

TO: Professors Andrea Armstrong and Nishi Kumar
FROM: Taylor Cleveland
RE: “Better Know A Jail” Memo
DATE: November 28, 2023

Shreveport City Jail Memo

Introduction

Caddo Parish is one of 64 parishes in Louisiana. It encompasses 879 square miles and has a population of over 229,000.¹ The parish is named for the Caddo Native American people and is comprised of one city, four towns, six villages, and one unincorporated area.² The Shreveport City Jail was established in the early 1900s to serve the city of Shreveport and the surrounding communities.³ The jail initially served as a temporary holding facility for inmates awaiting trial, sentencing, or transfer to other correctional institutions.⁴ The website for Shreveport city jail is <https://shreveportcityjail.org>.

Jail Characteristics

Shreveport City Jail is located at 775 Hope Street, Shreveport, LA 71101.⁵ It is a medium-security detention facility that serves the city of Shreveport and the surrounding communities.⁶ The jail has the capacity to hold approximately 300 people at a time.⁷ It has an average daily inmate population count of 110.⁸ The facility is designed to accommodate both men and women, with separate housing units to maintain safety and order.⁹ The housing units at Shreveport City Jail are organized into several pods, each containing multiple cells. Incarcerated persons are placed in cells based on their classification, which takes into account their criminal history, behavior, and security risk.¹⁰

The population of Shreveport City Jail consists of incarcerated persons who are awaiting trial, serving short sentences, or are being held on warrants from other jurisdictions. The jail also houses people who have violated parole or probation conditions.¹¹ Shreveport City Jail is a temporary holding facility, inmates who are sentenced to more than one year of incarceration will be transferred to a Louisiana state prison or another correctional facility.¹² Although the goal of this jail is to house people who are awaiting trial or serving short sentences, several incarcerated persons have been there for multiple years. One man has been incarcerated there since 2019 and has been there the longest of the current incarcerated persons in Shreveport City

¹<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/caddoparishlouisiana,la,US/PST045218>

²<https://www.louisiana.gov/local-louisiana/caddo-parish>

³<https://shreveportcityjail.org/history/>

⁴*Id.*

⁵ <https://shreveportla.gov/2233/City-Jail>

⁶ <https://shreveportcityjail.org>

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ https://www.insideprison.com/county_jails_details.asp?ID=1181

⁹ <https://shreveportcityjail.org>

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² *Id.*

Jail. Until recently, one wing of the jail had never been opened.¹³ Police are now using it to house suspects caught in sweeps like Operation Closed Market, which targets people with illegal guns.¹⁴

The live jail database can be accessed through the Shreveport City Jail Inmate Roster page at <http://www.shreveport.lavns.org/roster.aspx>. To find an incarcerated person, first click the inmate's last name first letter to view the list of matching inmates. Then review the results and select the correct inmate to view their detailed information. The Shreveport City Jail Inmate Lookup provides the following information about inmates: full name, booking number, booking date, charges, bond amount (if applicable), projected release date (if applicable), custody status, and mugshot. If you are unsure of the name you are looking for and would like to search by booking date instead, you can use <https://shreveportla.gov/2233/City-Jail>. Here, you can look at incarcerated persons by the date they were booked, or you can look at the list as a whole.

As of Saturday, November 25, 2023, at 8 PM (CST), the Jail had 114 people in custody.¹⁵ Of those, 12 were female. The youngest women currently incarcerated in the Jail is 26, while the oldest is 69. There are currently 102 males in custody. The youngest man currently incarcerated is 18, while the oldest is 68. The booking process typically includes taking the arrestee's personal information, photograph, and fingerprints, as well as conducting a background check and a medical screening. The arrestee's property will be inventoried and stored for the duration of their stay in jail. Following the booking process, the arrestee may be held in a holding cell or transferred to a housing unit, depending on the jail's policies and the arrestee's charges.¹⁶

Since 2014, Shreveport City Jail has reported only one death in their facility, Isaac Greer in 2016.¹⁷ However, news articles show evidence of at least one more, Bobbie Young.¹⁸ Of these two deaths, one cause was listed as medical and the other as violence.¹⁹

