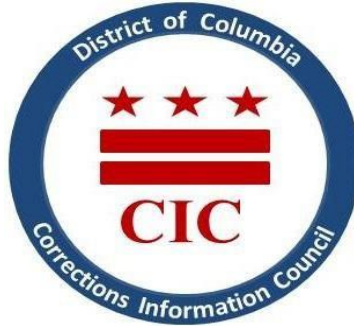


**District of Columbia
Corrections Information Council**



SFF Hazelton

**Follow-Up Report on Previous Findings and
Recommendations**

May 8, 2023



District of Columbia Corrections Information Council

Charles Thornton, Board Chair
Katharine A. Huffman, Board Member
Nkechi Taifa, Board Member

About the District of Columbia Corrections Information Council

The District of Columbia Corrections Information Council (CIC) is an independent oversight body mandated by the United States Congress and the Council of the District of Columbia to inspect, monitor, and report on the conditions of confinement in correctional facilities where residents from the District of Columbia are incarcerated. This includes facilities operated by the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP), the District of Columbia Department of Corrections (DOC), and private contractors.

The CIC reports its observations and recommendations to the District of Columbia Representative in the United States Congress, the Mayor of the District of Columbia, the Council of the District of Columbia, the District of Columbia Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice, the Director of the BOP, the Director of the DOC, and the community.

Although the CIC does not handle individual complaints or provide legal representation or advice, individuals are still encouraged to contact the CIC. Reports, concerns, and general information from incarcerated DC residents and the public are very important to the CIC, and they greatly inform our inspection schedule, recommendations, and reports. However, unless expressly permitted by the individuals or required by law, names and identifying information of residents, corrections staff not in leadership, and members of the general public will be kept anonymous and confidential.

DC Corrections Information Council

1400 Eye Street NW – Suite 400
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: (202) 478-9211
Email: dccic@dc.gov
Website: <https://cic.dc.gov/>

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Facility Profile

Date of Inspection: February 22, 2023
Location: Bruceton Mills, WV
(193 miles from Union Station)
Security Level: Medium

Rated Capacity: 384
Population total: 517 (3% increase from 2019)
DC Population: 8 (65% decrease from 2019)

Introduction

Secure Female Facility Hazelton (SFF Hazelton), one of four institutions that comprise the Hazelton Federal Correctional Complex in Bruceton Mill, West Virginia, currently houses eight DC women held in custody by the Bureau of Prisons (BOP).

The most recent site visit for ACA Accreditation was conducted Feb 7-9, 2023. The accreditation report has not yet been published.

The CIC previously reported on the conditions of confinement at SFF Hazelton based on a site visit conducted August 14 and 15, 2019. Based on the site visit to SFF Hazelton in 2019, the CIC developed recommendations regarding the use of mass punishment, lack of programming, triple bunking, lengthy waits for medical and dental care, and gender-specific staff trainings. Those recommendations and the BOP's response were published on April 6, 2020. The subsequent sections of this report focus on follow-up observations regarding the aforementioned issues; however, the residents also reported current concerns with mail delays, photocopied legal mail, and heat and hot water outages.

Follow-Up on Previous Recommendations

2020 CIC Recommendation: Eliminate or limit the use of “mass punishment”.

2020 BOP Response: The decision to restrict eating areas, spending limits, and securing an institution is one that is never taken lightly. It is only done when absolutely necessary to maintain the safe and secure running of the institution. The primary objective is to investigate what necessitated an event and to determine how best to prevent it from happening in the future. The need for a type of restriction will always be dictated by the nature, duration and magnitude of each situation. The goal remains to return to normal operating procedures as expeditiously as possible following the conclusion of any necessitating event.

As for mail restrictions, the Correctional Systems staff process all mail on a daily basis and ensure it is delivered the same day. In attempt to reduce the amount of contraband introduced through the mailroom, parameters have been implemented to ensure the safety and security of the institution for inmates and staff. For example, photographs printed on paper (as opposed to

photograph paper) are photocopied. In addition, greeting cards, colored paper and scented paper are no longer allowed; as well as colored/painted pictures, as the aforementioned have all contributed to the introduction of contraband and affects the orderly operation of the institution. Inmates were notified via TRULINCS prior to the implementation of this measure and advised to inform their friends and family of this change.

