing future data regarding segregation reduction efforts and outcomes.

A major concern with the segregation unit at Western remains heat and lack of ventilation. Cell doors have Plexiglas covering that severely limits ventilation with the compounding factor that cells lack functioning outlets for inmates to use fans within cells. The covered segregation doors also make it particularly difficult to hear inmates at cellfront. In draft report review, administrators reported coverings were removed from the cells previously used for segregation on the receiving unit and that they will work to remove some, but not all, on the segregation side, as some are still needed due to security concerns with certain assaultive inmates. Some inmates did not know that the issue regarding not being given fans was due to lack of electricity, and believe that they were just being denied use of fans. Administrators reported they had made a Capital Development Board request to fund this project, which has not been granted. In general, throughout the entire facility at Western, 69% of inmate survey respondents indicated that ventilation was not adequate, with only ten percent finding it adequate.⁵²

During hot weather, inside and outside temperatures are monitored and at a certain temperature threshold, ice is supposed to be provided to inmates to prevent overheating.⁵³ Many segregated men reported that the heat was unbearable. Administrators responded that large fans are placed on the housing wings and the cellfront chuckholes are opened in hot weather, and that the windows in segregation also may be opened. Throughout the facility, only five percent of the inmate survey respondents reported that temperature was comfortable, while the majority, 61%, strongly disagreed. More than half of staff survey respondents reported the temperature was comfortable, with some disagreeing.

As in other parts of the facility, inmates in segregation reported issues with lack of staff responsiveness, availability of grievance forms, as well as plumbing and cleanliness issues, discussed further below. Several segregated inmates reported that inmate workers were allowed to pack others' property when an inmate was sent to segregation and stole items. JHA notes that this should not be allowed and unsurprisingly results in theft. Theft seemed to be a common issue raised by inmates at Western, and sometimes also was blamed on staff.

Finding: Many inmates reported inadequacy of food, cleanliness, and physical plant issues.

As is common throughout facilities, inmates in several areas of Western reported dissatisfaction with food, such as that it was of poor quality, at times undercooked, and that the portions were small. Some inmates that worked in dietary reported that food was thrown out and they did not know why servings could not be increased. Administrators responded that they were very surprised by this feedback, as they have not received complaints and they felt staff provided extra food. In fact, from May 2016 through May 2017, facility grievance tracking only reflected three grievances were received in relation to food quality or quantity. However, only six percent of the inmate survey respondents at Western reported that they were satisfied with food from dietary, while the majority, 58% strongly disagreed. This may still be slightly more positive than at other facilities, as of all IDOC inmate survey respondents in 2017 at multiple facilities including Western, 5.9% reported they were satisfied with food from dietary, while 65.4% strongly disagreed. Some inmates at Western stated that food was a positive, or improving. It should be noted that food plays an important role in quality of life and even facility safety.⁵⁴ Administrators reported that they had been helped out by food donations from the community during difficult times with suppliers due to budget issues resulting in state nonpayment.⁵⁵

Some inmates also reported that commissary was not offered frequently enough, prices were too high, or that they were made to buy substituted items on commissary they did not want to purchase. Commissary was supposed to be offered every two weeks at the facility, and some inmates even stated that one positive about the facility was this schedule being followed.

Inmates in various locations pointed out, and JHA observed, worn mattresses and clothing. Only four percent of the inmate survey respondents reported that clothing provided by the facility was adequate, while the majority, 69% strongly disagreed. Some inmates complained that they had received used clothing in poor condition or wrong-sized items during intake at Western. Inmates reported mattresses in poor condition and that they could not trade in clothing or bedding as is supposed to be periodically permitted. One inmate said he felt he could not complain about a blanket with holes too large to be usable because he may be charged for a new one. Some inmates complained they were expected to buy some items on commissary that were reportedly in the past supplied by the facility. Administrators acknowledged the clothing situation had been bad for about a year and a half prior to the JHA visit. Since the visit, administrators reported that inmates are now able to purchase mattress pads on commissary, an option that had not previously been available.

Several indigent incarcerated men reported not receiving hygiene supplies, although administrators stated they would be provided to indigent inmates. JHA was shown an example of an indigent hygiene supplies bag on request, and we were told that these were being distributed during our visit. Over the past few years, with state budget difficulties, lack of adequate hygiene and cleaning supplies is a very common issue that JHA hears. Only five percent of the inmate survey respondents at Western reported that enough state hygiene items were provided, while the majority, 65% strongly disagreed. State pay for unassigned inmates is \$10 and many inmates report this is not sufficient to cover necessities, because commissary prices have increased and fewer products are being supplied by the state. Staff stated they will look at inmates' trust fund account and spending to determine indigency,⁵⁶ and if a person is indigent he can receive hygiene products (soap, shampoo, toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant), in addition to laundry

soap. The majority of staff survey respondents, 73%, felt that adequate clothing and hygiene items were provided to inmates.

