

Unannounced Allegheny County Jail Inspection
Performed by Bethany Hallam & MAN-E
5/14/24 Arrival 19:05 Departure 23:00

The nature of our visit was to check on incarcerated persons (IPS) at the request of their loved ones. We arrived at 19:00 and waited for 40 minutes for an escort while the sergeant working the desk at the entry refused to provide an explanation or help with locating the individuals we were there to speak with. Once the duty officer arrived to escort us, we were escorted to several housing units, where we observed jail operations and spoke to numerous incarcerated individuals. Our findings include complaints about several key issues, such as Medication deficiencies and lack of medical attention, Tablets, the Commissary, and the treatment by jail staff.

There were claims of IPS not being given their prescribed medications, such as one individual missing 3 days of their Cymbalta, causing them to experience symptoms of withdrawal. A man with frostbitten feet requiring daily wound care showed us documentation indicating that there were 10 days when he did not receive care.

Many IPS reported issues with their tablets, including that repair requests were not being addressed and that they need to be able to charge the devices during the day so they don't run out of battery before the day is over. This is especially concerning because it limits their ability to communicate with loved ones, doing legal research, and address issues inside the facility.

Several IPS expressed a desire to have the previous commissary provider, Keefe, return, as they were unhappy with the current commissary offerings, especially for hygiene items. People also reported that prices for both food and hygiene items were higher under the current provider than under Keefe.

There were numerous complaints about abuse and mistreatment by the employees. We received a very concerning number of complaints about a Sergeant named Sarver, including allegations of him repeatedly punching and tasing IPS on numerous occasions.

Our findings suggest significant problems and dissatisfaction with the conditions and treatment of Incarcerated Persons in the Allegheny County Jail.