



# COUNTY OF ALLEGHENY

## OFFICE OF THE CONTROLLER

104 COURTHOUSE • 436 GRANT STREET  
 PITTSBURGH, PA 15219-2498  
 PHONE (412) 350-4660 • FAX (412) 350-3006  
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The following report details findings from an unannounced inspection of Allegheny County Jail conducted by County Controller Corey O'Connor and Mr. Rob Perkins, members of the Jail Oversight Board, on Wednesday, April 24, 2024, from approximately 9:00-12:00 p.m. Controller O'Connor and Mr. Perkins inspected intake and central booking, medical and mental health services, housing pods, and other facility operations. The following information is based on this onsite review, including interviews and reviews of records and information, and shall be published for public inspection as per 61 Pa. C.S. § 1724. We appreciate our partners in developing this report and hope this information can inform the work being done across government to better support our community, reduce recidivism, and provide for Jail residents and staff.

Date/Time	Wednesday, April 24 (9-12 p.m.)	
JOB Member	Corey O'Connor	Rob Perkins
<b>Intake/booking center</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Intake staff noted communication breakdowns at several points in processing new arrest, leading to sometimes daylong delays in arraignment.</li> <li>· Per staff, there are now three points during intake where medical assessments are administered. However, due to staffing issues, assessments can often be delayed while individuals wait in holding.</li> <li>· Staff had varying knowledge of autism screening tool and suggested capacity and training constraints to implementation.</li> <li>· At time of inspection, roughly 1,670 individuals were in ACJ custody, including 20 male youths.</li> <li>· Staff noted DHS program aimed at increasing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Per staff, delays in communication between police and jail following new arrests is causing significant arraignment delays.</li> <li>· Sometimes officers make arrests early in the shift, but won't complete arrest paperwork until shift is complete, which can lead to 8-12-hour delays. Even worse, sometimes officer paperwork is not turned in at the end of a shift, which can lead to a 1-2-day arraignment delay.</li> <li>· The machine used to count and account for a new arrestee's money was down.</li> <li>· Per staff, vacancies in medical staffing presents significant operational burdens. Licensed social workers, mental health therapists, and nurses were particularly flagged.</li> </ul>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>diversion at arraignment has not started yet.</li> </ul>	
<b>Kitchen</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Briefly inspected area and noted issues with boiler.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Noted boiler was down at time of inspection.</li> </ul>
<b>Pod 4B</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff indicated pod was on lockdown during inspection and described process undertaken to complete count.</li> <li>Action should be taken to automate these processes, which would alleviate predictable staff and operational strains.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff indicated that conducting count only takes a few minutes, that there is some movement in and out of pods during count (which suggests ability for attorneys to visit clients during count).</li> <li>Incarcerated individuals completing work assignments were also permitted out of their cell during count.</li> </ul>
<b>Pod 5C (acute mental health pod)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Per staff, pod had occupancy of 25 people.</li> <li>Pod was on lockdown due to staffing issues which has an exacerbating effect on individuals with mental health challenges.</li> <li>Individuals are not permitted to leave their cell during lockdown. And as noted during previous inspections, individuals housed here are neither provided with outdoor recreation nor other equitable opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Noted pod was on lockdown. Observed the tiny cage where individuals from this pod are provided recreation time.</li> <li>Observed one individual calling for medical attention and others signaling for additional attention.</li> </ul>
<b>Facility operations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elevators were undergoing repairs resulting in staff and operational strains.</li> <li>In at least three areas, ceiling/roof leaks of varying severity were present with cans to catch water.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Because work is being done on the elevators, a sergeant needs to stand in the elevator all day and press the floor button every time a person uses the elevator.</li> </ul>



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· In several areas, including near the elevators on the first floor, in the intake area, and up on floor five, there were roof leaks, often with garbage cans set out to catch the leaks. The leak on level five was severe.</li> </ul>
<b>Observations and notes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Communication between the agencies overseeing critical stages of the criminal legal process frequently breaks down, ultimately leading to a longer time in ACJ and a higher cost to the taxpayer. Beyond staff constraints, several process changes should be prioritized to improve service delivery and efficiency.</li> <li>· Conducted interview with medical staff to learn more about hiring and retention progress. Staff noted five new hires and coinciding changes to staff management and administration.</li> <li>· Hiring and retaining mental health therapists has been difficult and should continue to be the focus of ongoing ACJ hiring efforts.</li> <li>· Multiple staff mentioned expanding use of diversion at multiple criminal legal touchpoints to alleviate staff and operational</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Conducted interview of medical staff to learn more about staffing issues, ongoing developments in medical care, and other concerns.</li> <li>· Discussed plans to start initiating methadone soon, currently only offered to people who were on it prior to entering ACJ.</li> <li>· Staff identified wanting more space on each pod to conduct medical and mental health services, instead of transporting individuals.</li> <li>· Staff identified inclusion of diversionary practices early and often to reduce population of those incarcerated.</li> <li>· Observed operations and administrative functions being conducted primarily by paper, particularly in intake. This presents a host of records management and retention issues.</li> <li>· Conducting interviews was very helpful, further time is</li> </ul>



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	strains presented by a rising custodial population.	needed with both staff and incarcerated individuals. · Appreciated the earnestness of employees and their interest and commitment to positive outcomes for residents and facility operations.