Inmates also reported that there were no "state loan" items available at Western, meaning items such as fans or televisions, typically purchased by inmates with funds on commissary, but which are sometimes loaned by facilities to indigent inmates. Some inmates reported that they were not being provided with weekly cleaning supplies, while others stated that cleaning supplies are inadequate, e.g., not strong enough. Staff at other facilities have also commented to JHA on the rare availability of bleach for cleaning. In a particularly disturbing example, one inmate reported he was denied cleaning supplies when his cellmate was sick and vomited, forcing him to clean up with his laundry detergent and clothing. Another stated that when his cellmate bled in their cell, they were not given cleaning supplies. Administrators reported that Lieutenants supervise the distribution of cleaning supplies daily. Unclean showers and yard areas was another concern repeatedly raised by inmates in various locations. Inmates also complained of lack of bathroom facilities on yard. Some stated they skipped yard due to the lack of access to bathrooms. Administrators responded that there are bathrooms on both yards that are cleaned weekly, with an outside contractor that comes in to pump them out when they get filled. Several inmates reported pest issues with ants or other bugs. Such issues regarding lack of adequate cleaning and pest control are common in IDOC.⁵⁷ Only two percent of the inmate survey respondents at Western agreed that adequate cleaning supplies were provided, while the majority, 82%, strongly disagreed. No staff survey respondents reported that units were unclean; however, only slightly more than half agreed with the statement that the facility was sanitary.

Inmates have an hour and a half out for yard at a time. With 12 phones on yard for an entire housing unit, upwards of 224 men, with 170-180 men reportedly typically attending per yard opportunity, access to these phones is limited. In dayrooms, where four phones are shared by upwards of 28 men during an hour and a half period, phone access is also a problem. As a result, reportedly gangs often control access to the phones. Administrators reported that they would like to have more phones and had increased the number of phones on yard through negotiation with the for-profit vendor Securus. Some of the demand for phone usage may be due to lower rates implemented through changes to state law. Fifty-seven percent of the inmate survey respondents indicated they did not have enough access to phones, while only 23% felt they did. Twenty-three percent of inmate survey respondents reported there was frequent gang activity at Western; more staff survey respondents believed that this was true than not, although almost half were neutral.

At the time of JHA's 2017 visit, plans to add MP3 players and video visitation through for-profit company GTL were in the works, but timeline for these products becoming available was unclear. As of December 2017, video visitation kiosks were installed on housing units and were expected to become operational in the next few months, while the timeline for other planned implementation of tablet technology was still unclear.⁵⁸ In theory, having messaging capacity through the devices and video visitation kiosks on housing units should ease some of the tensions related to lack of phone access.

JHA has always insisted that costs for new technology must be reasonable and that it should supplement and not replace in-person visitation and phone access. JHA also continues to oppose the absolute ban on phone calls for C-grade inmates, who have lost privileges due to discipline,

and believe this issue is ripe for review given the importance of family connectedness. JHA remains concerned that in person visitation and new technologies continue to be inaccessible and cost prohibitive for many people. These concerns are heightened due to the number of people JHA speaks with who have difficulty communicating with family via mail due to factors such as slow mail times, issues of illiteracy, and desire to be able to communicate with young children.

Some inmates also reported difficulty with shower access in addition to phone access during limited dayroom time. Forty-two percent of the inmate survey respondents reported that they had adequate access to showers, while 40% reported they did not. Inmates also reported that there is typically no hot water for showers, the water is discolored, or there is not enough heat. Some inmates noted that they had hot water the day of the JHA visit. Many incarcerated men reported that they had issues with toilets in the cells, some saying that the toilets öping-pongedö such that waste from one toilet would appear in the toilet of another cell upon flushing. Administrators stated that this topic was the subject of litigation and that testing had been performed that discredited the öping-pongingö theory. However, administrators acknowledged that there are issues with plumbing, at times caused by inmates flushing inappropriate items, and Western is in need of maintenance staff including a plumber.⁵⁹ Inmates reported that requests for work orders for repairs had not been responded to, and in one case, a repair request reportedly was ignored for three months. Staff noted that, given the age of the facility, they needed more than one plumber but lacked qualified applicants. They further observed that the apprenticeship to become a certified plumber takes seven years. Maintenance and repair issues were also complicated by the fact that vendors doing business with the facility were demanding payment up front for goods and services because of past issues with state nonpayment. Sixty-five percent of inmate survey respondents indicated that things are not fixed in a timely manner, while 15% felt that repairs were timely. Equal percentages of staff survey respondents agreed as disagreed with the statement that facility is in a good state of repair, while more than half were neutral regarding the question.

Administrators at Western reported over \$5 million in capital requests for the medium-security facility opened in 1989, including a new security control system, heating and cooling upgrades, building automation fire suppression system, refrigeration system, and plumbing valve replacement. After facility administrators submit capital requests, they must wait for funding to be authorized by state actors.

Finding: Western’s meat plant processes products used throughout IDOC and recently discontinued using soy filler; Staff aim to use industry training to assist inmates with obtaining employment post-release.

JHA toured the Illinois Correctional Industry (ICI) meat processing plant. The plant was not processing food at the time of the visit, but JHA visitors were impressed with staff enthusiasm for the operation and felt that inmates in the program would benefit from the training, which teaches hands-on work skills. Moreover, ICI jobs, in addition to paying better than other facility jobs, offer incarcerated men good conduct contracts through which they can earn days off their sentence, reducing incarceration and saving taxpayers money.⁶⁰ ICI also employs inmates for recycling at Western.

The meat plant area and equipment appeared clean, although there were a few puddles of standing water from leaky sinks. At one time the Western meat plant processed 72 products on all three shifts. Today Western produces about ten products, including fish, chicken, patties, nuggets, meatballs, and turkey ham. These products are served throughout IDOC. The meat plant in Fiscal Year 2016 produced more than three and a half million pounds of various meat products at a value of over eight million dollars.

Inmates throughout IDOC have often complained about soy content in their diet and this has been the basis of several lawsuits.⁶¹ During JHA's prior visits at Western, we had discussed soy content at the meat plant. However, in summer 2017, IDOC moved away from using soy, reportedly because of soy's higher cost. JHA has been told the remaining soy products within IDOC will be used up, but soy is no longer being used in meat production. IDOC officials have also stated they are planning some other dietary revisions throughout the agency.

