

CORRECTIONAL OVERSIGHT MODELS

Alaska

Office of the Ombudsman

- Accepts and investigates complaints from inmates in the Alaska prison system.
- Inmates have unlimited access to ombudsman and ombudsman has limited access prison facilities and all documentation from the facilities.
- Investigates complaints filed by inmates.
- Inmates may correspond in writing or by telephone and these communications are considered privileged and cannot be monitored by the Department of Corrections.
<http://ombud.alaska.gov/>

California

Los Angeles County Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission

- Created by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.
- Comprised of 9 members representing the Board, with 4 members recommended by the community and other affiliated groups.
- Works closely with the Office of the Inspector General to undertake investigations, inquiries, audits and monitoring.
- Supervises and evaluates all work performed by the Inspector General.
- Functions as a bridge between the Sheriff's Department and community by providing the community an additional means of giving input to the Sheriff- obtaining answers from the Sheriff to the community concerns about the Sheriff's operations, practices and activities and communicating community concerns to the Sheriff that may not be clear or go unnoticed.
<https://coc.lacounty.gov/>

Los Angeles County Jail Monitor

-Appointed a Special Council for the City of Los Angeles to conduct ongoing monitoring and critical review of the L.A. County Sheriff's Department's performance.

-Submits written report every six months regarding systemic issues in the department.

<http://bos.co.la.ca.us/Maint.htm>

Office of Independent Review (Los Angeles County)

- Created by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.
- Conducts independent monitors of the LA County Jail.
- Under contract with the LA County Board of Supervisors.
<http://laoir.com/>

Sybil Brand Commission for Institutional Inspection (Los Angeles County)

- Developed by the Board of Commissioners for L.A. County.

- Charged with inspecting each jail facility or lockup in L.A. County at least once each year.
- Reviews the administration, cleanliness, discipline, care and security of the inmates.
-During inspections, any member of the Commission has authority to interview any individual locked up imprisoned in the facility.

<http://sbs.lacounty.gov/>

Office of Independent Review (Orange County)

- Established by an ordinance in 2008 and created to provide full time civilian oversight of the Orange County Sheriff's Department.
- Pursuant to an attorney-client relationship with the County and the Sheriff's Department, the OIR has access to investigative files, official records, and confidential meetings involved Department personnel.
- Ensures the internal review processes are thorough, fair and effective.
- Monitors all misconduct cases and critical incidents, including significant uses of task force and inmate deaths.
- Tracks the progress of all investigations and consults with Department decision-makers as appropriate outcomes.
- Reports to the public.

www.oir.ocgov.com

Office of Inspector General

- An independent state agency provides extensive investigation and review of all California state prisons.
- Has authority under state law to conduct audits and criminal investigations.
- Has unlimited access to any and all facilities within the prison system, including access to all employees and the ability to review any documents at any time.
- Maintains a toll-free public line so that employees within the correctional facility can report problems.
- Inmates have access to the OIG through a mailing process that allows the inmate to report any problems.
- Divided into two bureaus- the Bureau of Audits and Investigations conducts fiscal and performance audits of all institutions and the system as a whole. The audits cover all aspects of the prison institution and operational system.
- The Bureau of Independent Review provides real time oversight and oversees investigations conducted by the internal affairs unit as they occur to ensure the agency fairly and effectively investigates and disciplines officers for violating the law or correctional policy.
- Their reports are available to the public.

<http://www.oig.ca.gov/>

Little Hoover Commission

- Independent oversight agency.
- Mission to investigate state government operations through reports, recommendations, and legislative proposals, with a goal to promote efficiency and improved services.
- Composed of nine individuals who are appointed by the Governor and the Legislature but also includes two state Senators and two Assembly Members.
- The Commission chooses topics to review that are brought to its attention by citizens or legislators.
- Investigations include public hearings and fieldwork which includes site visits to institutions in the California prison system.
- Reports its findings to the Governor and Legislature.
- Once recommendations are accepted, the commission ensures efficient and appropriate implementation.
- Produces one major report on public safety-related issues per year.
<http://www.lhc.ca.gov/>

Office of Sexual Assault in Detention Elimination Ombudsperson

- Investigates and resolves any complaints by inmates of sexual abuse.
- Has authority to monitor facilities in California prison system and respond to complaints filed that relate to sexual abuse.
- Interviews inmates and wardens.
- Inmates are allowed to write confidential letters to the Ombudsperson whose contact information is clearly posted in every institution.
<http://www.oig.ca.gov/pages/bureaus/bureau-of-criminal-investigations.php>

Delaware

Delaware Criminal Justice Council

- Has access to corrections institutions but does not monitor conditions.
- Has broad range of members including DOC administrators, lawyers and other state employees.
- Works with the DOC in issues surrounding planning, juvenile justice, sentencing and finance.
- Has unfettered access to facilities.
<http://www.state.de.us/cjc/default.html>