Visitation at Shreveport City Jail takes place on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays at four different times each day. There is a morning session from 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM, an afternoon session from 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM, and an evening session from 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM.²⁰ Shreveport City Jail enforces strict visitation rules and regulations. Incarcerated persons are only allowed up to two visitors per week. Visitors must be on the inmate's approved visitor list and present a valid government-issued photo ID. In addition, visitors must not have any outstanding warrants or be on probation or parole and they must arrive at least 15 minutes before the scheduled visitation time. To visit an incarcerated person at Shreveport City Jail, visitors must first register and be added to the inmate's approved visitor list. To do this, you can call the jail at (318) 673-7130 or visit the facility in person. Once approved, you can schedule a visit according to the visitation hours and the inmate's housing location. Shreveport City Jail enforces a strict dress code for visitors. Visitors must adhere to the

¹³ https://www.ktbs.com/news/why-is-shreveport-city-jail-not-at-capacity/article_062e3e41-2815-5fe4-b389-9984c54ed446.html

¹⁴ *Id.*

¹⁵ <https://www.caddosheriff.org/inmates/?lastNameChar=B>

¹⁶ <https://shreveportcityjail.org/>

¹⁷ <https://www.incarcerationtransparency.org/la-prison-deaths/caddo/>

¹⁸ <https://www.shreveporttimes.com/story/news/local/2022/06/23/elderly-man-dies-after-being-beaten-shreveport-city-jail/7716654001/>

¹⁹ <https://www.incarcerationtransparency.org/la-prison-deaths/caddo/>

²⁰ <https://shreveportcityjail.org/>

following guidelines: no revealing or transparent clothing, no clothing displaying offensive language or images, no hats, scarves, or head coverings (except for religious purposes), no shorts or skirts shorter than knee-length, and no tank tops or sleeveless shirts.²¹

Jail Leadership

The current sheriff for Caddo Parish is Steve Prator. Prator has served six terms as Caddo Parish Sheriff and has chosen to retire at the end of his current term, which expires on June 30, 2024.²² Prator, serving 24 years, is one of the longest-serving sheriffs in Caddo Parish. Prator began his career in law enforcement on January 29, 1973, when he joined the Shreveport Police Department as a patrolman. He worked a variety of assignments including homicide, robbery, sex crimes, and narcotics before being appointed as police chief while serving as a sergeant. After 26 years, he retired from SPD to seek the position of sheriff.²³ In his time as Sheriff, Prator has made multiple inappropriate remarks which have been inappropriate and racist.²⁴ In 2018 specifically, Sheriff Prator expressed his dislike for an inmate release program. Prator was concerned the new inmate release program would negatively affect the amount of free labor the prison was currently benefitting from.²⁵

In the last five years, Steve Prator has been named as a Defendant in multiple cases in the Western District, many of these cases alleging violations of Plaintiff's rights.²⁶

Caddo Parish just recently held elections for sheriff and the winner was Democrat Henry Whitehorn. However, Republican candidate John Nickelson demanded a recount Wednesday after losing to Whitehorn by only one vote.²⁷ The recount was scheduled for Monday, November 27.²⁸ Whitehorn, again, won by a margin of one vote.²⁹ Whitehorn worked as a Superintendent for three years for the Louisiana State Police before serving as the Chief of Police for the Shreveport Police Department for three years. Afterwards, Whitehorn took a position with the US Marshall Service, where he stayed for nine years before becoming the Chief Administrative Officer for the city of Shreveport for two.³⁰ Whitehorn then spent a year in retirement before running for Caddo Parish Sheriff.

Evidence of Oversight

Shreveport City Jail is not accredited by the American Correctional Association³¹, an organization which has published operational standards designed to enhance correctional

²¹ *Id.*

²² <https://www.ktalnews.com/news/local-news/caddo-sheriff-steve-prator-announces-retirement-after-24-years-of-service/>

²³ *Id.*

²⁴ <https://medium.com/@imrealHampson/corruption-in-caddo-parish-the-truth-revealed-363c5dff26cf>

²⁵ <https://www.essence.com/news/la-sheriff-steve-prator-good-inmate-release-free-labor/>