Ideally 70 inmates work at the meat plant on two shifts five days a week, but at the time of the visit there were 58 workers. ICI staff noted they had staff vacancies that limited operations. Inmate workers must be in Grade A, have no staff assaults, and no sex offenses. A worker will have two to seven years remaining on his incarceration to get the most benefit from the training. Since the visit, administrators reported that now men with up to ten years left to serve may participate. All workers must be safety trained and start with low skilled positions, like bagging chicken, and then may advance to more highly skilled positions. These workers with experience reportedly make upwards of \$250-\$350 a month, which is considerably more than the \$10 a month that an unassigned inmate receives on state pay. ICI staff stated that the Illinois Department of Agriculture inspects the plant every day and has an office onsite.⁶² Two inmates are employed in quality control and work closely with the state inspector. These men earn the highest skill-based wage. Fish is the only product that is not inspected, as it is merely repackaged onsite. JHA was pleased to hear that ICI is making efforts to facilitate reentry for workers, including contacting parole and issuing certificates of training completion.

Finding: Educational and volunteer-provided programming is a facility strength, although demand outpaces available opportunities.

Educational programming at Western was a bright spot; however, as is the case throughout IDOC, demand outstrips supply. While about 20% percent of Western's population was in school at the time of the visit, only 16% of the inmate survey respondents reported that rehabilitative and educational programming was adequate, while 40% strongly disagreed. About half of staff survey respondents reported there is enough rehabilitative programming for inmates, with a few disagreeing. Inmates requested more educational opportunities. Educational staff noted that updated books and videos are needed, and that some inmates require more keyboarding instruction to be able to use computers effectively for GED classes. Administrators noted that educational classroom space also can be used to conduct mental health groups.

Only inmates with a greater than two-year sentence are assessed by IDOC to determine their educational needs. At the time of the 2017 visit, 178 students were enrolled in Adult Basic Education (ABE). Some of these were inmates were in mandatory ABE classes, which are required for inmates who test at less than a 6th grade education level. A few inmates reported that

they did not believe they could receive needed special education instruction. Mandatory ABE students must be enrolled for 90 days in ABE classes, and they are pay restricted to just \$10 a month until completion. There were 51 men enrolled in General Educational Development (GED, sometimes referred to as Adult Secondary Education (ASE)), classes. Waitlists were reported as 138 for mandatory ABE classes, 132 for non-mandatory ABE, and only nine for GED classes. College offerings are provided contractually by Lake Land College. There were more than a hundred students enrolled in academic or vocational college courses, with about an equal number on the waitlists.⁶³ Staff stated an inmate is limited to earning an associate degree and two vocational certificates.

Waitlists for educational programming are based on the inmate's release date. Administrators stated that when an inmate is within ten months of his release date, he is moved to the top of the list. As noted above, a third of the inmates at Western have less than a year left to serve. Inmates could only be placed on the waitlist for one class at a time. Inmates who have been in segregation generally have to wait 45 days before they will be placed back on a waitlist, and those who got in trouble in class have a longer ban.

Administrators reported the facility usually has several college academic classes. At the time of the visit, courses on Fundamentals of Accounting, Principles of Selling, Western Civilization, Introduction to Sociology, and Death and Dying were offered. Vocational classes offered at Western included, Food Services, Horticulture, Construction Occupations, Automotive Technology, and Career Technology. One student in the automotive class expressed appreciation for the instruction, stating it teaches students "how to learn." Another stated that even though he had been a mechanic on the outside, he was learning things. However, numerous students expressed frustration that the facility security level precluded some hands-on training. The instructor expects essay responses on materials covered in class, and reports he has seen his students take on a whole different demeanor when they are treated with respect and more is asked of them.

JHA appreciated meeting many dedicated educators at Western who were focused on treating inmates as students and helping them change their lives. However, at the time of the 2017 visit, only four of the five vocational classes had instructors and Western was expecting to lose another instructor shortly. Staff reported it is difficult to find people qualified to teach in the area. This flux of teaching staff, often with an instructor leaving one facility to go teach at another, is a commonly observed occurrence in Illinois' corrections. Culinary Arts, which was about to lose its instructor, was reportedly a particularly popular offering and inmates in this class prepared meals for special functions at the facility including graduations. Western does not offer school on the evening shift, reportedly because of security concerns; however, we note that other medium-security facilities, such as Hill, do offer more class opportunities by having evening courses.

JHA received complaints regarding law library access and services. Inmates would like to have library hours offered also on the weekend. Forty-five percent of the survey respondents indicated they did not have adequate access to the law library, while only 26% felt they did. Some said it was too difficult to get things notarized. Inmates stated that Western did not provide any law library coverage during a planned two-week staff vacation, for example. Administrators also stated they were short staffed in the library and that they were filling a paralegal position that had

been vacant for a long period. This is an area where JHA frequently sees staffing difficulties throughout IDOC. JHA recommends that IDOC reinstitute paralegal training opportunities for incarcerated people to enable them to work in law libraries and fill an important need.

Staff noted that due to the facility's security classification and budget cuts over the years, many positive recreational activities such as art, sports, and music have been eliminated. Sixty-six percent of inmate survey respondents reported that there was not enough recreation. Inmates expressed desire for such programming, suggesting it could be used to incentivize positive behavior by making it available to only those who are A-grade, without disciplinary restrictions for privileges, approximately 88% of the men at the time of the 2017 visit. JHA notes that several other facilities recently began reintroducing more recreational activities. Administrators at Western, as at all facilities JHA has visited in 2017, reported that they were not authorized for any Inmate Benefit Fund (IBF) funds from inmate commissary purchases) spending, which historically could be used for items for the benefit of the inmate population, like games, activities, or recreational equipment. Administrators expressed hope to be able to introduce more recreational activities when a LTS staff position is filled.