Delaware Council on Correction

- A governor appointed advisory body that serves as a liaison to the public.
- Has statutory authority to meet with corrections administrators and the Governor.
<http://www.doc.delaware.gov/COC.html>

Florida

Florida Model Jail Standards Committee

- Created by statute which mandates a working group to develop model standards for the operation of jails and detention facilities in the state.
- Includes 5 members: three persons appointed by the Florida Sheriff's Association and two appointees of the Florida Association of Counties.
- Operates under the auspices of the Florida Sheriff's Association.
- Committee chair also appoints a facilitator who coordinates jail inspections and reporting. The inspections are done by volunteer inspectors (corrections officers from another jail) and done annually for each jail using a checklist of questions based on the Standards.
<https://www.flsheriffs.org/law-enforcement-programs/training/florida-model-jail-standards>

Hawaii

Office of the Ombudsman

- Investigates complaints about prison conditions and allegations of abuse and neglect.
- If the complaint is substantiated the office can attempt to resolve the problem with the agency directly.
- Does not have the power to compel or reverse administrative actions- but tries to resolve complaints through recommendations and persuasion.
- Can make recommendations for changes to the law, administrative rules or operating procedures.
<http://www.ombudsman.hawaii.gov/>

Idaho

Idaho Sheriffs' Association

- Conducts regular inspections by two sheriffs, two county board members and the jail standards coordinator.
- If jail is not in compliance, they have 30 days to present a compliance plan.
- Established minimum jail standards
<http://www.idahosheriffs.org/>

Illinois

John Howard Association for Prison Reform – advocacy group with Right of Access

- Private, not for profit organization that provides public oversight of the state's prisons, jails and juvenile correctional facilities.
- The JHA's Prison and Jail project sends staff and volunteers on periodic, announced visits to prisons in 102 counties to evaluate the conditions of confinement.
- JHA staff includes corrections experts and volunteers who go through a short training course prior to visits.
- Reports are produced from these visits and are used to make recommendations for change or improvement.

- Access is at the discretion of corrections officials.
<http://www.thejha.org/>

Indiana

Indiana Ombudsman Bureau

- Functions independently of the DOC
- Ombudsman is appointed by the governor
- Responsible for investigating prisoner complaints against the DOC relating to the violation of any law, departmental policy or any act that risks the health or safety of any person.
- The investigation usually begins with a prisoner related grievance, but the Ombudsman may also initiate an investigation.
- Grievance forms are available to the public on the Bureau's website and to the prisoners in the law library at every correctional institution.
- Inmates may bypass internal grievance procedures and submit complaints directly to the Ombudsman.
- Bureau staff members are granted direct access to any relevant DOC records for the inmate and granted immediate access to any DOC facility.
- May conduct confidential interviews with the prisoners.
- Send monthly and annual reports to the Governor's office and the DOC Commissioner.
<http://www.in.gov/idoa/2610.htm>

Indiana State Department of Health, Health Care Regulatory Services Commission, Acute Care Division

- Conducts surveys to assess for unsafe, unsanitary or unhealthy conditions that affect the health, safety and welfare of offenders or employees and medical care of each facility operated by the DOC.
- Also mandated to conduct an annual survey of the Food Service at each institution.
<http://www.in.gov/isdh/20111.htm>

Iowa

Office of Citizens' Aide/Ombudsman

- Has unlimited access to all corrections facilities in Iowa and access to all documentation.
- During an inmate's intake, they are informed of the ombudsman and told he or she can write or call the office with any questions or complaints.
- The staff write the inmate back in order to determine whether that inmate would like the office to formally begin an investigation and pursue the issue.
<http://www.legis.state.ia.us/ombudsman/>

Kansas

Joint Committee on Corrections and Juvenile Justice Oversight

- Reviews the operations of the state prison system and county jails.

- Primary focus is the inmate population and the need for prison construction or expansion of community corrections.

Sentencing Commission

- Monitors and regulates prison population through the use of sentencing guidelines and not on prison conditions generally.

Kentucky

Kentucky Department of Corrections Division of Local Facilities Jail Services Branch

- Inspects jails twice per year to monitor compliance with state standards established by statute, including standards relating to prisoner rights, and to provide training and technical assistance.
- After a hearing involving an inspector and officials from a non-compliant local jail, the Commissioner of Corrections can order the closure of a jail.

Maine

Board of Visitors

Oversight board

- Has statutory authority to inspect the prisons at anytime and without notice.
- Established for each prison facility in the state.
- Each board is comprised of five Governor appointees, one of whom must be licensed in Maine to provide mental health services.
- Their job is to represent the best interest of the people of Maine in prison matters: focuses on safety and security of the public, prison staff and inmates, inmate health and prison industries and programs.
- Members can go anywhere in the prison at any time.
- Board can take concerns to the Governor, commissioner or legislative committee responsible for prison issues.
- Produces an annual report.

