



Hernando County Sheriff's Office

P.O. BOX 10070 – BROOKSVILLE, FL 34603-0070 FAX 352 796-0493 PHONE 352 754-6830

Media Release

From: Michael Terry
Deputy PIO, 352-797-3608

Re: Hernando County Detention Center Achieves PREA Compliance Certification

Date: July 2, 2024

The Hernando County Sheriff's Office is proud to announce that the Hernando County Detention Center (HCDC) has achieved full compliance certification with the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) standards. This significant milestone underscores HCDC's unwavering commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of its inmate population.

During the rigorous three-day audit, HCDC was thoroughly evaluated across 43 PREA standards. The facility not only met but exceeded standards in two critical areas: **Agency Protection Against Retaliation** and **Volunteer and Contractor Training**.

PREA Auditor James Kenney, a seasoned expert with experience auditing 32 other county jails, state prisons, and federal prisons, praised HCDC's performance.

"Having audited 32 other county jails, state prisons, and federal prisons, I am well practiced at performing audits of the Prison Rape Elimination Act Standards," said Kenney. "The staff at the Hernando County Detention Center take the sexual safety of their inmate population very seriously and it showed during this three-day intensive audit of the 43 PREA Standards. This audit really tests the readiness of the line staff and how they would address the needs of the inmates. A positive report like this sends the message that your friends and family are well taken care of inside the facility."

Sheriff Al Nienhuis expressed his gratitude and pride in the dedication of the HCDC staff.

"Achieving PREA compliance is a testament to the hard work and commitment of our detention center staff," Sheriff Nienhuis said. "We are dedicated to providing a safe environment for all individuals in our care and will continue to uphold the highest standards of inmate protection."

The PREA certification marks a significant achievement for the Hernando County Detention Center and reinforces the facility's dedication to maintaining a secure and supportive environment for both inmates and staff.

About the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA):

The Prison Rape Elimination Act was enacted in 2003 to address the problem of sexual abuse and harassment in correctional facilities. The PREA standards aim to prevent, detect, and respond to incidents of sexual misconduct in confinement settings.

About the Hernando County Sheriff's Office:

The Hernando County Sheriff's Office is committed to providing professional law enforcement services to the community. The Detention Center, a key component of the Sheriff's Office, strives to ensure the safety, security, and well-being of all inmates and staff.

Hernando County Crime Stoppers / Anonymous Tips

If you have information on this case, please contact Hernando County Crime Stoppers. You will remain anonymous!

Hernando County Crime Stoppers can be reached by phone at 1-866-990-TIPS (8477) or **TIPS from a cell phone.

You may also submit your tip via the internet at <http://www.hernandocountycrimestoppers.com> .

You will remain anonymous and also be eligible for a reward up to \$5,000 cash!