Administrators reported that Western's counselors offer multiple group programs including lifestyle redirection, anger management, and substance abuse education, and that the facility has many volunteers who facilitate programs. However, inmates and staff noted the need for certain additional religious volunteers, including African Hebrew Israelites and Odinists,⁶⁴ as well as additional Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous (AA/NA) classes, sign language programming, and programming for Spanish-speaking inmates. JHA noted that the Illinois School for the Deaf is located about a 45-minute drive from the facility in Jacksonville, and may be a valuable resource. Administrators made clear that anyone approved by IDOC as a volunteer would be welcome.

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This report was written by JHA staff. Media inquiries should be directed to JHA's Executive Director, Jennifer Vollen Katz, at (312) 291-9555 or jvollen@thejha.org.

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Since 1901, JHA has provided public oversight of Illinois' juvenile and adult correctional facilities. Every year, JHA staff and trained volunteers inspect prisons, jails and detention centers throughout the state. Based on these inspections, JHA regularly issues reports that are instrumental in improving prison conditions.



JHA's work on healthcare in IDOC is made possible through a generous grant by the Michael Reese Health Trust.

Preparation of this report was supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.



*The John Howard Association was the proud recipient of the 2015
MacArthur Award for Creative and Effective Institutions*

¹ This prison is also often referred to by the name of its location, as Mt. Sterling. This report is based on a monitoring visit to Western on July 14, 2017 and ongoing communications with inmates, staff, and concerned citizens. JHA surveyed inmates and staff during the 2017 visit, and some results are discussed herein and full reports of surveys where a significant percentage of the population participated will be made available at www.thejha.org/prisonsurveys. When we do not obtain surveys responses from a statistically significant percentage of the population, in this case for Western staff, we still use the survey responses collected to inform our monitoring activities and these also may be used for cumulative IDOC survey reporting. IDOC officials and Western administrators reviewed and fact-checked a draft of this report and it was last discussed with JHA on January 5, 2018. No factual substantive changes have been made since that time prior to publication. All statements of opinions and policy recommendations herein are JHA's unless otherwise stated. See JHA's 2013 publication *How JHA's Prison Monitoring Works*, available at www.thejha.org/method. Inmates may send privileged mail to JHA, P.O. Box 10042, Chicago, IL 60610-0042. Other concerned parties may also reach us by email or phone.

² Inmates from the work camp are assigned to Western as their parent facility and they are sometimes counted in Western facility data and may have work assignments at the medium-security facility. JHA did not visit Clayton. Clayton has a rated capacity of 150. By July 2017, it only housed 90 men. Administrators reported population is low at the work camp due to greater use of deterrence of low-level offenders from IDOC custody, while IDOC has not yet reconsidered the criteria for placement. Department-wide, inmates are now supposed to be considered for programming based on risk and needs assessment. However, such assessments are still infrequently conducted and there are few staff trained in using the assessment tool throughout IDOC. As of December 28, 2017, Clayton housed only 60 men and administrators reported it was difficult to fill job assignments as the population dropped, in part due to sentencing credit awards. At the time of the July 2017 JHA visit, Clayton had 53 authorized staff positions and had 48 employees with two on leave. During JHA's 2014 visit, Clayton was over capacity and housed 197 inmates. Administrators reported in 2017 that they had requested \$1.5 million for a plumbing project at Clayton. The latest publicly available report we could find of community service hours at Clayton in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 IDOC Annual Report was 23,292.5 hours, far below the number of hours reported ten years prior, wherein FY03 hours totaled 70,569.

³ At the time of the 2017 visit, about 15% of the population were under 25 years old, and about 19% were over 50. In the 2016 Fiscal Year 2016 (FY16) IDOC Annual Report, population throughout the agency was about 15% under 25 years old and about 18% over 50 years old. At the time of the 2014 visit, Western housed one 17-year-old. JHA continuously recommended that Illinois not house 17-year-olds in adult facilities, see e.g. JHA's February 2016 Briefing on 17-year-olds in Illinois' adult prisons, <http://www.thejha.org/sites/default/files/JHA%20Briefing%2017%20year%20olds%20Feb%202016.pdf>. As of January 1, 2017, Illinois' law was amended so that youth under the age of 18 are no longer housed in IDOC. 730 ILCS 5/5-8-6, amended by Public Act 99-628. In 2014, young offenders under the age of 25 accounted for 22% of Western's population (5% or 105 inmates were under 21) and about 13% were over 50.

⁴ See FY16 IDOC Annual Report. However, the average annual cost of housing a prisoner in IDOC is likely closer to \$38,000 when costs outside of the facility and agency's budget, including employee benefits, are included. See FY10 data in Vera Institute of Justice publication, *The Price of Prisons: What Incarceration Costs Taxpayers*, <http://www.vera.org/sites/default/files/resources/downloads/price-of-prisons-updated-version-021914.pdf>.