Maryland

Commission on Correctional Standards

- Members appointed by the Governor and role is to advise the Secretary on issues related to standards for state and local correctional facilities.
- Staff are responsible for auditing facilities to determine compliance with standards and for writing audit reports that are provided to the Secretary.
- Relies on trained volunteers known as Duly Authorized Inspectors, to carry out inspections and draft audit reports which are reviewed by the Commission members.
<http://www.dpscs.maryland.gov/agencies/mccs.shtml>

Massachusetts

Massachusetts Correctional Legal Services

Prisoner legal advocacy organization

- An established project that allows it to gain access to correctional facilities in order to investigate specific claims of brutality against inmates.
- Prisoners file grievances, the corrections agency allows MCLS staff to have immediate access to any witnesses.
- Staff are allowed camera for the collection of evidence.
<http://www.mcls.net/home>

Mississippi

Joint Committee on Performance Evaluation and Expenditure Review (PEER)

- a legislative committee made up of Senators and house members
- Has a full-time staff of auditors and serves as the auditors- the auditor for corrections conducts reviews, evaluations and responds to complaints and files reports with the legislature.
- Conducts unannounced visits, follow ups on inquiries and complaints
<http://www.peer.state.ms.us>

Missouri

Citizens Advisory Committee

[description says its part of the DOC]

- 13 private citizens appointed by the Governor who serve for three years.
- Committee members consider significant inmate grievances referred by the DOC, visit facilities on a scheduled basis and make recommendations to the DOC.
<https://doc.mo.gov/DAI/>

Joint Legislative Committee on Corrections

- Includes legislators from House and Senate.
- Required to visit, once a year all twenty-one of the state's correctional facilities, monitor conditions.
- Visits are made unannounced.
- Will sometimes bring subject matter experts on the tours with them.
- Responds to inmate complaints and makes recommendations.
<http://www.senate.mo.gov/06info/comm/statutory/jccr.htm>

Nebraska

Nebraska Crime Commission, Jail Standards Division

Statutorily created

- Governed by an independent, 11-member Jail standards Board, nine of whom are Governor appointees.
- The remaining two members, are mandated to serve by statute.

- Has legislative authority to visit and inspect jail facilities at any time and generally visits once a year.
- Staff submit reports on a variety of issues, including operational, structural, medical and policy-related and make recommendations to the Jail Standards Board.
<https://ncc.nebraska.gov/jail-standards-1>

Ombudsman-Office of the Public Counsel, Ombudsman for Corrections

Statutorily created legislative agency.

- Responds to complaints about Department of Correctional Services.
- Reports annually to the Legislature and the Governor on what the office has done in addition to submitting any other reports the office produces.
- Inmate grievances include confinement issues, and abuse by staff.
- Has access to inmates and administrative and correctional staff.
<https://www.nebraskalegislature.gov/divisions/ombud.php>

New Jersey

Department of Public Advocate, Division of Citizens Relations, Office of Corrections Ombudsman

Public Advocate created legislatively and granted oversight authority.

- Public Advocate is appointed by the Governor and reports directly to the legislature.
- Contains Ombudsman and four assistant ombudsmen who review and investigate prisoner related complaints.
- Each assistant ombudsman is stationed at a different facility at least three or four days a week.
- A toll-free number is available and answered during regular business hours for direct contact.
- Staff have full access to prisons at any time to investigate complaints, talk to correctional staff and inmates, monitor living conditions and review policies and procedures to ensure compliance.
<http://www.nj.gov/correctionsombudsman/>

New York

New York City Board of Correction

- Sets minimum standards of care for all NYC jails and ensures compliance.
- Has authority to make unannounced visits to inspect and monitor treatment and living conditions.
- Submits reports to the mayor and DOC.
- Has enforceable subpoena power.
- 14 staff with 6 who are based on site in the jails.
<http://www1.nyc.gov/site/boc/index.page>

New York State Commission of Correction

- Permanent and independent government body
- Has enforcement power and oversight of all correctional facilities in the state [including jails].
- Regulatory agency with the authority to access the jails and prisons at any time, subpoena witnesses and pursue closure of a facility it considers unsafe or non-compliant with standards.
- Three full time members who are appointed by the Governor with Senate approval (1) chairperson is head of the agency, (2) member serves as head of Medical Review Board, (3) member serves as head of Citizen's Policy and Complaint Review Council.
- Meets monthly to discuss proposed changes, regulations, variance requests and results of investigations.
- Staff members may be placed as monitors in any facility if the Commission characterizes the jail or prison as an imminent danger to the healthy, safety or security of the inmates, staff or public.
- Has power to close any jail or prison it deems unsafe, unsanitary or non-compliant with standards.
- May issue subpoenas and examine persons under oath.
- Contains *Medical Review Board* to investigate deaths and serious incidents in facilities and investigates health care grievances.
- Contains *Policy and Complaint Review Council* appointed by Governor who review inmate grievances that have not been successfully resolved at the facility level. It is mandated to improve conditions in facilities, oversees complaints process and advises the Commission.