²⁶ <https://www.docketbird.com/search>

²⁷ <https://louisianaradionetwork.com/2023/11/24/34395/>

²⁸ *Id.*

²⁹ <https://lailluminator.com/briefs/caddo-sheriff-recount/>

³⁰ <https://www.linkedin.com/in/henry-whitehorn-82567156/>

³¹ https://www.aca.org/ACA_Member/ACA/ACA_Member/Standards_and_Accreditation/SAC_AccFacHome.aspx?CCO=2

practices for the benefit of inmates, staff, administrators, and the public.³² Nor do they appear to have any of the three accreditations offered by the National Commission on Correctional Healthcare, an organization that writes the standards for correctional health care.³³ While multiple audit reports are listed on <https://www.shreveportla.gov/>, no posted audits contain information about Shreveport City Jail or its operations. However, audits are likely being done since PREA Standards require all covered confinement facilities to be audited at least once during every three-year audit cycle.³⁴

The City of Shreveport currently has a consent decree negotiated with the Department of Justice and the Environmental Protection Agency.³⁵ The Consent Decree requires that the City repair defects in the sanitary sewer system to eliminate Sanitary Sewer Overflows. As a result, the city's 2022 Annual Operating Budget contains a \$38,000 fee to purchase a booster pump for the City Jail.³⁶ In addition, under Unfunded Needs there is also a \$2,000,000 provision in the Unfunded Needs section for City Jail upgrades.³⁷ The building for Shreveport City Jail was constructed in 2003 and since that time maintenance has not been properly addressed due to funding issues. As such, critical infrastructure improvements and replacements are needed. Specifically, they hope to allot \$180,000 worth of funding to replace all plumbing at the City Jail.³⁸

Evidence of Transparency

If you want to look up who is currently incarcerated in Shreveport City Jail there are multiple ways to do so, as previously stated. Searching on <https://shreveportla.gov/2233/City-Jail> gives you the incarcerated person's name, booking date, booking ID, charge description, race, sex, and age. Finding overall population data, is a bit more difficult. However, this may be due to the fact that the City Jail has a population that changes rapidly.

To receive Public Records Requests from Shreveport City Jail, you can email spd_public_request@shreveportla.gov. However, even with an email you may have a hard time receiving the information you are looking for as they have denied prior requests for records from multiple students. In addition to denying prior requests, they have also failed to follow the requirements set forth by the Louisiana Public Records act.

First, R.S. 44:33.1, requires that public bodies shall make the contact information of the custodian available to the public in a manner that will allow a member of the public to quickly determine the appropriate person to whom a public records request should be submitted, including placing this contact information on the internet.³⁹ This information was not on the internet, nor was it easily available. In fact, when try to request records, I had to call the jail to

³²https://www.aca.org/ACA_Member/ACA/ACA_Member/Standards_and_Accreditation/StandardsInfo_Home.aspx?hkey=7c1b31e5-95cf-4bde-b400-8b5bb32a2bad

³³<https://www.ncchc.org/accreditation/>

³⁴<https://www.prearesourcecenter.org/audit/overview#:~:text=The%20National%20Standards%20to%20Prevent, every%20three%2Dyear%20audit%20cycle.>

³⁵<https://www.shreveportlawater.gov/202/Consent-Decree>

³⁶<https://www.shreveportla.gov/DocumentCenter/View/19586/Proposed-2022-Annual-Operating-Budget>

³⁷ *Id.*

³⁸ *Id.*

³⁹[https://app.lla.state.la.us/llala.nsf/7C469838E7BC1C5186257AC2004F6279/\\$FILE/Public%20Records%20Law%20FAQ.pdf](https://app.lla.state.la.us/llala.nsf/7C469838E7BC1C5186257AC2004F6279/$FILE/Public%20Records%20Law%20FAQ.pdf)

get the email. Additionally, even after calling, I was given the wrong contact. I was given the contact email of Sergeant Michael Dunn, then was forwarded to Brad Sotak who then told me they would not be releasing any of the information that I was requesting.

According to R.S. 44:31, the burden of proving that a public record is not subject to inspection, copying, or reproduction rests with the custodian.⁴⁰ When denying my request for Public Records, Brad Sotak did not list the reason for my denial. Additionally, when I responded back asking for a citation to the Public Records exception he was using to deny me, I did not receive an answer. In the end, I was unable to obtain any Public Records I had requested from Shreveport City Jail.