⁵ Data from information provided to JHA in relation to the visits, as well as from IDOC Quarterly and Annual Reports. See <https://www.illinois.gov/idoc/reportsandstatistics/Pages/default.aspx>. Comparatively to 2017, data from September 2014 reflected: Population: 2,126 (more than 200 inmates than in 2017, with the most drastic difference in the Clayton population, which decreased by more than 100 inmates, or more than a half, by 2017); Average Age: 36; Committed from Cook County: ~60%; Average Annual cost per inmate (FY13): \$16,555 (administrators also provided for JHA's 2014 visit an annual figure of \$15,449.43, broken down as two-thirds, \$10,447.13, for Personnel Services; \$1,993.30 for Medical, \$978.74 for Food, and \$687.78 for Utilities); Population by Race: 63% Black, 23% White, 14% Hispanic, and 1% (11) Asian; Committing Offense: 13% Murder, 33% Class X, 17% Class 1, 22% Class 2, 7% Class 3, and 8% Class 4 felonies.

⁶ At the time of the 2017 visit, Western had about 89% of 425 authorized state employee positions filled, with an additional 11 staff members (2.5%) on leaves. Roughly 97% of the state employee staff are Caucasian, and 13% are female. Healthcare staffing at the time of the 2017 JHA visit is discussed in the mental health and grievance sections

below. Comparatively, at the time of the 2014 visit, administrators reported Western had 338 state employees, with 217 security and 73 non-security staff at the medium-security facility and 42 security and six non-security staff at Clayton, with 20 state employees on leaves. At that time, administrators reported that authorized headcount was 54 state employees higher for Western and 11 higher than actual headcount at Clayton. State staff population by race was reported to be 97% White, and 14% female. In 2014, Western employed 54 contractual staff members between Lake Land College instructors and healthcare services provided by Wexford Health Sources (Wexford), 81% of whom were female. At that time, two of the 43 healthcare positions at Western were state positions, with four healthcare staff on leave. Critical vacancies in 2014 included a Correctional Lieutenant, Maintenance Equipment Operator, a Plumber, an Account Tech, and a Business Administrative Specialist. Administrators noted that they were down seven maintenance staff, three food supervisors (although they noted they had been short seven previously), and about 20 security positions.

⁷ Other noted critical state vacancies at Western included: a Superintendent at Clayton Work Camp; seven administrative positions in various departments; three maintenance positions, importantly including a plumber; three dietary supervisors; a Bureau of Identification technician; five correctional counselors and a clinical services supervisor; four social workers; a Leisure Time Services (LTS) position to coordinate recreation opportunities (that had been vacant over a year); and six security supervisor positions. Since the visit in addition to the AWP and mental health staff hired, the facility has been able to post positions for a plumber, state social worker, and LTS position. For more information about the state hiring process see JHA's 2015 Policy Paper, *State Hiring Practices and Illinois' Corrections: A Complex Problem in Need of Straightforward Solutions*, <http://www.thejha.org/statement20151029>. The facility has conducted interviews for the clinical services supervisor and has hired a counselor, so that as of December 2017, the facility was short four counselors.

⁸ Data provided reflected in 2017, 33.6% of the population had less than a year left to serve, 11% less than two years, 15.8% less than five years, 8.1% less than eight years, 8.1% less than 20 years, 12.3% more than 20 years, 2.2% Life, and 0.3% Indeterminately sentenced. In 2014, 34% of the population had less than a year left to serve, 16% less than two years, 16% less than five years, 8% less than eight years, 23% less than 20 years, 1% more than 20 years, 1% Life, and 5 men were Indeterminately sentenced.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ See e.g. Kjelsberg, E., Skoglund, T. H., & Rustad, A.-B. (2007). Attitudes towards prisoners, as reported by prison inmates, prison employees and college students. *BMC Public Health*, 7, 71. <http://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2458-7-71>.

¹¹ See <https://www.uc.edu/content/dam/uc/corrections/docs/Training%20Overviews/CCP%20-%20Overview.pdf>; Stephan M. Haas and Douglas H. Spence, *Use of Core Correctional Practice and Inmate Preparedness for Release*, *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 2017, Vol. 61(13) 1455-1478, <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0306624X15625992>.

¹² *Rasho v. Baldwin*, 07-cv-1298 (C.D. Ill.) Some case documents available at <https://www.clearinghouse.net/detail.php?id=12369>.

¹³ See e.g. JHA's 2016 Prison Monitoring Project, Summary and Recommendations, Part II, <http://www.thejha.org/sites/default/files/JHA%202016%20Adult%20Prison%20Monitoring%20Report%20Part%20II%20Final.pdf/>.

¹⁴ Inmates also noted in survey comments that the cable offerings were good (a few reported problems with reception), they appreciated having four-hour visits (visits in maximum-security facilities are commonly limited to two-hours), and that lockdowns were fewer and isolated to involved areas, unlike at some other facilities. Men who had been housed at maximum-security facilities mentioned being able to see outside of the prison fences as a positive, as opposed to seeing just a wall. Some men stated they were closer to their families at this facility.

¹⁵ JHA did also hear some complaints at Western that staff were not always responsive or quick to respond to emergency call buttons in cells.

¹⁶ See e.g. Matt Dutton, "State \$400K behind in payments for Mount Sterling prison," *Herald-Whig*, (September 28, 2017), (discussing backlog of water and sewer bills owed the city), <http://www.whig.com/20170928/state-400k-behind-in-payments-for-mount-sterling-prison#>.

¹⁷ Nineteen percent of inmate survey respondents reported they felt safe personally and twelve percent reported the facility was safe for inmates generally. All staff survey respondents agreed with or were neutral regarding the truth of the statement that inmates were safe at the facility.

