



FY 2023

Staffing Plan

Orris, William
Merrimac Center
FY 2023

Merrimac Juvenile Detention Center
Middle Peninsula Juvenile Detention Commission
9300 Merrimac Trail, Williamsburg, VA 23185

STAFFING PLAN Fiscal Year 2023

Date: 08/18/2023

This document details the staffing plan currently in effect for Merrimac Center in accordance with the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice standards related to resident ratios and staff supervision, and as required in Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Standard 115.313 Staff-to-Resident Ratios.

Merrimac Center is a 48-bed secure residential facility providing 24-hour, seven days a week custodial care to juveniles before the court from 18 different localities. July 1, 2023, the facility signed into an agreement with (5) five additional jurisdictions. The cities of Portsmouth, Suffolk, the town of Franklin, and the counties of Isle of Wight and Southampton were added.

The detention center provides a highly structured program of care to meet the physical, educational, and medical needs of the juveniles detained. The facility partners with Williamsburg- James City County Public Schools and the Virginia Department of Education to provide a fully accredited school program, offering 5.5 hours of academic instruction daily to all residents, with eight teachers, a principal, and an administrative assistant.

The population consists of juveniles aging from 7 to 17 years of age awaiting disposition in the juvenile court and up to the age of 20 in the Department of Juvenile Justice's (DJJ) male or female Community Placement Program (CPP). As of this writing there are (2) two (CPP) residents in the facility. Effective July 1, 2023, the agreement between Merrimac Center and DJJ was not renewed.

Merrimac Center opened as 32 bed facility on December 23, 1997, with a 16-bed expansion already under construction at the date of opening. The expansion unit (Unit 4) opened on July 1, 1998. There are currently 62 staff employed by the Middle Peninsula Juvenile Detention Commission (facility governing body). Merrimac Center utilizes approximately 14 volunteers to include religious volunteers, barber, and pet therapy. Volunteers receive training to the level of participation with the residents.

Merrimac Center complies with the DJJ standard "6VAC35-101-890- Staff Supervision of Residents" and "6VAC35-101-900- Staffing Pattern," which requires minimum direct care staff to resident ratios of 1:10 during waking hours and 1:16 during sleeping hours. These minimum ratios are met at all times except in the case of unforeseen and temporary circumstances. Merrimac Center uses a "Staff Draft" to ensure that the facility meets all minimum ratio requirements at all times. Any time that the minimum staffing ratios are not met, the circumstances must be documented in an incident report that lists the reason(s) and the duration that the minimum staff-to-resident ratio was not met, and any actions taken to correct the situation. This meets the requirements as set forth in Virginia DJJ regulations and in PREA.

Effective August 1, 2016. Merrimac Center requires a staff-to-resident ratio of 1:8 during waking hours and 1:16 during sleeping hours. Merrimac Center will continue to strive to exceed generally accepted secure detention practices.

Staff and Teachers:

Staff (counselors) and teachers must receive appropriate training in crisis intervention, PREA, Behavior Management, Cognitive Behavioral Training, Suicide Prevention, CPR, First Aid, Standard Universal Precautions, and Emergency Response/Evacuation/Fire Extinguisher. Teachers will only augment the staffing plan when directly supervising/teaching residents.

Staff Supervision of Residents:

Direct care staff are required to maintain line-of-sight supervision of residents at all times except when residents are secured in their individual sleeping rooms. Staff are required to carry a two-way radio. Staff must complete a minimum of 40 hours of training annually, including training on delivery of programming specific to the composition of the resident population, crisis intervention training, and training on preventing, detecting, and responding effectively to sexual abuse and sexual harassment of residents. The facility has four teams. There are three shifts that are 4 days on and 2 days off consisting of two dayshifts (0700-1500) and two evening shifts (1400-2200) for the work week. This schedule allows for the staff to work approximately 133 hours less a year. The night shift team works 4 days on and 3 days off on a 10-hour shift schedule. The three days off allow for extra rest. There is a shift overlap or power shift from 1400 to 1500 and 0700 to 0800 to allow for shift briefings and training. All direct care staff follow a strict daily schedule to ensure that education and programming needs are met. All direct care staff are considered “essential personnel.”

Mental Health Staff:

The local Community Service Board (Colonial Behavioral Health) identifies residents with mental health needs and develops alternative strategies and mental health plans for the court to consider including aftercare.

Supervisory Personnel:

At least one supervisory level person, including administrators, shift supervisors, and/or counselor III's (supervisor designee) will always be on duty. At least one administrator, including the facility director, will always be on call. On-duty supervisory personnel are required to always be accessible to direct and oversee building operations and safety and respond to crisis or incidents. Shift supervisors complete “unannounced supervisory rounds” each shift to deter instances of sexual abuse or harassment. On-call administrative personnel must be available to respond promptly and effectively in the event of crisis or emergencies at the facility. Administrators and supervisors can augment coverage but can only be considered in the staff-to-resident ratio when directly supervising residents.

Medical:

Merrimac Center has a full-time registered nurse, a part time registered nurse and a contract doctor serving as medical director. These positions meet requirements under the Department of Juvenile Justice Standard - 6VAC35-101-930. There is always at least one medication agent on duty each shift to respond and triage illness and injuries in the absence of a nurse. This meets requirements under 6VAC35-101-1060 and 1290 of the Department of Juvenile Justice Standards.

Video Monitoring Systems:

Merrimac Center utilizes a DVR/video monitoring system. The video/DVR system is considered a deterrent to sexual acting-out and other safety violations and is used in post incident investigations. There are 51 cameras within our current system to cover possible blind spots. The system is actively monitored at all times by a control room specialist. The system has sound recording capabilities. The video playback can be reviewed in live mode and recorded mode from the administrative and supervisor offices. In FY 2022, the control room received a system upgrade. The previous system utilized two 40-inch monitors. The system upgrade went to three 43-inch monitors. This allows the control room operator to monitor all offices and all occupied areas. In the coming fiscal year additional cameras will be purchased to monitor the program manager's office and property room.

Applicable Laws, Regulations, and Findings:

Merrimac Center is reviewed at least annually by DJJ to ensure compliance with all applicable laws, standards, and practices set forth for secure detention settings. This includes a three-year certification audit for licensure, a self-audit with report to DJJ and a monitoring visit. Any findings of inadequacy must be addressed and corrected in a timely fashion through a corrective action plan. Merrimac Center is not subject to any state or federal judicial findings of inadequacy relative to staffing at this time. Merrimac Center will have its fourth PREA Audit, scheduled for July of 2024. The facility conducts audits pursuant to §§ 115.401–405 of the PREA standards.

Staffing Plan Review:

This staffing plan will be reviewed at least once annually by facility administration in collaboration with the PREA Coordinator. The staffing plan review will be documented and recommendations for modification to the staffing plan implemented as applicable and appropriate. For compliance with PREA the staffing plan review must consider if:

- Generally accepted secure residential practices are met,
- Findings of inadequacy are addressed,
- Adequate numbers of supervisory personnel,
- Physical plant inadequacies, such as “blind spots” on video monitoring systems is addressed to the maximum extent possible

- Responses are made where there is a prevalence of sexual abuse reporting on a certain shift, in a certain location, with certain personnel, or as pertaining to other factors,
- Programs are occurring on a particular shift,
- The composition of the resident population is addressed,
- Applicable state and federal laws and regulations are being followed,
- Any other relative factors are applicable,

Signature:

PREA Coordinator

8/18/2023

Date