In 2019, a group of activists, The Critical Thinking Coalition, pushed for legislation that would authorize a citizen review board for Shreveport.⁴¹ The Citizen Review Board would have the power to investigate citizen complaints against the police for excessive force, unlawful arrests, officer-involved shootings and other grievances. The board would also analyze policies, procedures and legislation on law enforcement. In opposition, some argued that there is already a board that oversees law enforcement in Shreveport, the Fire and Police Civil Service Board.⁴² However, while the Fire and Police Civil Service Board has oversight over the Shreveport Police Department internal affairs, the board protects civil service employees. On the other hand, a Citizen Review Board would have authority to investigate citizens' allegations of police misconduct.

Notable Cases/Complaints

Based on what has been reported by Shreveport City Jail to prior students, only one person has died while incarcerated in their facility since 2014.⁴³ Isaac Greer, a 58-year-old man, died from a possible seizure two days after being admitted into Shreveport City Jail in 2016.⁴⁴ However, further research has found that Mr. Greer is not the only person to have passed while incarcerated in their facility. Although Shreveport City Jail sent us a letter stating their facility had zero deaths in 2016, Bobbie Young, an elderly male prisoner, died June 20, 2016, after being beaten to death by a fellow prisoner.⁴⁵ Mr. Young is not the only incarcerated person in Shreveport City Jail to be brutally beaten. In 2006, the City of Shreveport settled in a \$4.9 million dollar lawsuit for damages incurred by Carl Edwin Janski after being beaten by a fellow prisoner for 20 to 30 minutes.⁴⁶ The lawsuit asserted: 1) that the jail staff was inadequately trained, 2) there was inadequate staff, 3) the monitoring equipment was outdated and under maintained, and 4) the jail failed to insure Janski's mental problems and special needs were addressed.⁴⁷

⁴⁰ *Id.*

⁴¹ <https://www.shreveporttimes.com/story/news/2019/06/01/group-pushing-citizen-oversight-shreveport-police/1302671001/>

⁴² *Id.*

⁴³ <https://www.incarcerationtransparency.org/la-prison-deaths/caddo/>

⁴⁴ <https://www.incarcerationtransparency.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Greer-Isaac-Caddo-2016-CJ9.pdf>

⁴⁵ <https://www.incarcerationtransparency.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Coroner-releases-name-of-man-who-died-after-alleged-beating-at-Shreveport-City-Jail-another-inmate-charged.pdf>

⁴⁶ <https://www.prisonlegalnews.org/news/2007/dec/15/49-million-settlement-in-louisiana-jail-prisoner-on-prisoner-beating/>

⁴⁷ *Id.*

In the last five years, there has been one notable case in which Shreveport City Jail has been named: Carter v. City of Shreveport et al (filed 2018). William Carter's mother, Jacqueline Carter, filed suit on his behalf in this Court in October 2017, alleging, among other things, inadequate medical care, negligence, and deliberate indifference by various defendants, including the deputies at the jail.⁴⁸ Carter has been paralyzed from the waist down for over a decade as a result of a gunshot wound to his abdomen at age sixteen and must use a wheelchair for mobility. In addition, Carter has a history of physical and mental health problems.⁴⁹ This includes for present purposes, severe stage IV pressure ulcers on his hip and buttocks. The nature and extent of these bed sores require daily bandage changing and frequent turning or repositioning while in bed in order to prevent aggravation and possible infection. This was not done while incarcerated, which caused an infection of Carter's bed sores, ultimately leading to his hospitalization.⁵⁰ In 2023, the judge entered a judgement in favor of the Defendants.

⁴⁸<https://casetext.com/case/carter-v-city-of-shreveport-3>

⁴⁹ *Id.*

⁵⁰ https://www.docketbird.com/court-documents/Carter-v-City-of-Shreveport-et-al/MEMORANDUM-RULING-re-83-MOTION-for-Reconsideration-re-82-Order-on-Motion-for-Summary-Judgment-81-Memorandum-Ruling-filed-by-Butler-Hurst-J-D-Smith-Pfender-T-Tobin-A-Lofton-Debbie-Strickland-B-Norsworthy-T-Nesbitt-Signed-by-Chief-Judge-S-Maurice-Hicks/lawd-5:2017-cv-01289-00093?user_id=guest