¹⁸ Various assignments detailed to JHA included: Wing Janitors and Porters ó 180, Commissary, Clothing, Warehouse, Laundry, Barber Shop, Leisure Time Services, Inside Grounds, Maintenance, Vocational Janitor Workers ó 35; Dietary Workers ó 131; Industry Workers ó 58; ABE/GED Academic Students ó 188; Vocational and Academic College Students and Teachers Aides ó 115. Some inmates had more than one assignment. At the time of JHA's 2014 visit, the facility reported 805 assignments. At that time 402 inmates, about 20% of the population at Western, had work assignments. The majority of these assignments were janitorial and in dietary. There were another 403, or 20%, with school assignments. However, some of the assignments are duplicative. For example, in the October 2014 IDOC Quarterly report, although there were 500 educational/vocational assignments, there were only 392 inmates served. See <http://www.illinois.gov/idoc/reportsandstatistics/Pages/QuarterlyReports.aspx>.

¹⁹ While the rule requiring rotation perhaps was intended to prevent security issues of staff and inmates becoming too familiar or to provide more opportunities for other inmates to have some work experience, one inmate commented that regular job rotation, no matter how well the worker performed, creates a mentality that hard work does not matter. This can create a disincentive for inmates to commit to their jobs generating unsanitary conditions, and workers who believe that they should try to get away with as much as possible, such as stealing from dietary, while they can.

²⁰ JHA heard from some inmates housed in certain cell numbers that their dayroom would fall during a yard time periodically due to an error, oversight or poor scheduling not taking this into account. Also, some inmates reported that they would have to choose between commissary, law library, and yard. Western provided a schedule indicating that individuals housed in Healthcare/the infirmary were allowed individual yard opportunities of an hour and a half two to three times a week. JHA has received some complaints at other facilities about lack of access to outdoor areas from individuals housed in infirmaries.

²¹ The United Nations, United States Department of Justice, and the American Correctional Association define solitary confinement or restrictive housing to include those who are confined to their cells for more than 22 hours a day. See also, JHA's May 2016 Statement on Illinois' Use of Solitary Confinement, <http://www.thejha.org/statement20160504>,

²² JHA was encouraged that while Western had given various out-of-cell non-segregation disciplinary restrictions in 2016 (gym (52), yard (59), and dayroom (56)), in the period of January through the time of the visit in July of 2017, far fewer were reported (just three instances of yard restrictions and no gym or dayroom restrictions reported). Such restrictions should only be used for serious instances of misconduct directly related to use of the recreation area.

²³ *Rasho v. Baldwin*, 07-cv-1298 (C.D. Ill.) Some case documents available at <https://www.clearinghouse.net/detail.php?id=12369>.

²⁴ For example, the FY12 IDOC Annual Report section on the facility noted that adding two mental health professionals to the contract enabled having new group programming.

²⁵ At the time of the 2014 visit, seven inmates were identified as transgender with six receiving hormone therapy and the seventh expected to begin shortly thereafter. During the 2017 visit, administrators reported that there were two confirmed transgender inmates, and three pending IDOC Gender Identity Disorder Committee review. The absence of mental health staffing at the facility seemed to be a detriment to transgender individuals who reported issues with housing and treatment, discussed below.

²⁶ In contrast, at the time of the 2014 visit, Western had two mental health staff members onsite and telepsych, with a lesser mental health caseload, which included 286 on psychotropic medications and 88 inmates identified as SMI. Mental health staff noted that they tracked that they had seen 900 unique patients at some point over the prior year. Western at that time was authorized for 3.5 minimally masters level MHPs, three minimally bachelor level behavioral health technicians (BHTs), and two part-time psychiatrists, who provide telepsych services with rare onsite visits, and who would ideally provide coverage five days a week.

²⁷ Administrators noted that correctional officers with good attitudes are selected to assist with telepsych, where inmates are seated shackled in front of a television screen for appointments. The facility is able to email the doctor patient notes prior to the visit.

²⁸ See Illinois Sexually Violent Persons Commitment Act, 725 ILCS 207, <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=1990&ChapterID=54>.

²⁹ See e.g. JHA's 2016 Prison Monitoring Project, Summary and Recommendations, Part II, <http://www.thejha.org/sites/default/files/JHA%202016%20Adult%20Prison%20Monitoring%20Report%20Part%20II%20Final.pdf>.

³⁰ *Rasho v. Baldwin*, 07-cv-1298 (C.D. Ill.), First Annual Report of Monitor Pablo Stewart, MD., <https://www.clearinghouse.net/chDocs/public/PC-IL-0031-0026.pdf>.

³¹ Administrators report that all counselors at Western are Crisis Intervention Team members, conduct Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) screening interviews, make recommendations for the Prisoner Review Board (PRB) for parole orders, screen inmates for Clayton placement, review escape risk designations, process requests for birth certificates and social security cards, answer grievances, process Supplemental Sentence Credit (SSC) reviews, submit transfer requests, and serve on various committees or fill in as needed. Additionally, particular counselors have specific duties as follows: one provides group programs including Trained Reformed and Capable (TRAC), Veterans Group, Lifestyle Redirection, and conducts Orientation; one is responsible for the Receiving, Segregation, and Healthcare units and provides substance abuse education, Parole School, and Orientation; one is responsible for Field Services including preparation of prerelease documentation and facilitation of placement with Parole; one is the Grievance Officer and has a caseload of 220 men; one has a caseload of 448 men and is the facility translator; one has a caseload of 220 and is the Social Security Liaison for inmates applying for disability on release; one has a caseload of 448 men and is responsible for reviewing disciplinary restrictions; the last had a caseload of 448 men added with Parole School.