<http://www.scoc.ny.gov/>

Correctional Association of New York, Prison Visiting Project

A non-profit advocacy organization.

- Committee includes staff and board members, correctional, medical and mental health experts, former prisoners and citizens- none are appointed or selected by the Legislature.
- Has access to correctional facilities.
- Prison Visiting Project has statutory authority to organize teams of citizen volunteers to conduct monthly visits to prison facilities and interview inmates and staff.
- Submits report with recommendations to the Legislature and Commissioner of the DOCS.
- Also has a female counterpart, The Association's Women in Prison Project and monitors the female units.

<http://www.correctionalassociation.org/pp/about-pvp>

North Carolina

Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Health Service Regulation, Jail and Detention Section

Ohio

Correctional Institution Inspection Committee (CIIC)

Established by statute

- A committee of the Ohio legislature with four members of the Ohio Senate and four members of the House – appointed by the President of the Senate & Speaker of the House.
- Has a full time professional staff.
- responsible for establishing and maintaining a continuing program of inspection of each state correctional institution, inspecting each institution w/out being required to give notice or make arrangements, evaluating and assisting in the development of programs to improve conditions, conduct evaluations of the inmate grievance procedure and report findings to the G.A.
- Monitors public & private institutions.
- Staff have access to data on discipline, education/vocational program attendance, medical issues and grievances, data on inmate assaults.
- Staff receive communication directly from inmates.

<http://ciic.state.oh.us/>

Oklahoma

Oklahoma Department of Health, Jail Inspection Division

Oregon

Multnomah County Corrections Grand Jury

- Every year the Multnomah County District Attorney has one of his senior deputies convene a special grand jury.
- The grand jury examines conditions in the jail facilities through testimony from witnesses, including judges, defense lawyers and jail staff.
- Results in a report of its finding.

<http://mcda.us/index.php/news/2017-corrections-grand-jury-report-released/>

Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania Prison Society

- Independent organization funded publicly and privately to monitor corrections facilities.
- Made up of over 1,000 members across the state with 43 chapters.
- Membership in the society can be obtained by paying membership dues and is not limited to a particular group of people.
- Can access the prison facilities: member volunteers are allowed to visit the facilities and inmates and observe and report any abuse or misconduct and assist the prisoners with a variety of issues.
- Helps prisoners and their families with visitation, services and intervention.

- Advocates for progressive criminal justice legislation, to reduce the use of incarceration as punishment, educate the public and encourage correctional professionals to remain informed.

<http://www.prisonsociety.org/>

County Prison Boards

- Each county that is classed as “level 2” is statutorily mandated to establish prison boards that monitor conditions in county prisons.
- Prison Oversight Board for Bucks County & Allegheny County Jail Oversight Board
- Responsible for hiring and supervising wardens and determining staffing levels. They have access to local prisons.
- Must consist of the county chief executive, two judges, sheriff, controller, city council member and three citizen members.
- Must make semiannual unannounced inspections of the local prisons to ensure that they are in compliance with county and state regulations.
- Board members have access to prisoners and correctional staff.
Board files a publicly available report.

Bucks County: www.buckscounty.org

Allegheny County:

<http://apps.alleghenycounty.us/website/boards.asp?Board=167&button1=View>

Tennessee

Tennessee Corrections Institute

Independent state agency with oversight responsibility for local jails.

- Must visit each facility annually and publish the results of inspections.
- Has the authority to decertify noncompliant facilities. [no website]

Texas

PREA Ombudsman for TDJC

- Required to monitor department policies with regard to sexual assault
- Oversee investigation and ensure resolution of sexual assault complaints
- Collect statistics about sexual assault allegations
- Report both publicly and to designated officials about sexual assault allegations and the result of investigations and disciplinary actions.
- Three staff members and safe prison coordinators based at each prison facility with whom the officer collaborates.

<http://tdcj.texas.gov/tbcj/prea.html>

Texas Commission on Jail Standards

Regulatory body

- Nine members appointed by the Governor including sheriff, doctor, county judge and County Commissioner.
- Provides technical assistance and consultation to jails.

- Promulgates written rules and procedures that establish minimum standards, inspection procedures and enforcement policies for jail facilities.
- Conducts on-site inspections once a year and can arrive unannounced.

<https://www.tcjs.state.tx.us/>