2023 CIC Finding: Some improvements accomplished.

- During the site visit, one of the four SFF units was locked down due to a fight that occurred during the morning. It was not clear how many of the women on the unit were involved.
- The women reported that lockdowns are generally imposed because of altercations between residents.

2020 CIC Recommendation: Increase programming opportunities, such as the Resolve Program, and prioritize efforts to reduce lengthy waiting lists.

2020 BOP Response: SFF Hazelton is in compliance with Program Statement 5300.21, Education, Training and Leisure Time Program Standards, and recently added a number of programs to assist inmates with their transition back into society. This includes, the First Step Act recognized National Parenting from Prison Program Phase I and Phase II. Additionally, beginning June 2020, SFF Hazelton will introduce the Female Integrated Treatment (FIT) program to its institution. It will accommodate 240 inmates into the program. The FIT program is a unit-based therapeutic program, which addresses the specific needs of women. The FIT Program integrates treatment for trauma, substance abuse, and mental health, while also focusing on work and family-related issues, ultimately preparing women for a successful transition into society.

2023 CIC Finding: Some improvements accomplished.

- There are a total of six educational staff; one of whom is leaving during March 2023.
- Two education staff members are specifically assigned to the SFF, without duties at the other facilities.
- A special education teacher is shared between the SFF and the FCI.
- Two female DC Code Offenders are enrolled in college correspondence classes.
- Two of the survey respondents indicated that they are currently participating in GED classes.
- Three women are currently enrolled in the Resolve Program, which focuses on treating female trauma.
- According to site staff, most programs, including culinary and horticulture, are “on hold”.
- Currently, six ACE classes are operational.
- Staff is currently recruiting volunteers for the parenting program.
- Education staff visits the SHU daily to deliver ACE packets.
- The FIT program currently operates as a modified therapeutic community. The program is structured as three hours of programming in the morning and supplemental programming in the afternoon:
 - There are currently 118 women enrolled in FIT. The staff did not know the number of DC women currently enrolled. One DC woman reported current enrollment, and two others reported prior enrollment.

- The women described the FIT program as “all about accountability, but not about treatment”.
- The officer responsible for implementation of the FIT program stated that the Residential Drug Abuse Program (RDAP) has been absorbed into FIT.
- The women who have participated in FIT reported prior enrollment in RDAP, which is no longer offered.

2020 CIC Recommendation: Eliminate triple bunking.

2020 BOP Response: As of November 26, 2019, a memorandum approving a population of 384 inmates for SFF Hazelton-General Population was approved by the Correctional Programs Assistant Director. This cap will enable the facility to discontinue the use of triple bunks.

2023 CIC Finding: Recommendation fully implemented.

The women indicated that the removal of the bunks was successful because additional space was created by using previously vacant office space. The elimination of triple bunking occurred concurrent to a three percent increase in population. The residents reported that there was no impact on programming.

2020 CIC Recommendation: Shorten lengthy wait times for medical and dental care by increasing medical and dental staff.

2020 BOP Response: SFF ensures medical and dental care is triaged in order of emergency, and the most serious clinical problems are addressed first. We are always seeking to recruit medical and dental professionals, but have historically had difficulty filling these positions. Nonetheless, we have increased our dental staff to nearly the recommended numbers. We usually have dental staff on-site at each facility most days of the week. We have had more challenges filling the medical staff positions, especially physicians. We have one staff physician and one contract physician for the entire complex. Multiple avenues are being utilized to recruit more physicians and mid-level providers. We have renovated our sick-call process to maximize the available staff and address patient concerns, as soon as possible.

2023 CIC Finding: No change.

- Several of the women expressed concerns about having their medications discontinued.
- The head of the Psychology Department for the complex is stationed at the SFF.
- The Psychology Department consists of four full-time staff members: the chief, two psychology technicians, and one treatment specialist.
- According to the Assistant Health Administrator, the medical department sees 20 to 30 women per day.
- Sick call is conducted four days per week.
- There is a nurse on day and second shift.
- For medical emergencies during the night, the Lieutenant contacts Dr. Mimms, who remains on-call.
- Staff noted that there is a two year wait for dental care at the SFF; one woman stated she had been waiting 72 months for a dental appointment.
- Dental sick call is available for pain and/or emergencies during one day per week.
- Two of the women reported frustration with the length of their wait for eyeglasses.