³² See e.g. JHA's 2016 Prison Monitoring Project, Summary and Recommendations, Part II, <http://www.thejha.org/sites/default/files/JHA%202016%20Adult%20Prison%20Monitoring%20Report%20Part%20II%20Final.pdf>. Some inmates reported frustration that their school assignment time conflicted with the time that the counselor was available. As is common throughout IDOC, JHA spoke to some Western inmates who complained of transfer denials when they wanted to be closer to family. In addition to the fact that crowding throughout IDOC has made transfers scarce, several inmates JHA interviewed had requested transfers for which they were clearly ineligible and counselors should have been able to advise them of this fact. Again, this is an area where staff education and communications could be improved so that inmates could understand why their request was not granted as opposed to just believing it was ignored or denied out of spite. Additionally, IDOC should make public where there are specific rules for placement at certain facilities and keep people informed regarding changes to qualifications.

³³ Roughly the same number of staff respondents agreed, disagreed, or were neutral regarding whether most inmates treated staff with respect. While the majority of staff survey respondents reported their coworkers were professional, some remained neutral or disagreed. Only a few staff survey respondents indicated that staff did not treat inmates with respect. Twenty-six percent of inmate survey respondents reported that inmates did not treat each other with respect.

³⁴ Western's 2016 Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Audit Report noted that additional cameras had been requested. <https://www.illinois.gov/idoc/programs/Documents/Final%20PREA%20Report%20-%20Western%20Illinois%20Correctional%20Center.pdf>. Wiring issues frequently make such installations larger projects than they would seem. We were told that camera projects were being prioritized based on greatest need in the department and that PREA grant money had enabled the purchase of additional cameras.

³⁵ Inmates who transferred from other facilities to Western also reported items were taken that were allowed elsewhere. While IDOC has taken some necessary steps to make property allowances more uniform, this likely needs continual review. However, administrators opined that perhaps for some of the long-term inmates, who had transferred in to Western from other facilities, their property may not have been recently reviewed for currently permitted items.

³⁶ See e.g. JHA's 2016 Prison Monitoring Project, Summary and Recommendations, Part II, <http://www.thejha.org/sites/default/files/JHA%202016%20Adult%20Prison%20Monitoring%20Report%20Part%20II%20Final.pdf>.

³⁷ Twenty-eight percent of inmate survey respondents reported that posted schedules were not accurate, or, in fact, followed, while 32% percentage felt that they were accurate; this variation may reflect differences in housing units, but further analysis is required. Staff survey responses generally indicated they believed schedules were accurate.

³⁸ The grievance process requires that inmates attempt to resolve issues first with their correctional counselor prior to filing a grievance to be reviewed by the grievance officer. Having the same person in both roles would remove a layer of review. JHA recommended that where this is the case, an alternate grievance officer be utilized to remove potential real or perceived bias. Administrators responded that another counselor will perform the first level review to eliminate this concern.

³⁹ During the 2014 visit, administrators reported that the average number of grievances received per month was 82; however, they did not provide any further data relating to the grievances tracked.

⁴⁰ The FY13 IDOC Annual Report noted getting a full-time dentist at Western decreased the waiting list by 75%. Nonetheless, JHA still received some reports of difficulty getting timely dental care. We have not been able to discern a pattern regarding which facilities have authorizations for certain healthcare positions, since this facility had assistants while inmates at other facilities commonly report they cannot get cleanings. Again, we advocate for IDOC to make such information regarding staffing authorizations and vacancies public.

⁴¹ See e.g. JHA's 2012 Healthcare Report, <http://thejha.org/sites/default/files/Unasked%20Questions-Unintended%20Consequences.pdf>.

⁴² See Solicitation Overview <http://www.purchase.state.il.us/ipb/IllinoisBID.nsf/All/3119AD3E5EAA48A98625809E005DE37D?OpenDocument&RefNum=22039980&DocID=3119AD3E5EAA48A98625809E005DE37D&view=viewSolicitationsOpenByDate>

⁴³ See <http://www.purchase.state.il.us/IPB/IllinoisBID.nsf/frmBidDocFrameset?ReadForm&RefNum=22039980&DocID=04608B272F298D608625820C00683639&view=viewNoticesOpenByAgency>.

⁴⁴ See e.g., *Lippert v. Baldwin*, 10-cv-04603 (N.D. Ill).

⁴⁵ See e.g. JHA's 2016 Prison Monitoring Project, Summary and Recommendations, Part II, <http://www.thejha.org/sites/default/files/JHA%202016%20Adult%20Prison%20Monitoring%20Report%20Part%20II%20Final.pdf>. See also the National Commission on Correctional Healthcare (NCCHC) Positions Statement on Charging Inmates a Fee for Health Care Services, reaffirmed November 2017, <https://www.ncchc.org/charging-inmates-a-fee-for-health-care-services>.

⁴⁶ Encouragingly, more inmate survey respondents reported mail is timely at Western (39%) than disagreed (31%). Some inmates coming to Western from Stateville were disappointed that they are charged for legal mail and stated that they believed such beneficial policies should not vary across facilities.

⁴⁷ The receiving unit has a capacity of 107, and housed men transferring, on crisis watch (some on crisis watch are housed in the healthcare unit), or refusing housing. Some of these cells, like Western's segregation cells, do not have functioning electrical outlets. Inmates in receiving are supposed to receive dayroom time and the standard privileges of general population. Some inmates had the impression that people who were in crisis were still taken to segregation. We believe this impression may come from the fact that the receiving unit is adjacent to segregation and inmates may be processed or interviewed prior to placement in watch in the segregation unit area. Some inmates reported that staff assaults on inmates occurred in the receiving area or when people were taken to segregation.

⁴⁸ At the time of the 2014 visit, Western also housed one inmate in Administrative Detention (AD) status who was subsequently moved to maximum-security Menard Correctional Center, and 13 inmates identified as Weapons Violators/Staff Assaulters, who typically were dressed in black and white striped uniforms. In 2014, when JHA posed questions regarding the rules pertaining to these individuals, administrators stated that they were modifying their two-year Weapons Violators/Staff Assaulter program. In 2017, Western administrators reported there no longer was a program or classification and that any striped uniforms at the facility would be remnants of what the inmate

transferred to the facility wearing. However, JHA continues to see men so identified in maximum-security settings. JHA has repeatedly requested policy regarding the Weapons Violators/Staff Assaulters program from IDOC over the past several years while advocating for it to be eliminated and objected to such classifications with opaque and unclear, seemingly uneven, application and rules. We also had concerns regarding staff targeting individuals with such labels for poor treatment. Further, this program seemed to be applied for incidents retroactively where inmates have already been severely disciplined, which if true, leads to what appears to be unfair, unending punishment.

⁴⁹ Six of the men housed on the segregation unit were in temporary confinement status and had not yet had their disciplinary ticket heard.

⁵⁰ JHA interviewed one individual in segregation who was very difficult to communicate with and from prior correspondence we were aware that this man was currently serving time in IDOC after assaulting staff at a state mental health facility. He clearly presented as someone with significant mental health needs. In fact, in the public record the States Attorney handling the case for the assault at the mental health facility even remarked he wanted this man tried as quickly as possible so that he would not again experience mental health decompensation and become unfit for trial. JHA raised concerns about this man's ability to function at Western with the lack of mental health staffing at the time of the visit. He has since been transferred to Pinckneyville, although we do not know if this was for more segregation time.

⁵¹ See e.g. Vera Institute of Justice's December 20, 2017 blog entry, *Momentum Builds in 2017 to Reduce the Use of Solitary Confinement*, <https://www.vera.org/blog/addressing-the-overuse-of-segregation-in-u-s-prisons-and-jails/momentum-builds-in-2017-to-reduce-the-use-of-solitary-confinement>.

⁵² More than half of the staff survey respondents reported that ventilation was adequate with a few disagreeing. Some inmates stated that some housing units have functioning overhead fans that improve ventilation, while others do not.

⁵³ Some inmates in general population reported that ice is only offered once a day during dayroom but their dayroom may be scheduled at a time that is not peak daytime temperature. Administrators stated that ice should be passed out by inmate workers on the morning and evening shift and that other inmates can get ice at various times throughout the day, such as during dayroom, count, or after lines return to the unit.

⁵⁴ See e.g. "Life in prison: Food. A findings paper by HM Inspectorate of Prisons." (July 2016), <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2016/09/Life-in-prison-Food-Web-2016.pdf>.

⁵⁵ Hands of Hope of Illinois, <http://www.handsofhope4u.org/>, reportedly made substantial contributions.

⁵⁶ Indigency may be determined by an inmate having less than \$20 in his trust fund account during the period 30 days before, but also after, the time it is assessed. For example, if an inmate has a balance of \$10, but during the prior month he had an account balance of \$20.01, he would not be considered indigent. Likewise, it is our understanding that if an inmate had a zero-dollar account balance and received \$20 from a relative 29 days later, the cost of indigent supplies could be subtracted from the \$20. Administrators stated that those who are likely to be indigent are inmates who are new to the facility, unassigned and receiving only state pay, and those who are "heavy litigators," i.e. those who have incurred court and legal copy and mail fees, although such fees should likely only be assessed at a percentage of an inmate's income.

⁵⁷ See e.g. JHA's 2016 Prison Monitoring Project, Summary and Recommendations, Part II, <http://www.thejha.org/sites/default/files/JHA%202016%20Adult%20Prison%20Monitoring%20Report%20Part%20II%20Final.pdf>.

⁵⁸ See GTL product page <http://www.gtl.net/correctional-facility-services/inmate-services/handheld-devices/>.

⁵⁹ At the time of the 2014 visit, maintenance was an area with seven reported vacancies, and two out of five of the reported critical vacancies at Western were maintenance positions. Information provided to JHA in 2014 stated that there are on average 370 maintenance orders a month submitted of which they complete on average 315, for an 85% completion rate, which was noted to have improved from FY13 when completion rate was 77%. JHA commended this improvement, but noted that inmate reports that some issues were unresolved appeared credible.

⁶⁰ For more information, including ICI annual reports and product catalog, visit <http://www.icicatalog.illinois.gov/>.

⁶¹ See e.g. *Harris v. Brown*, 7-cv-3225 (C.D. Ill.) (judgement entered in favor of defendants in March 2015).

⁶² JHA continues to recommend increased outside inspection of all IDOC food handling areas such as dietary kitchens

⁶³ In 2014, educational staff had identified 624 inmates at Western, about 30% of the population, as having Low Literacy or Limited English Proficiency. At the time of the 2014 visit, 137 students were enrolled in Adult Basic Education (ABE) and 69 were enrolled in General Educational Development (GED) classes. Waitlists had more inmates on them than were enrolled in classes with 174 waiting for ABE and 121 for GED. There were 124 students enrolled in Academic College courses, with 26 on the waitlist, and 73 enrolled in Vocational College courses with 123 on the waitlist.

⁶⁴ At time the time of the visit, some incarcerated men expressed that they felt non-Christian inmates were discriminated against, ranging from a report of trouble obtaining Wiccan books to reports that men attending Islamic services were searched more frequently than men of other faiths attending services.