All inmates are provided an overview of Health Services during Admission & Orientation (A&O). During A&O, all inmates receive an A&O Handbook detailing the explanation of medical care services. The CIC did not provide specific information such as inmate names or register numbers to properly review these allegations.

Prescription medications are evaluated for continued medical necessity during each visit with a medical provider, as well as each time the prescription is renewed. Medications can be discontinued for multiple reasons, such as no longer being deemed clinically appropriate by the provider or for no longer meeting formulary requirements for prescription. Without specific information on the individual in question and their prescription and medical history, it is impossible to provide feedback on why a certain medication was discontinued for a particular inmate. Furthermore, providers ordering prescription medications must follow all applicable guidelines and formulary requirements within the BOP, as well as the direction of the local Clinical Director, who is the final clinical authority for all medical decisions made at the facility. Psychologists do not have the authority to change an inmate's medication. Modifications to medications are determined by the Clinical Director.

Until recently, the dental department of FCC Hazelton had vacancies in staffing, including dentists. Further compounding the provision of dental care with low staffing numbers, routine dental care was suspended under COVID--19 guidelines to reduce the potential spread of COVID-19. Therefore, at the time of the CIC inspection, FCC Hazelton had just resumed routine dental care again since COVID-19 precautions were relaxed and had a more appropriate staffing level in the dental department. Therefore, the routine care list had a longer wait time than previously but was being actively reduced through routine care appointments. Dental sick call is offered once per week at each facility for urgent dental care, as established by the local Chief Dental Officer (CDO), outlined in Program Statement 6400.03, Dental Services. Emergent dental care is triaged and provided for immediately at any time, on a 24-hour basis.

As it pertains to the wait time for eyeglasses, the Federal Prison Industries at FCI Butner, NC is the only approved eyeglasses vendor. Staff frequently place orders for inmate eyeglasses. Once these orders are completed, they are shipped back to the facility and issued to the inmate. Local staff have no control over the amount of time required to process, fulfill, and ship the eyeglasses from the facility in Butner. It is against policy to source prescription eyeglasses from any other source.

There are five (5) psychologists at the SFF; six (6) treatment specialists for FIT and one Psychology technician. The Chief Psychologist is stationed at the USP but makes regular rounds at all institutions. The institution continues to have TDY (Temporary Duty) psychologists assist the institution from other Federal Bureau of Prisons institutions on a rotation. Psychology Interns also assist with the complex needs.

Human Resources continues to work tirelessly on hiring psychologists to assist in the staffing at FCC Hazelton. However, location of the facility and demographics are some of the challenges with the hiring process. The CIC is encouraged to advise potential candidates of hiring opportunities at FCC Hazelton.

2020 CIC Recommendation: Mandate that all corrections officers receive training focused on gender specific mental health and trauma. Assure that staffing responsibilities are filled by officers who have undergone trainings relative to the populations with whom they are working.

2020 BOP Response: Every officer at FCC Hazelton has undergone Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) trainings relative to the populations with whom they are working. TIC training is an organizational structure and treatment framework that involves understanding, recognizing, and responding to the effects of all types of trauma. The Trauma-Informed Correctional Care training is provided to every new staff member prior to working any housing unit, and it is also conducted annually during staff annual training.

2023 CIC Finding: Some improvements accomplished.

- The women noted that staff are primarily male.
- Several of the women complained that male staff arriving on the units do not announce their presence.

Response by the Bureau of Prisons to the CIC's 2023 findings:

There is an automated message played on all shifts throughout the day at the SFF which states that male staff routinely make rounds in all areas of the institution. Signs are also posted in areas of the institution identifying the same message. Male staff also identify themselves when making rounds in the Special Housing Unit at the SFF. All staff participate in Female Offenders Training at the FCC Hazelton complex on a yearly basis.

